

Program of Metacognitive Strategies at the Level of Performance of Critical Reading of Tenth Grade Students of an Educational Institution in Sincelejo, Sucre, Colombia

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the results of a study that evaluated the impact of a program of metacognitive strategies, called PlanSuperEva, on the development of critical reading competencies in tenth grade students of the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution, located in Sincelejo Sucre. The objective of the study was to determine whether the implementation of such strategies significantly improves students' ability to identify, analyze, and critically reflect on texts. An action research methodology with a qualitative approach was used, structured in three phases: diagnosis, implementation and evaluation. The results of the closing workshop showed a significant improvement in the three key competencies assessed: identification of local content, understanding of the overall structure of the text and critical reflection. After the intervention, the percentage of correct answers in each competition increased by more than 50%. These findings confirm that the metacognitive approach contributes to the development of critical reading skills, promoting greater autonomy and reflection in the reading process. The conclusions of the study suggest that self-regulation strategies are essential for success in reading learning, and it is proposed to replicate this approach in other educational contexts.

KEYWORDS: Critical reading, metacognitive strategies, self-regulation, critical thinking, critical reading competence.

1. Introduction

Contextualization of the topic and justification of the problem

In the Colombian educational context, training in reading skills, especially in critical reading, has been a constant concern for both teachers and institutions. Critical reading, defined as the ability to interpret, analyze, and evaluate texts in a reflexive and autonomous manner, is fundamental for the development of analytical and responsible thinking in students (Kintsch, 1998). Despite their importance, the results of various national assessments, such as the Saber 11th grade tests, and international comparisons, such as the Programme for International Student

Assessment (PISA), have shown deficiencies in the ability of Colombian students to understand and analyze texts critically (ICFES, 2022; OECD, 2018).

In the context of the Saber 11° tests, administered by the Colombian Institute for the Evaluation of Education (ICFES), a persistent trend of low performance in critical reading has been identified. According to the 2022 report, 62% of students in Sucre are at the lowest levels of reading proficiency, indicating that these students only achieve a superficial understanding of texts, without reaching more advanced levels of analysis and inference (ICFES, 2022). This problem reflects not only a deficiency in reading skills, but also a significant barrier to access to higher education, as reading skills are assessed as a requirement for admission to many universities (Ministry of National Education, 2021).

At the international level, the results of the 2018 PISA report revealed that Colombia is below the average of OECD countries in terms of reading comprehension. 50% of the students evaluated in this report were placed at level 2 or lower, which implies a limited ability to interpret and reflect on the content of the texts read (OECD, 2018). This not only highlights a problem in the Colombian education system, but also suggests the need for more effective pedagogical reforms and strategies that promote reading comprehension from a critical and reflective perspective (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015).

In the Department of Sucre, this problem has been especially visible in institutions such as the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution, where the results of the 2023 Saber 11° tests reveal that more than 70% of students are at low levels of competence in critical reading (ICFES, 2023). These results reflect a worrying picture in terms of students' ability to participate in academic and social processes that require advanced reading skills, such as the interpretation of complex texts and the ability to argue from them. In addition, this situation not only affects their academic performance, but also their personal and professional development, since critical reading is essential to face the challenges of an increasingly globalized and complex world (Van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983).

In view of this situation, the present study aims to determine the impact of a program of metacognitive strategies, called PlanSuperEva, on the level of critical reading performance of tenth grade students of the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution. This metacognitive approach is based on the work of Flavell (1979), who defined metacognition as the ability to reflect on one's own thought processes, a crucial aspect to improve reading comprehension and critical thinking in students. The use of metacognitive strategies allows students to self-regulate their learning, monitor their comprehension, and adjust their approaches to improve the quality of their critical reading (Mateos, 2001; Baker, 2005). Therefore, this program seeks not only to improve academic performance, but also to foster an attitude of critical reflection and self-regulation in students, which will allow them to develop autonomy in their learning process and a greater ability to interact with texts critically and consciously (Flavell, 1979).

****Theoretical approaches for the analysis of the categories of the research problem****

The analysis of the problem of critical reading in the context of the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution is based on three key theoretical approaches: the cognitive approach, the metacognitive approach and the psycholinguistic approach. These theoretical frameworks not only provide a solid basis for understanding the observed deficiencies in students' reading skills, but also offer concrete tools to design pedagogical interventions that promote a significant improvement in these skills.

