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The Reading and Writing Workshop course in the curricular context: professional profile of Social Work in thanatology in the health field

La asignatura de Taller de Lectura y Redacción en el contexto curricular: perfil profesional de Trabajo Social en tanatología en el área de la salud

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ABSTRACT

The human need to write arguments dates back to ancient Greece, then to the theological arguments of the Middle Ages, and in modern times it was perfected with the ability to write syllogisms. Over the centuries, argumentative texts have been written using the Introduction, Development, and Conclusions format and have evolved into the current digital texts of the 21st century. The objective of this paper is to analyze the teaching strategies used in the Reading and Writing Workshop course in various curricular contexts. To this end, it addresses the different perspectives in various high school subsystems in Mexico and the pedagogical strategies contained in their curricular contexts, which are as varied as the profiles of their teachers themselves. In particular, the case study focuses on the curriculum and teaching strategies of the Advanced High School and Higher Education System (SABES) in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico, and a curricular and teaching proposal that aims to contribute to student learning.

Keywords: Argumentative Writing; Reading and Writing Instruction; Teaching Strategies; Secondary Education in Mexico; Curriculum Development.

RESUMEN

La necesidad humana de escribir los argumentos data de la época de la antigua Grecia, luego con los argumentos teológicos de la Edad Media y en la modernidad se perfeccionó con la habilidad de redactar silogismos. A través de los siglos los textos argumentativos se han redactado con el esquema de Introducción, Desarrollo y Conclusiones y han evolucionado hasta los actuales textos digitales del siglo XXI. El objetivo de esta ponencia es analizar las estrategias didácticas utilizadas en la docencia de la asignatura de Taller de Lectura y Redacción en diversos contextos curriculares, para ello, se abordan las diferentes perspectivas en varios subsistemas de bachillerato en México y las estrategias pedagógicas contenidas en sus contextos curriculares, las cuales son tan variadas como los perfiles mismos de sus profesores. En particular se presenta el estudio de caso mismo que se centra en el currículo y estrategias didácticas del Sistema Avanzado de Bachillerato y Educación Superior (SABES) en el estado de Guanajuato, México y una propuesta curricular y didáctica que pretende abonar al aprendizaje de los educandos.

Palabras clave: Escritura Argumentativa; Enseñanza de la Lectura y La Escritura; Estrategias de Enseñanza; Educación Media Superior en México; Desarrollo Curricular.

INTRODUCTION

The reading and writing workshop course has different names and academic approaches depending on the curriculum of each high school subsystem in the country. Some subsystems separate reading from writing, whereas others follow-up in their curriculum map, which is called a chain subject (the sequence from the first to the third or fourth semester, and others only in the first and second).

Other upper secondary subsystems relate the skills to be developed to activities such as play, writing syllogisms, submitting academic essays, designing printed or digital magazines or newspapers, and even digital projects. However, they all converge on one need, which is the development of writing skills and reading comprehension abilities (Eliash, 2007).

Although there is significant overlap between subsystems, there is considerable variation in curricula. In addition, non-school-based or mixed modalities have proliferated, lasting only a few months and sometimes operating outside the main subsystems of upper secondary education (EMS). The objective of this study is to argue that the curricula of public education institutions should address personal, social, and occupational relevance in the context of the country's current circumstances (SEP, 2008) in the context of reading and writing for upper secondary education students.

In Mexico, there are models of general high schools, technological high schools, tele-high schools, the Colegio de Bachilleres, the UNAM, the UPN, state universities in the public sector, and others in the private sector, which operate in morning, afternoon, or Saturday classroom modes, as well as mixed modes (classroom and digital). Likewise, the study plans and programs are as broad and varied as all the high school subsystems existing in the country. Some focus on knowledge in their graduation profiles, whereas others focus on skills, abilities, or competencies, but all of these studies are in accordance with the Common Curriculum Framework (MCC) (SEP, 2008).

In this vein, the problem lies in appropriately placing the reading and writing workshop course within the curriculum and teaching strategies, as the wide variety of offerings at the upper secondary level disperses the educational purposes of the course. This is particularly true in the general baccalaureate program of the Advanced Baccalaureate and Higher Education System (SABES) in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico.

