

Strengthening communication skills: reading and writing through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs with fifth-grade students

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Abstract

The strengthening of communication skills allows us to function in daily life. Therefore, the objective of this research was to strengthen reading and writing skills, through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs, with fifth-grade students. Methodologically, the study was framed in the critical paradigm, under the qualitative approach, with the pedagogical action research method, energized in three phases: deconstruction, reconstruction, and evaluation of the reconstructed practice. 33 students made up the work unit. The instruments were: a questionnaire addressed to teachers and an observation log. The results of the diagnosis evidenced the difficulty of the students in the development of the aforementioned skills. With the implementation of the workshops, they expanded their vocabulary, expressing themselves with solid arguments and writing pertinent summaries. This allows us to conclude that traditional Vallenato songs strengthened communication skills; in addition, the students were able to interpret the message that the composer embodied in the songs.

Keywords: communicative competence; reading; writing; popular song; ability.



An article resulting from the research entitled: 'Strengthening communication skills: reading and writing through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs with fifth-grade students', developed from March 8, 2021, to September 30, 2021, in Valledupar municipality, Cesar, Colombia

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Fortalecimiento de las habilidades comunicativas: leer y escribir, mediante el análisis de canciones vallenatas tradicionales con estudiantes del grado quinto

Resumen

El fortalecimiento de las habilidades comunicativas permite desenvolverse diariamente, por ello, el objetivo de esta investigación fue fortalecer las habilidades comunicativas: leer y escribir, mediante el análisis de canciones vallenatas tradicionales con estudiantes del grado quinto. Metodológicamente se enmarcó en el paradigma crítico, bajo el enfoque cualitativo, con el método investigación acción pedagógica, dinamizada en tres fases: deconstrucción, reconstrucción y evaluación de la práctica reconstruida. La unidad de trabajo fue 33 estudiantes. Los instrumentos utilizados fueron un cuestionario dirigido a docentes y una bitácora de observación. Los resultados del diagnóstico evidenciaron la dificultad de los estudiantes para el desarrollo de las habilidades comunicativas: leer y escribir. Con la implementación de los talleres, los estudiantes ampliaron el vocabulario, expresándose con argumentos sólidos y redactaron síntesis pertinentes. Se concluyó que, las canciones vallenatas tradicionales fortalecieron las habilidades comunicativas de los estudiantes, además, interpretaron el mensaje que el compositor plasmó en las canciones.

Palabras clave: competencia comunicativa; lectura; escritura; canto popular; habilidad.

Fortalecimento das habilidades de comunicação: leitura e escrita por meio da análise de canções tradicionais vallenatas com alunos da quinta série

Resumo

O fortalecimento das habilidades de comunicação permite funcionar na vida diária; portanto, o objetivo desta pesquisa foi fortalecer as habilidades de leitura e escrita, por meio da análise de canções tradicionais vallenatas, com alunos da quinta série. Metodologicamente, o estudo foi enquadrado no paradigma crítico, sob a abordagem qualitativa, com o método de pesquisa-ação pedagógica, dinamizado em três fases: desconstrução, reconstrução e avaliação da prática reconstruída. A unidade de trabalho foi de 33 alunos. Os instrumentos foram: um questionário dirigido aos professores e um diário de observação. Os resultados do diagnóstico evidenciaram a dificuldade dos alunos no desenvolvimento das habilidades supracitadas. Com a implementação das oficinas, eles ampliaram seu vocabulário, expressando-se com argumentos sólidos e escrevendo resumos pertinentes. Isso permite concluir que as canções tradicionais vallenatas fortaleceram as habilidades de comunicação; além disso, os alunos puderam interpretar a mensagem que o compositor incorporou nas canções.

Palavras-chave: competência comunicativa; leitura; escrita; música popular; habilidade.

1. Introduction

According to Pérez and La Cruz (2014):

Educating students in the formal learning of the written language and significantly favoring the development of oral expression is one of the tasks that teachers face throughout their professional career [...], especially in the first grades of primary education. It is pertinent to emphasize, as stated by González (2008), that the acquisition of these practices is necessary, being considered essential for the acquisition of knowledge and the development of certain skills in the various subjects of the curriculum.