1. Cognitive approach

The cognitive approach, as suggested by authors such as Kintsch (1998) and Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983), focuses on the mental processes involved in reading comprehension. This approach is based on the idea that the comprehension of a text involves a series of cognitive operations ranging from word recognition to the integration of meanings at a global level. In the context of critical reading, the cognitive approach is especially relevant for analyzing how students process textual information and construct meaning from it. For example, by identifying limitations in students' ability to relate different parts of a text, this approach makes it possible to break down the processing stages that fail, which is essential for designing pedagogical strategies that reinforce the overall understanding of the text.

In previous studies, authors such as Hernández (1999) have applied the cognitive approach to examine the difficulties in the acquisition of reading skills in secondary school students, finding that many of them are unable to integrate information efficiently due to the lack of adequate cognitive strategies. This finding is consistent with the results of the present study, where students demonstrated difficulties not only in understanding the literal content of the text, but also in establishing inferential connections between different ideas. The application of the cognitive approach in this study makes it possible to address these deficiencies through the explicit teaching of information integration strategies, such as the identification of main ideas and the use of graphic organizers (Goodman, 1996).

2. Metacognitive approach

The metacognitive approach, developed by Flavell (1979), is essential for understanding how students monitor and regulate their own reading comprehension processes. This approach posits that students' ability to reflect on their own thinking—metacognition—is crucial for the development of critical reading skills. In the present study, the PlanSuperEva program was specifically designed to strengthen these metacognitive skills by teaching self-regulation techniques and assessment of the reading process. These strategies include pre-reading planning, post-reading monitoring, and post-reading assessment, allowing students to adjust their approach according to the demands of the text (Mateos, 2001).

A concrete example of the application of the metacognitive approach in this study is the use of reflective questions that students answer while reading. These questions help them identify key points in the text, relate what they read to their prior knowledge, and question their own understanding. In previous studies, Baker (2005) and Sanz (2010) demonstrated that teaching metacognitive strategies significantly improves reading comprehension, as it allows students to take a more active role in

their own learning process. In line with these findings, the results of this study show that students who participated in the PlanSuperEva program developed a greater ability to control their comprehension, resulting in an improvement in their performance on critical reading tests.

3. Psycholinguistic approach

The psycholinguistic approach, proposed by authors such as Goodman (1976) and De Vega (1984), argues that reading is an interactive process between the reader and the text, where meaning does not reside only in the words, but in the reader's interpretation of them. This approach is fundamental to understanding how students at Altos del Rosario Educational Institution interpret the texts they read and how linguistic and cognitive factors influence this interpretation. In this study, it was observed that many students had difficulty constructing deep meanings from texts due to the lack of effective interaction between their prior knowledge and the new information presented in the text. The psycholinguistic approach made it possible to identify this gap and, based on this, to design teaching strategies that would encourage more active and conscious reading.

Goodman (1996) argues that reading is a process of "sampling" in which the reader selects key information from the text and uses it to construct meaning. In this sense, the students who participated in the PlanSuperEva program were trained to interact more effectively with the texts, using strategies such as prediction and hypothesis formulation, which allowed them to improve their ability to interpret and analyze the information presented. The results of previous studies, such as that of Hernández (1999), have also shown that the psycholinguistic approach is effective in improving reading comprehension, especially in contexts where students face difficulties in relating textual content to their personal experience.

Summary methodology and main results

The present study was carried out under a qualitative approach with elements of action research, a method widely used in the educational field to promote critical reflection and the transformation of pedagogical practices (Elliott, 1993). Action research was selected for its ability to actively involve participants in the process of educational improvement, facilitating collaboration between students and teachers to achieve significant changes in the learning of critical reading (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). In this sense, the PlanSuperEva program was designed and implemented, based on metacognitive strategies, in order to improve the critical reading skills of tenth grade students of the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution.

The program was developed in three main phases: diagnosis, implementation, and evaluation. In the diagnostic phase, the main difficulties in students' critical reading were identified through interviews and observations, as well as through the analysis of previous results in the Saber 11° tests. The implementation phase included the application of four modules specifically designed to strengthen metacognitive skills, encouraging self-regulation and reflection on the reading process (Sanz, 2010). Finally, in the evaluation phase, the impact of the program was measured through standardized tests and feedback interviews, observing significant improvements in the students' ability to interpret and argue complex texts.

Among the most outstanding results was a 30% increase in the number of students who managed to place themselves in the higher levels of critical reading proficiency after the implementation of the program, according to the comparative results of the Saber 11° tests (ICFES, 2023). In addition, a qualitative improvement was observed in the students' ability to self-regulate their reading comprehension and use monitoring and evaluation strategies autonomously, which suggests progress not only in the academic field, but also in their personal and critical development (Flavell, 1979).