In this sense, using the action research methodology proposed by Elliot (2000), the first step was to identify the problems presented by the subject in the curricular context in which it is found. The second step was to analyze the teaching strategies used in different high school subsystems in the country; finally, an appropriate position for the subject in the curricular context was proposed, as were relevant teaching strategies on the basis of the author's own teaching experience for SABES.

The methodology used was action research aimed at improving teaching practices in the reading and writing workshop subject. To paraphrase Elliot J. (2000), when practical problems arise, the priority is to act quickly to solve them; facing a practical problem involves a calculated risk of making a mistake. There is no separation between research and practice; practice itself is the form of research, so research becomes a reflective practice.

Diversity of teaching strategies for reading and writing

Pineda (2004) mentioned that teaching should not be limited to writing techniques but should also include a critical and reflective approach. He stated that in the objective of a written text, the first step is the selection of the topic, followed by the writer's research and information gathering on the topic to be addressed to support the arguments as fundamental elements of a general and specific idea. In the process, the problem is presented, the arguments are selected, the thesis and antithesis are proposed, and on the basis of the arguments, a conclusion is reached, following the dialectical method. The author must use real data derived from reliable sources of information to achieve a substantiated interpretation; they can also use narration, demonstration, review, refutation, or exordium.

Rebolledo (2002) presents an analysis of the Reading and Writing Workshop II course in high school, focusing his study on El Colegio de Bachilleres. He begins with a description of the school and its situational context, the course's place in the curriculum, the expected learning outcomes, and the desired competencies and skills.

He proposes a lesson plan on the topic of journalistic genres, suggesting the writing structures used in his class, among which the following stand out: introduction, development, and conclusion, which are based on questions such as what, how, when, where and why. In addition, it proposes diagnostic assessment tools for identifying different types of text, such as infographics, questionnaires, columns, and texts for reading comprehension; spelling exercises, punctuation and accentuation with their respective rules; argumentative discourse; literary genres; oral expression; and caricature, among others. The planning proposal, in accordance with the official program, sets out the topic, the learning objectives, and the teaching and learning activities for the beginning, middle, and end of the class (Rebolledo, 2002).

Nájera (2001) suggested explanatory-illustrative, problem-posing, heuristic, and investigative teaching strategies and methods. He also proposes the use of different types of classes, which include the acquisition of new knowledge; the development of skills and competencies; and the systematization and control of knowledge, skills, and habits.

He classifies learning strategies as memorization; meaningful; recall; factual information; conceptual information; retrieval, elaboration, and communication of information; reading comprehension; applied problems; use of semantic networks; concept maps; development of exploratory questions and questionnaires; and different types of reading comprehension (e.g., study, consultation, research, selective, critical, dynamic or rapid, recreational, informative, word searches, crossword puzzles, stories, comics, among others). It also includes an expository presentation of newspapers, magazines, advertisements, news articles, and all journalistic genres (Nájera, 2001). Regarding the presentation of the course content, González L, C., 2009 suggested that during the teaching process, students be provided with an anthology of argumentative texts in ascending order of complexity to exercise reading comprehension and thus train students in writing bibliographic records and study guides for the readings.

Moreover, González A, M., 2009 proposed that there are two modules in the allocation of class hours to the subject, since the extension of time favors workshop-style work, thus allowing time for reading texts and their subsequent analysis, thesis presentation, and group discussions. The study presents the contents of the Reading, Writing, and Documentary Research Initiation Workshop course taught over four semesters at the College of Sciences and Humanities (CCH) of the UNAM.

Regarding the role of the teacher as a mediator (collaborative learning), he recounts how he applied the activities from the moment he described them to his students (specific cases of expository, philosophical, journalistic, and argumentative texts) and then describes the desired product, competencies, skills, procedures, knowledge, and attitudes to be evaluated; how the students began their work; and how they completed it for evaluation. He also cites teaching strategies and classroom activities developed alongside student learning actions. Finally, González (2009) refers to the results obtained and reflects on the teaching practices carried out.

From Colegio de Bachilleres, González (2009) analyzed his students and determined that the causes of school dropout depend more on situational context factors than on the academic evaluation of their subjects. These causes are economic, family-related, and academic situations resulting from insufficient basic education.