In this regard, UNESCO (2005) asserts in one of its reports: learning to read and write is an essential means of mastering other subjects and is one of the best instruments for formulating forecasts of long-term learning outcomes. Reading should be an important area when it comes to focusing efforts on improving the quality of basic education. (p. 2)

One of the main problems that arise in the different educational contexts of the municipality of Valledupar is the difficulty in communication skills: reading and writing. According to the ICFES national report (Saber 3rd, 5th, and 9th 2012-2017), in 2017, the results found in the language area show the shortcomings of students to achieve a global understanding of the texts. This problem persists in the municipality, and it is evident in the direct observations made to the fifth-grade students of the Bello Horizonte Educational Institution, Villa Yaneth de Valledupar, Cesar.

Through some observations made to these students on the communicative skills of reading and writing, the difficulty in expressing their feelings and emotions was evidenced, since they have a very limited vocabulary, given the little reading habit. Little analysis is also observed, and little ability to summarize, order, formulate hypotheses, create, and issue opinions. Their biggest obstacle is in textual production, among other situations, which prevents them from performing well when reading texts in all areas of knowledge, which has multiple negative consequences on their academic performance.

Something necessary in this institution is to distort the paradigm that only the Spanish Language teacher is in charge of guiding the reading and writing processes, specifically in the first grades (basic primary). After so many attempts, proposals, and investigations, it is clear that the responsibility for the student to acquire the necessary skills to understand texts belongs to all teachers, without determining a specific area. This situation is notorious when a student who has difficulties in this process also presents deficiencies in all areas of knowledge, because the language they use, whether oral or written, must be interpreted by other students. This has generated a change of conception in the face of this situation, where all the actors in charge of the training process have direct responsibilities when addressing this difficulty.

Taking into account the above and recognizing the importance of improving these difficulties, it became necessary to propose a proposal that, in a certain way, would help to strengthen the communicative skills of reading and writing, through the analysis of vallenato songs with fifth-grade students from the Villa Yaneth headquarters of the Bello Horizonte Educational Institution in Valledupar, Cesar.

For this reason, the following main question was raised: How can the communicative skills of reading and writing be strengthened through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs in fifth-grade students, morning shift, of the Bello Horizonte Educational Institution, Villa Yaneth campus, from Valledupar, Cesar?

To resolve this question, the following general objective was proposed: Strengthen the communicative skills of reading and writing through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs in fifth-grade students. To make this objective workable, the following specific objectives were elaborated: 1) Diagnose weaknesses in the communication skills of reading and writing in students; 2) Design workshops to strengthen the communication skills of reading and writing, through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs; 3) Implement reading and writing workshops through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs; 4) Evaluate the application of reading and writing workshops through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs.

The research is justified because the communicative skills of reading and writing are the fundamental essence of the human being, which sizes and redefines the reality of which it is part and is committed to transforming. These abilities must be considered, not as an accessory element of school tasks, but as the cognitive mechanism that propels the construction of knowledge and its procedure within society.

In this context, the communicative skills of reading and writing should be strengthened in fifth-grade students, through the analysis of vallenato songs. This, more than an interest in optimizing interpretive processes, is a challenge that initially requires awareness of how essential it is to work from one's own, from one's culture, understanding that one becomes part of it and that, in addition to allowing an identity rescue facilitates improving reading comprehension processes, which obviously can be easier if we work with written texts that use typical terms and realities of a known culture.

Reading and written production are relevant to education, to the point that the greatest efforts of the Ministry of National Education and public and private educational entities emphasize reflection, discussion, and execution of plans, projects, and programs leading to reduce difficulties in this area, and the Bello Horizonte Educational Institution, Villa Yaneth de Valledupar, Cesar, is no exception concerning the problems outlined in the document.

Therefore, the contents of the vallenatos songs are useful for fifth-grade students, in the challenge of articulating, improving, and promoting the communicative skills of reading and writing, focused on the relationship between the content of the songs and the grammatical categories, text structures, and reading comprehension. In this way, it is possible to improve their capacity for analysis, interpretation, and understanding, to the point of allowing them to expand their vocabulary and play a role in the context, consistent with the demands of society.