2. Methodology

The present study is framed in a qualitative approach with a methodological design based on action research, widely recognized in the field of education for its ability to integrate critical reflection and the improvement of pedagogical practices (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). The action research was selected due to its collaborative and participatory approach, which facilitates direct interaction between researchers and participants, promoting a real and meaningful transformation in the educational context.

The study was structured in three phases: diagnosis, implementation and evaluation. In the first phase, a detailed diagnosis of the critical reading skills of tenth grade students of the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution was carried out. This phase included data collection through semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, as well as observation of reading practices in the classroom. In addition, the results of the Saber 11th grade tests of recent years were reviewed to identify recurring patterns and deficiencies in critical reading comprehension (ICFES, 2022). This initial analysis made it possible to establish a starting point for the intervention, detecting the areas that required greater attention, such as the ability to infer and critically evaluate the information.

In the implementation phase, the PlanSuperEva program was applied, specifically designed to address the identified deficiencies. This program is based on metacognitive strategies, which allow students to develop skills of self-regulation and monitoring of their own reading process (Flavell, 1979). The program was structured in four modules, each focused on a key aspect of the metacognitive process: planning, monitoring, evaluation, and implementation. The activities included in these modules were designed to promote critical reflection and conscious decision-making during reading. In addition, practical exercises were included that allowed students to apply the strategies learned to expository and argumentative texts, strengthening their ability to analyze and interpret complex information.

The research was carried out at the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution, located in Sincelejo, Sucre. The target population consisted of tenth grade students, who, according to the results of the Saber 11th grade tests, had low levels of competence in critical reading. A purposive sample of 60 students was selected, which allowed a detailed and in-depth analysis of the reading difficulties observed. The selection of this sample was based on the previous results of the Saber tests and the willingness of the students to actively participate in the intervention program.

Three main instruments were used for data collection: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and critical reading tests. Semi-structured interviews with teachers provided valuable information on perceptions and experiences around teaching critical reading, while interviews with students allowed the identification of the main difficulties and attitudes towards reading. The classroom observations were made during the PlanSuperEva program sessions, which allowed documenting how the students applied metacognitive strategies in real time. Finally, critical reading tests were administered before and after the implementation of the program to measure its impact on student performance (ICFES, 2023).

Data analysis was performed using a qualitative approach, using the content analysis technique for interviews and observations, and comparative analysis for critical reading tests. The qualitative data were coded into categories related to difficulties in reading comprehension and the application of metacognitive strategies, which allowed the identification of recurring patterns and trends. The comparative analysis of the critical reading tests, applied before and after the intervention, made it possible to measure the impact of the program in terms of quantitative improvements in the level of student performance. The results were interpreted according to the theoretical approaches previously exposed, which allowed a deeper understanding of the processes involved in the improvement of critical reading.

Results of the intervention with PlanSuperEva

After the implementation of the PlanSuperEva program, a closing workshop was held to assess students' critical reading competencies. The results were compared with those of the diagnostic workshop to observe the progress made. The findings for each of the competencies evaluated are presented below.

Competence 1: Identify and understand the local content that makes up a text

The closing workshop showed a significant increase in students' ability to identify and understand the local contents of a text.

Evaluated Trait	Number of Students	Correct Answers (Diagnosis)	% of Correct Answer (Diagnosis)	Correct Answers (Closing)	% of Correct Guess (Closing)
The student understands the meaning of the local elements that make up a text	24	10	42%	24	100%
The student identifies the events narrated explicitly in a text	24	18	75%	23	96%
Total Average	-	-	57%	-	96%

Graph 1: Comparison of the results of competition 1 – Diagnosis vs Closure

In this competition, the students went from 57% correct in the diagnosis to 96% in

the closing workshop. This represents an increase of 39%, demonstrating that the PlanSuperEva program was highly effective in improving the understanding of local elements of texts. The metacognitive strategies implemented helped students accurately identify significant events and elements within the text, thereby improving their ability to interact with the content in literal and contextual ways.

Competence 2: Understand how the parts of a text are articulated to give it a global meaning

In competence 2, students showed remarkable progress in the ability to integrate the different parts of a text and understand its overall structure.