Linares U,M,. (1995), for his part, explains the curricular context in which the subject of Reading and Writing Workshop I is found. In a descriptive manner, he begins with the Colegio de Bachilleres, starting with its educational model, graduate profile, and teacher profile. then continues with the subject, setting out the objectives, expected learning outcomes, and the number of hours dedicated to it during the semester. The report details, in the author's teaching practice, the teaching strategies applied, suggestions, and assessment tools. It also suggests allocating class time, including scientific time, to a variety of texts.

With respect to the teaching proposal at CCH-Naucalpan, Quiñones (2026: 27-28) starts with entrance exams. In her practice in the Reading and Writing Workshop course, she works on implementing reading circles that promote understanding of the information in teamwork so that the independent reader will express their experience in front of the group. Finally, the expected product is a reading report. In another exercise, he also proposed the writing of five hypotheses derived from a given problem (2016: 53-74).

The Colegio de Bachilleres Camarena C, M., (1995:15) cites the contents of the Reading and Writing Workshop course in the first semester, which are the classification of text types, scientific texts, and documentary research, and in the second semester, which are journalistic and literary texts (narration, description, denotation, and connotation). As part of the research, Camarena C, M, (1995: 16) presents a report on the situational context of his students.

In the strategies proposed for reading comprehension, Camarena C. M. (1995: 42-53) suggested that high school students develop the ability to identify the main and secondary ideas in a text. He proposes teaching students to identify writing patterns such as the location of time and space, the attribution of the information provided, the detection of ideas that are contrary, conflicting, or that mark a contrast in the content of the texts; ideas that answer the questions in the text; the detection of ideas that reveal cause-and-effect correlations; the creation of concept maps that summarize the main ideas; and the detection of hypotheses that are the answers to the questions raised by the problem posed in the text and that therefore lead to a thesis or position on the topic presented in the reading.

The study of Reynoso, M, R's thesis (2002: 31-45) is approached from the Colegio de Bachilleres in the Reading and Writing Workshop II course with two main topics, which are journalistic and literary texts. Among the proposals is the development of a communication plan for the subject, which proposes a teacher-student collaboration strategy and sets out the

teacher's instructions, the work plan and proposed activities, or the forms of communication in this educational partnership and, in general, all aspects that contribute to a positive social and academic relationship between both parties.

Similarly, Reynoso M, R. (2002) explained the composition, structure, and content that journalistic genres should have and presented exercises, readings, practices, and proposed questionnaires that contribute to the reading comprehension of this type of text. In the conclusions section of her thesis, the author explains that exercises are proposed for daily teaching practice in the Reading and Writing Workshop II course at the Colegio de Bachilleres.

The experiences and proposals presented lead us to consider a graduate profile for upper secondary students in relation to the development of skills, the acquisition of expected learning outcomes, and the ability for reflective and critical reading comprehension. This can be seen between the lines of the study plans and programs presented. Even though they are from different periods, states of the Mexican Republic, and subsystems of study, there are similarities between them and those currently (2025) applied in SABES, the College of Science and Technology Studies (CECYTE), and other upper secondary subsystems in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico. This argument is part of the basis for the Common Curriculum Framework that was implemented during the 2012-2018 six-year term, which sought to standardize the graduate profile competencies of upper secondary education (EMS) students.

Reading and Writing in the Sabes

The Guanajuato Ministry of Education (SEG), which is based on the 1996 Education Law, opened up the provision of educational services through newly created decentralized bodies such as the Advanced Baccalaureate and Higher Education System (SABES) and, in 2000, the Interactive and Distance University of the State of Guanajuato (UNIDEG). The system emerged as a decentralized public body of the State Public Administration, with legal personality and its own assets, sectorized to the SEG; it currently has nearly 50,000 students enrolled at both educational levels (SABES, 2024).

By 2024, it will offer upper secondary education for general high school students through a three-year (six-semester) semester-based system, where graduates will receive job training in addition to their high school diploma. It is part of the upper secondary education subsystem with state coverage and funding in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico, and has 263 educational centers.