In the social imaginary of this educational community, cultural expressions such as traditional Vallenato songs are necessary because they permeate the communicative heritage in a certain way. The ancestral traditions appear in daily life and, from the memory of the

people, oral and written forms emerge as a vital product that gives new meanings to the reality of the classroom and the social environment of the students.

Development and application of the project to strengthen the communication skills of reading and writing with fifth-grade students are important for Universidad Mariana because its team of teachers contributes to promoting the processes of reading comprehension, creating spaces for discussion, reflection, and production of reading and writing, articulated to the contents of traditional Vallenato songs that are part of the culture of the students and, therefore, arouse their interest in their contents.

Based on the above, it was pertinent to review previous works that included the categories of the study; thus, Guerra et al. (2019), whose research was based on positivist thinking, with a quantitative approach and quasi-experimental design, showed that the pedagogical mediation applied to the group under investigation made it possible to reduce distracting elements in classes, increase interest in learning, and academic performance. These authors affirm that playful musical strategies offer important changes in university learning.

The contribution of this study is related to the importance of inserting music and, especially, vallenato in the educational context, because it represents a fundamental role in the student, which allows fast, relaxed, and safe learning, due to the influence that exerts the cultural milieu concerning music; therefore, it is definitive in the desire to learn.

Durán's study (2019) stands out nationally; her objective was to build and apply a didactic proposal based on songs, rounds, and games, to stimulate the teaching-learning of social sciences. Methodologically, the research was framed in the qualitative paradigm and in the research-action design. For the collection of information, he used the techniques of direct observation, the field diary, non-structured or open interviews, and closed-ended questionnaires. The procedure was based on five stages; the sample consisted of 28 fifth-grade B students.

Results show that the students actively appropriated the knowledge since they showed

pleasure in carrying out the activities. Regarding the conclusions, songs, rounds, and games, they stimulated the teaching and learning of the social sciences, because, in their daily activities, they are taught that learning is easy and fun and that qualities such as creativity, desire, and interest to participate, respect for others, attend to and comply with rules, be valued by the group, act with more security and communicate better; that is to say, to express their thought without obstacles.

This research contributed to the present study regarding the need to use didactic strategies that motivate the teaching-learning process and the importance of inserting music for the development of communication skills in students.

On the other hand, in the international scope, the study by Sangama (2019) stands out and set out to understand the importance of developing children's communication skills from an early age, so that they can assertively express their ideas, thoughts, emotions, and, that they can start a conversation in any circumstance and context of their life. The methodology was a qualitative documentary type. The study concluded that socialization, through coexistence and play, contributes to the acquisition and full development of communication skills, since, through exchanges with their peers and with adults, children acquire new linguistic resources to the repertoire of the various responses of others, assimilating cognitive structures over the patterns of values, norms, and meanings recognized in their context.

This study contributed to the research, key elements to highlight the importance of developing communication skills in students since they allow them to rearrange their cognitive structures to understand more; likewise, it develops autonomous learning to be able to function with assertive language and effective communication.

Regarding the theories developed in the study, the ability was addressed. According to Portillo-Torres (2017), the ability is understood as:

A combination of knowledge of materials and processes with manual skills is required to carry out a productive activity. That is, the ability represents an individual property,

a physical and mental ability to perform a task in the work process [...]. Skill can only be demonstrated in performance (by doing something), while knowledge can be gained through more abstract means, such as conversation. Therefore, the skill is identified as practical or technical knowledge, the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical context. This way of understanding ability is close to the concept of competence. (p. 119)

For communication, according to Kaplún (as cited in Niño, 2012), if one delves into the level of interpersonal communication between two people, there are two ways of understanding: the first, if it occurs from the transmission of information of one person to another through a medium, in this case, we speak of one-way communication, which occurs exclusively from the perspective of the first interlocutor; therefore, the most correct form of speech is the monologue. The most appropriate verb to define this first conception is to communicate. The second, a little more generic, occurs with two-way communication, where reciprocity is shown between the participants, which is why the idea of dialogue appears, in which case the action is called communication.