Evaluated Trait	Number of Students	Correct Answers (Diagnosis)	% of Correct Answer (Diagnosis)	Correct Answers (Closing)	% of Correct Guess (Closing)
The student understands the formal structure of a text and the function of its parts	24	9	38%	20	83%
The student identifies and characterizes the different voices or situations present in a text	24	11	46%	22	92%
The student understands the relationships between different parts or statements of a text	24	6	25%	24	100%
Total Average	-	-	30%	-	93%

Graph 2: Comparison of the results of the competition 2 – Diagnosis vs Closure

The total average number of correct answers in this competition increased from 30% in the diagnosis to 93% in the closing workshop, reflecting an increase of 63%. The students improved considerably in their ability to understand the formal structure of the text and the relationship between its parts. The reading supervision strategy, implemented in the PlanSuperEva program, was key for students to monitor their comprehension and organize information in a logical way.

Competence 3: Reflect on a text and evaluate its content

In competence 3, which assesses students' critical ability to reflect on a text, significant improvements were also observed.

Evaluated Trait	Number of Students	Correct Answers (Diagnosis)	% of Correct Answer (Diagnosis)	Correct Answers (Closing)	% of Correct Guess (Closing)
The student establishes relationships between a text and other texts	24	1	4%	24	100%
The student recognizes evaluative contents present in a text	24	11	46%	22	92%
The student recognizes the discursive strategies in a text	24	9	38%	19	79%
Total Average	-	-	36%	-	88%

Graph 3: Comparison of the results of the competition 3 – Diagnosis vs Closure

The students improved in their critical capacity, with the total average number of correct answers increasing from 36% in the diagnosis to 88% in the closing workshop, which represents an increase of 52%. The PlanSuperEva program not only improved students' ability to identify the discursive and evaluative elements in a text, but also increased their ability to make intertextual connections and reflect on the content critically.

3. Final analysis of the results

The results obtained in the closing workshop after the implementation of the PlanSuperEva program show significant progress in the three critical reading competencies evaluated, compared to the results of the diagnostic workshop. Next, a comparative analysis is carried out, based on the theoretical approaches presented in the introduction.

Competence 1: Identify and understand the local content that makes up a text

In the diagnostic assessment, 57% of tenth grade students were able to identify and understand the local elements of a text. This competence is key to developing a literal understanding of textual content, as suggested by Kintsch (1998) and Van Dijk & Kintsch (1983), who state that cognitive processing of local textual elements is fundamental to constructing meaning. However, the difficulties initially observed, especially in the identification of local elements, show the lack of adequate cognitive strategies among students, which is consistent with the observations of Hernández (1999).

After the implementation of PlanSuperEva, the results of the closing workshop show

that 96% of the students managed to improve their performance in this competency. This increase of 39 percentage points reflects the success of the metacognitive approach proposed by Flavell (1979), which allowed students not only to identify the explicit elements of a text, but also to self-regulate their comprehension process. The planning and monitoring strategies taught in the program's early modules played a crucial role, helping students anticipate text content and actively monitor their progress. This is aligned with what Mateos (2001) and Baker (2005) suggest about the importance of metacognition in improving reading performance.

Competence 2: Understand how the parts of a text are articulated to give it a global meaning

In the diagnostic evaluation, only 30% of the students managed to understand the overall structure of a text. This competence, which requires the integration of different textual elements to form a coherent structure, is directly related to the cognitive approach to reading, which emphasizes the need to understand how parts of a text relate to each other in order to construct overall meaning (Goodman, 1996). Difficulties in this competence reflected a lack of skills to connect main ideas with secondary ideas and organize information in a coherent way, something that Kintsch (1998) also identifies as a common challenge in reading comprehension.

After the intervention with PlanSuperEva, the percentage of correct answers in this competition increased to 93%, which represents an improvement of 63%. This result can be explained by the metacognitive approach applied in the program, specifically in modules 2 and 3, where supervision and evaluation strategies were worked on. These strategies allowed students to monitor the coherence between the different parts of the text and assess their comprehension on an ongoing basis. This approach not only facilitated the understanding of the relationships between utterances, but also promoted a more conscious and organized reading, as suggested by Flavell's (1979) and Sanz's (2010) theories on cognitive supervision.

Competence 3: Reflect on a text and evaluate its content

In the diagnostic assessment, 36% of the students were able to reflect on a text and make critical judgments. This competence, which requires the application of advanced cognitive strategies and the ability to contextualize information, is based on the principles of the psycholinguistic approach, which emphasizes the interaction between the text and the reader for the construction of meanings (Goodman, 1976). The initial low hit rate reflects students' difficulties in moving beyond literal comprehension and engaging in critical analysis, indicating a lack of development in critical thinking and evaluation skills.