It is a public upper secondary education institution created by the government of the State of Guanajuato, with wide coverage, operating mainly in rural and suburban populations. Its institutional program states on its official website (www.sabes.edu.mx) that high school is a space for reflection and guidance for students, with the aim of building ethical and moral behavior, that is, a place where problems are listened to with creativity and initiative, where students prepare themselves to play leading roles in the construction of their own life projects.

The Reading and Writing Workshop I course is part of the core curriculum of the General High School program. According to the SABES curriculum map, the learning unit corresponds to the first semester of high school as part of the 2018 high school curriculum. Students in the same grade take courses in algebra, ecology, research methodology, logical thinking, research and communication technologies, and physical education.

The study period lasted nineteen weeks from August to December, with four fifty-minute modules per week. It is assessed with three midterm exams with a maximum score of 30. The minimum passing score is 18. Students who fail the first opportunity to retake the exam will have a second and third opportunity. If they do not pass the subject, they will be academically dismissed.

The general objectives of the course are as follows:

1. For students, they must acquire and apply communication skills that allow them to function adequately in various contexts.
2. Through comprehension strategies, students develop skills that allow them to communicate what they have understood orally and in writing.

General objectives of the first midterm exam

Students improve their writing skills and develop the ability to organize and relate words and sentences. They must be able to write correctly structured texts; analyze the processes of language and thought development, as well as the elements that comprise them, emphasizing the relationship between both processes. They should be able to write texts with appropriate syntax, logical ideas, and coherence between what they think, feel, and write.

General objectives of the second midterm exam

Students develop skills aimed at reading comprehension of the content of a text via attention, memory, analysis, and synthesis.

General objectives of the third midterm exam

High school students develop deductive thinking skills, which allow them to learn and apply useful rules to improve their cognitive abilities, as well as their intellectual performance in general. They solve the problem posed by analyzing it, extracting relevant data, verifying data, formulating hypotheses, testing hypotheses, and drawing conclusions.

Proposed specific objectives of the study

The proposed objectives are aimed at developing communication skills in upper secondary school students.

- a) The application of different reading and writing strategies to strengthen synthesis, reading comprehension, and writing skills will lead to meaningful learning during the teaching-learning process for students, both in this and other subjects.
- b) Write clear narrative; descriptive, expository, and argumentative texts; summaries; critical evaluations; and various types of commentary, paying attention to the stages of writing, specific styles, and grammatical aspects studied.
- c) Structure writing uses the various grammatical aspects necessary for writing texts on the basis of the characteristics of each genre analyzed.
- d) Oral techniques should be applied appropriately in the expression of different types of discourse.

At the beginning of semester planning, the subject teacher must consider the time available to teach the course, including the number of hours per week, the start and end dates of the course, the content to be taught, the expected learning outcomes, the skills and abilities to be developed, and other factors that influence the initial outlook for any class. They should consider the educational goals to be achieved in their semester's work, and the ideal way to capture this goal is through a format. In this case, the formats established by SABES were used.

The semester planning format includes, in the first section, the identification and location details of the subject and the teacher; the second section sets out the general educational objectives of the course and a brief description of the situational context of the group and the educational institution; the following section describes the characteristics of the students from the perspective of the instructor's diagnostic assessment, describing study habits and learning styles; the next section sets out the form and criteria for assessment; the document then sets out the curricular elements of the subject, which are the educational objectives, generic and disciplinary competencies, and the curricular location of the subject; and finally, the final breakdown presents the distribution of activities with general and specific content, scheduled dates, and necessary teaching resources.

CONCLUSIONS

After the subject was placed in its official curricular context, a detailed analysis of topics, content, expected learning outcomes, skills, abilities, desired products, and, in general, everything related to teaching the subject was performed. Daily practice led to a particular exercise of the program, that is, an operational curriculum was applied each school year, in which new teaching interventions were applied through a trial and error system during all class sessions of the semester. The proposals and modifications in the redesign of the official curriculum plans were the result of a process of operationalizing the curriculum that was refined during teaching practice. Thus, the content, teaching strategies, teacher interventions, expected learning outcomes, competencies, expected products, criteria, and assessment instruments were designed.

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