Regarding communication skills, Monsalve et al., 2009 argue that,

These refer to the competence that a person has to express their ideas, feelings, needs, dreams, and desires through oral and written language. Also, the ability to understand the messages they receive through these codes. This didactic proposal is specifically oriented toward the development of the following communication skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. (p.193)

In this line of thought, according to Cassany et al. (2008, as cited in Monsalve et al., 2009):

Every user of a language must master these skills to communicate effectively in the various situations of daily life. Therefore, the school must develop methodological and didactic proposals to develop and enhance them from a communicative approach.

A language is a social act that contributes to shaping the cognitive structure of human beings, and this, in turn, through its schemes

and functions, influences communication, which is the result of the relationships that the individual establishes with the environment configuring itself in this way in a socially mediated process. Hence, communicative competence is configured as a complex act that implies a set of linguistic and sociolinguistic processes, which the human being must put into play to produce or understand speeches according to different situations and contexts, and to the degree of complexity according to the situation. (p. 193)

For Fernández et al. (2006), communication skills refer to:

The levels of competencies and skills that individuals acquire by systematizing certain actions through the experiences and education they obtain throughout their lives, allow them to perform and regulate communicative activity. (p. 2)

Therefore, it can be affirmed that communication skills are fostered through the communicative approach; so, it is necessary to look for activities that resemble the type of competencies that the student will have to develop in their life outside the classroom, which will be carried out among groups of students under the supervision of the teacher, in which the student has the possibility of using the language in class, in a real way and interact depending on their possibilities and abilities to exchange. In this exchange, their vocabulary or grammar will be implemented, in addition to the necessary strategies for communication, not only when listening or reading, but also when speaking or writing, integrating the four fundamental skills of the language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing; this interaction helps make communication more competent.

As a communicative skill, reading is the result of the interaction between a structure, the text, an action, and the reader's response. According to Greimas and Courtes (as cited in Sánchez, 2003), the act of reading or constructing the meaning of a text implies establishing a relationship between linguistic signs and their objects through a set of interpretants; the meaning is in reaching the semiotic process of interpretation. Thus, constructing the meaning of a text is, constructing the object of the discourse; then,

construction of the reader, due to their previous experience of the signs and their combination, will acquire a certain competence to interpret their reading.

Writing, as a communicative skill, runs into a lack of understanding that, in the pedagogical discourse, is related to writing, the semiotic function of language. It is in the school where the problems with lack of abstraction, analysis, and synthesis originate. From the semiotic perspective, writing is, according to Peirce (as cited in Murillo & Valle, 2015),

a constructive characteristic of the signs that leads to the construction of meanings and senses; this is how such an activity requires the subject to evaluate and review the knowledge acquired, forcing him to question ideas and seek other voices. Writing is essentially the morality of fame. (p. 12)

These characteristics give rise to a semiotic process, linked to writing in its relationship between expression and content, which is reflected in the discourse staged: why do I write, who do I write for, alluding to positions. Barthes (as cited in Murillo & Valle, 2015) notes that it is necessary to protect, monitor, censor, and cross out nonsense, sufficiencies (or insufficiencies), hesitations, and ignorance.

For Greimas and Courtes (as cited in Cely & Duque, 2009) writing is understood as: "the manifestation of a natural language with the help of a signifier, whose substance is of a visual and graphic (or pictographic) nature" (p. 121). In this sense, writing is the pragmatic-somatic process of graphic production that a subject, using various instruments, carries out on a matter in a specific social and individual situation, during a determined time, the result of which is a sequence of graphic inscriptions.