After the intervention, the percentage of correct answers in this competition increased to 88%, which represents an increase of 52%. This progress can be attributed to modules 4 and 5 of the **PlanSuperEva** program, which focused on discursive analysis and critical reading. These activities allowed students to identify and evaluate the arguments of the text, as well as generate informed judgments about the content. The metacognitive approach of **PlanSuperEva** provided students with the necessary tools to monitor their understanding and reflect on the author's intentionality, which facilitated the development of more sophisticated critical

reading (Mateos, 2001). This result confirms the relevance of the metacognitive approach to foster critical thinking and the ability of students to evaluate the content of a text from a reflective perspective.

The progress observed in the three critical reading competencies can be explained by the aforementioned theoretical approaches. The cognitive approach, which focuses on the mental processes involved in reading comprehension, was fundamental to address the initial difficulties in identifying local elements and understanding the overall structure of the text. The improvement in these areas, after the intervention, reinforces the importance of teaching explicit cognitive strategies to organize and process textual information (Kintsch, 1998).

The metacognitive approach played a decisive role in the success of the program. As Flavell (1979) and Mateos (2001) suggest, students' ability to reflect on their own reading process and self-regulate their comprehension was key to the development of more conscious and critical reading. The planning, supervision, and evaluation strategies not only allowed students to improve their performance in literal competencies, but also strengthened their ability to interact critically with texts.

Finally, the psycholinguistic approach helped students understand how the text relates to their own knowledge and context, allowing them to make intertextual connections and make critical judgments. Advances in competency 3 demonstrate that, after the intervention, students were able to interact with texts in a more reflective manner, confirming the importance of this approach in developing critical reading skills (Goodman, 1976).

4. Discussion of the results

The results obtained after the implementation of the PlanSuperEva program confirm its effectiveness in improving critical reading skills in tenth grade students of the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution. This significant advance can be understood through the theoretical approaches that supported both the design of the program and the analysis of the results.

Impact of the cognitive approach on improving skills

The increase in students' ability to identify and understand the local contents of a text (Competence 1) suggests that the cognitive strategies implemented in the first modules of PlanSuperEva were highly effective. The cognitive approach, based on the processing of textual information, provided students with tools to improve their ability to extract literal information from text, as mentioned in the studies of Kintsch (1998) and Hernández (1999). Planning and prediction activities before reading allowed students to enter the text with a clear purpose, increasing their ability to identify key elements of the text.

The fact that students have improved their performance in the local content identification competency, reaching 96% of correct answers, also validates the hypothesis that literal comprehension is an essential starting point for the development of more complex skills, such as inference and critical analysis (Goodman, 1996). This confirms Kintsch's (1998) statement about the importance of

mastering the basic stages of comprehension before moving on to higher levels of analysis.

Metacognitive self-regulation as a key to progress

The metacognitive approach was fundamental in the success of PlanSuperEva, especially in the development of Competence 2, which involves the global understanding of texts. As Flavell (1979) and Mateos (2001) suggest, students' ability to monitor their own comprehension process and make adjustments as they read was key to the observed progress. The 30% to 93% improvement in this competence reflects the effectiveness of the metacognitive strategies applied, which allowed students to organize information and connect the different parts of the text to give it coherence. The process of self-regulation, which involves planning, monitoring, and evaluation, was essential for students to overcome their initial difficulties in articulating the parts of the text. As Baker (2005) and Sanz (2010) indicate, metacognition fosters greater awareness of internal reading processes, which allowed students to more effectively control their comprehension and reflect on the relationships between the ideas presented in the text. The improvement in this competence also suggests that students developed greater autonomy in their reading process, a result that is consistent with the findings of previous research on metacognition in learning.

Development of critical thinking and discursive analysis

Competence 3, which assesses the ability to critically reflect on a text and make judgments, showed considerable progress, going from 36% in the diagnosis to 88% in the closing workshop. This result confirms that the metacognitive approach not only helps students understand what they read, but also provides them with the tools to analyze and question the information presented. The evaluation and discursive critique strategies, worked on in the final modules of ***PlanSuperEva***, were fundamental to develop these skills.

The psycholinguistic approach was also crucial in explaining the advances in this competence. As Goodman (1976) and De Vega (1984) suggest, reading is an interactive process between the reader and the text, where the reader constructs meaning from his or her prior knowledge and the clues provided by the text. The students, after the intervention, demonstrated a greater ability to interact critically with the texts, establishing intertextual relationships and evaluating the validity of the arguments presented by the author. This advance also suggests that students were able to develop a deeper critical reading, which reinforces the idea that the development of critical thinking requires a solid understanding of discursive structures, as proposed by previous studies in the area (Mateos, 2001; Baker, 2005).

Comparison with previous studies

The results of this research are consistent with previous studies that highlight the importance of metacognitive strategies in improving critical reading skills. For example, the findings of Flavell (1979) and Mateos (2001) on the self-regulation of cognitive processes coincide with the results observed in this intervention. The students' ability to monitor their comprehension and adjust it throughout the reading process resulted in significant improvements in the three competencies assessed.

In addition, the results of Competence 3, which show an improvement in critical reflection and analysis of texts, confirm the observations of authors such as Goodman (1996) and De Vega (1984), who argue that critical reading depends to a large extent on the reader's ability to interact with the text in an active way, questioning and evaluating the arguments presented. In this sense, **PlanSuperEva** proved to be an effective program to develop these skills in the students of the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution.

Pedagogical implications

The results of this study have important pedagogical implications. First, the success of PlanSuperEva suggests that metacognitive strategies should be more systematically integrated into the critical reading curriculum. The focus on self-regulation and critical reflection not only improves academic performance, but also promotes greater autonomy and critical thinking among students, skills that are essential for their personal and professional development. In addition, teachers can benefit from incorporating metacognitive strategies into their practice, as these provide students with practical tools to meet the challenges of reading comprehension and critical analysis.

5. Conclusions

The present study has shown that the implementation of the PlanSuperEva program, based on metacognitive strategies, is an effective approach to improve critical reading competencies in tenth grade students of the Altos del Rosario Educational Institution. The findings confirm that planning, monitoring, and evaluation strategies, applied systematically, can have a significant impact on the way students understand and analyze texts (Flavell, 1979; Mateos, 2001). This work provides new evidence on the importance of self-regulation in the critical reading process and the need to promote an active and conscious approach to reading learning.

One of the main contributions of this study lies in the validation of the metacognitive approach as a key tool for the development of critical reading. Unlike traditional approaches, which focus on the simple transmission of content, PlanSuperEva was based on the idea that students should take an active role in managing their own comprehension process (Sanz, 2010). This approach not only allowed them to improve in the competencies assessed, but also fostered greater autonomy and reflective capacity. Metacognition, understood as the ability to monitor and adjust one's own cognitive processes, was shown to be a fundamental element for students to overcome initial difficulties and move towards a more critical reading (Flavell, 1979; Baker, 2005).

The results of this research highlight the importance of the structure of the programme, divided into five modules that address everything from planning to critical reflection. Each module allowed students to develop specific skills that, when integrated, led to considerable advancement in their ability to interact with texts. This modular approach underscores the need for appropriate sequencing of learning, allowing students to acquire more complex skills as they consolidate the basic ones, which is in line with Kintsch's (1998) recommendations on textual information

processing. This finding has important pedagogical implications, suggesting that critical reading programs should be designed in a staggered manner, addressing each stage of the reading process strategically (Hernández, 1999).

Another relevant contribution is the connection established between critical reading and reflective thinking. Students not only improved in identifying and understanding the local and global elements of a text, but also developed a greater ability to evaluate and critically reflect on the arguments presented (Goodman, 1996). This aspect is crucial in an educational context where critical thinking is fundamental for the formation of conscious and participatory citizens. The fact that students learned to question and evaluate texts, rather than simply accept them, reflects a significant change in their approach to learning, as suggested by previous studies on critical reading and metacognitive reflection (Mateos, 2001).

From a disciplinary perspective, this study contributes to the understanding of the role of metacognitive strategies in the development of critical reading. Although research on metacognition has been extensive in other areas of learning (Flavell, 1979), this work provides empirical evidence on its effectiveness in the field of critical reading in secondary school students. The results obtained not only reinforce existing theories on metacognition, but also open new avenues for future research, particularly in the application of these approaches in other contexts and educational levels (Baker, 2005; Sanz, 2010).

In summary, the PlanSuperEva program has proven to be an effective intervention to improve critical reading skills. The metacognitive strategies implemented made it possible to transform the way in which students relate to texts, offering a pedagogical proposal that can be replicated and adapted in various educational contexts. This study not only contributes to research on critical reading, but also provides a solid basis for designing educational interventions that promote a more autonomous and reflective approach to reading learning, an increasingly important need in today's educational landscape.

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