For Segura (2016) the written expression represents:

The highest level of linguistic learning, since it integrates experiences and learning related to all linguistic skills (listening, speaking, and reading) and puts into operation all the dimensions of the linguistic system (phonological, morph-syntactic, lexical-semantic, and pragmatics). Writing is a complex skill that requires the writer to have

the knowledge, basic skills, strategies, and the ability to coordinate multiple processes. (para. 6)

For this reason, Vallenata music in particular, and “musical sounds in the world [in general] become a motivating factor that permeates joy, given the value of euphonies in the mind of those who listen to it, provoking emotions that allow cognitive interrelationships, increasing sensitivity” (Guerra et al., 2019, p. 63). Blacking (as cited in Guerra et al., 2019) considers:

The destiny of music is to involve people in their own experiences and in their cultural references. This consideration suggests that music can generate an impact in the process of arguing and interpreting their manifestations or that of society, which facilitates a learning process. (p. 63)

Thiermann (n.d.) expresses that,

As a musical genre, Vallenato has allowed the recognition and preservation of the local oral tradition by serving as a historical reference for the region and a source of remembrance of customs, places, and characters associated with the Colombian Caribbean. In the community, traditional songs have taken root as an important source of memory and identity construction, generating cultural and social ties. From there also derives the importance of training processes and cultural entrepreneurship, which represents the livelihood of local musicians and luthiers. (para. 1)

2. Methodology

Current research is framed within the critical or socio-critical paradigm, which requires, on the part of the researcher, a constant “reflection-action, implying the researcher’s commitment from practice to assume change and liberation from oppressions that generate social transformation. This implies a process of participation and collaboration based on critical self-reflection in action” (Ricoy, 2006, pp. 17-18), placing itself then in a qualitative approach, because, according to González (as cited in Portilla et al., 2014), “it addresses the real as a cultural process, from a subjective perspective, with which it tries to understand and interpret

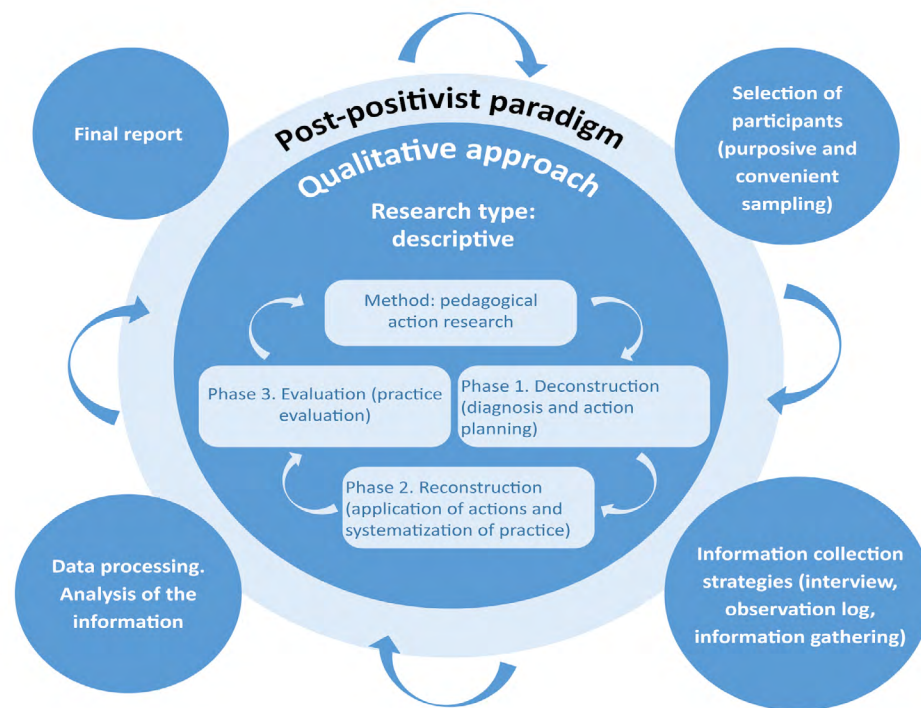
all human actions, experiences, and feelings, to create ways of being in the world of life” (p. 91)

The chosen method was action-research, following the explanation of Vargas (2009):

The Pedagogical Action Research method assumes practice as an object of study in itself, an object of analysis, reflection, and intervention, with ethical and professional responsibility. It is important to develop processes of this nature because they favor the rigorous analysis of what has been produced and involve a bibliographic search to extract from a theory, the applicable aspects of the problem situation in a contextual reality. Choosing the scenario that serves as a source of information and observation is key to the application of models, strategies, and instruments to be used in the guiding practice and in the area of interest, to improve the quality of care that, as professionals, they provide to populations in their different environments. (p. 164)

Following the guidelines of Restrepo (2002), the method is structured in three phases: deconstruction through diagnosis and planning of activities; reconstruction through the application of actions and systematization of the practice; and, evaluation of the practice (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Graphic representation of the methodological design



Source: adapted from Restrepo (2002)

The work unit consisted of 33 fifth-grade students -15 boys and 18 girls- ranging between 9 and 11 years old, by the type of selected sampling (non-probabilistic) of the intentional type and for convenience.

In this direction, the information collection strategies were designed according to the stages of pedagogical action research. For the first phase of diagnosis, a questionnaire was used and it was applied to teachers to know the student's reality. For the second phase of the investigation, the observation technique was used because, according to Díaz (2010), the researcher gets in personal contact with the fact or phenomenon that he/she tries to investigate and, later, orders it using systematization.

Martínez (2007) refers that the observation "are the written records of what is observed to produce quality descriptions" (p. 74). The instrument through which the descriptions of the application of the strategies were made was the observation log. Barrios et al. (2012) define it as follows:

Form of communication with the student in which he/she is involved as an active part of

his/her training process; it is easy to manage, complements face-to-face activities, favors teacher-student interaction, and provides support for evaluation and feedback activities. (p. 405)

For the third phase, Evaluation of the practice, a written test was used as an instrument, containing a vallenato song so that the students could analyze its content and freely express their ideas, thereby demonstrating the development of communication skills.

3. Results

This section collects the results of the intervention process carried out on the students, starting with the diagnosis, which demonstrated the presence of weaknesses in the communication skills of reading and writing. Said diagnosis was a questionnaire addressed to the teachers of the institution (see Table 1), where the highest score was 67.51%, located in the Never criterion; 20.94% was for the Sometimes criterion and 11.85% was Always. A relationship with the study problem was observed, highlighting that

the students presented difficulties in the development of communication skills, especially in reading and writing; therefore, they had weaknesses to express their ideas, feelings, needs, dreams, and desires, through oral and written language. In the same way, they showed difficulties to produce or understand speeches according to different situations and contexts and, with the degree of complexity, in line with the situation.

Table 1

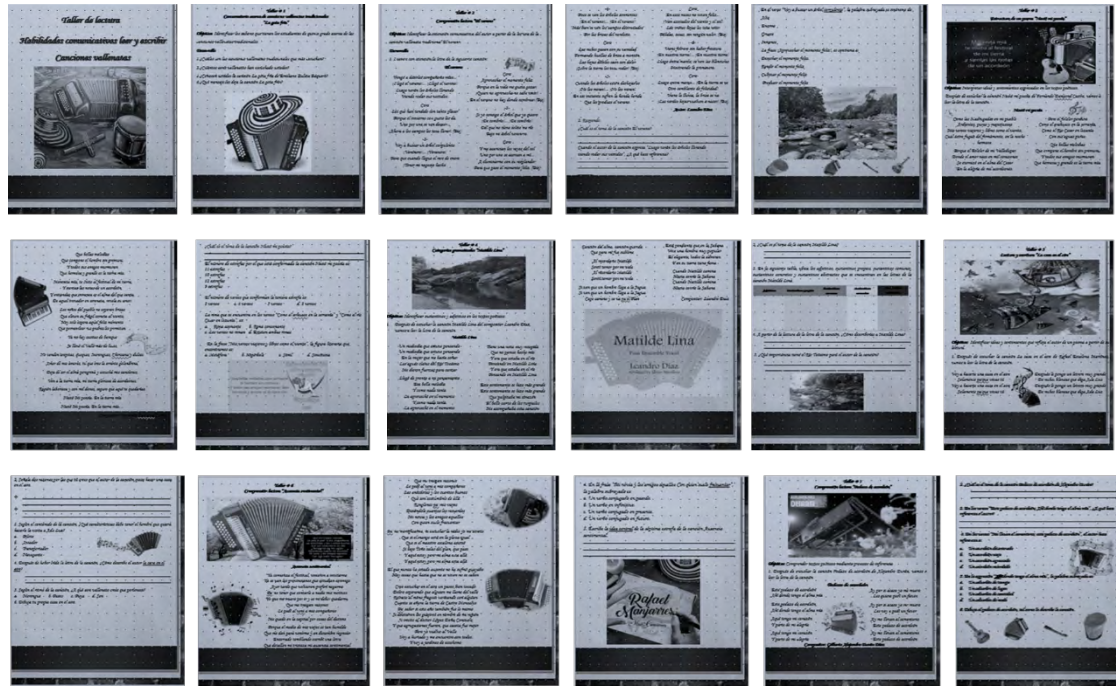
The questionnaire addressed to the students

N.	Students Items	Criteria		
		Always	Sometimes	Never
1	They make a brief summary of the study topics at the end	6,06	9,09	84,85
2	They basically translate content found in unusual language	3,03	18,18	78,79
3	They problematize the learning contents to generate concrete actions	6,06	12,12	81,82
4	They deconstruct and construct knowledge through the exchange of ideas in the classroom context	0	12,12	87,88
5	They develop topics with detail and accuracy, through analytical and explanatory procedures, as scenarios for understanding	6,06	21,21	72,73
6	They assess prior knowledge by asking essential questions orally	12,12	30,30	57,58
7	They graph the contents of a topic using a metaphor or story	6,06	15,15	78,79
8	They recap the central ideas about a topic	15,15	21,21	63,64
9	They illustrate complex topics through diagrams, concept maps, or mind maps	18,19	21,21	60,60
10	They connect theoretical approaches with situations of concrete facts of the real world	39,39	45,46	15,15
11	They establish connections between the abstract and the concrete through visual and/or audiovisual.	18,18	24,24	57,38
	Total	11,85	20,94	67,51

To respond to the objective referring to designing workshops to strengthen the communicative skills of reading and writing through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs, in the first instance, the results of the diagnosis were observed; secondly, the experts were called upon to guide the process of planning the workshops. According to Cassany et al. (2008), communication skills are important in all events of daily life and need to be strengthened; for this reason, the school must develop methodological and didactic proposals to promote them from a communicative approach. The workshops were designed based on this postulate.

Figure 2

Workshops to strengthen communication skills in reading and writing



Source: this research

For the development of the objective related to implementing reading and writing workshops through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs, seven workshops were carried out, beginning with a conversation about them; for example, *La gota fría*, carried out virtually through the Meet platform, to identify the previous knowledge of the students regarding the subject. The opening was made with the video of a Vallenato song sent by the mother of a student, in which her son played the accordion.

Subsequently, the following question was posed: What are the Vallenato songs that you listen to the most? The answers were varied: *La casa en el aire* by Rafael Escalona, *La gota fría* by Emilianito Zuleta, *Nació mi poesía* by Fernando Dangond, *El pedazo de acordeón* by Gilberto Alejandro Durán, *Matilde Lina* by Leandro Díaz, among others. Some argued that they are studying percussion at COMFACESAR and the first Vallenato songs they were taught were the traditional ones, which is why they know them and like to sing.

It should be noted that, for the study, students needed to know the songs they wanted to sing; this would make it easier to analyze and answer

the different questions aimed at strengthening the communicative skills of reading and writing because knowledge of the letter would be a motivating factor to learn and participate in the development of the project. It is also relevant to express that one of the weaknesses in the execution of the first workshop was the scarce vocabulary that the students had to express their opinions on the subject; but, despite this, their motivation and participation were achieved; therefore, the development of the workshop was pleasant and simple, in an atmosphere of spontaneity and trust.

Given these experiences and, taking into account the results of the first workshop, the researchers recognized that to overcome the barrier of low vocabulary, it was necessary to offer students in each socialization of the workshops, an environment of trust, emphasizing the unknown words, helping them to decode each term according to the context and its meaning so that they become familiar with the words and use them appropriately.

In the second workshop, the subject of reading comprehension was worked on; its field of action was to identify the author's communicative

intention from the reading of the vallenato song *El Verano*, by the composer Leandro Díaz. They listened to the song and read the lyrics on a television screen at the same time. The workshop took place in an atmosphere of joy and constant motivation.

Despite the motivation and sense of responsibility of the students to respond to the different activities that were proposed during the workshop, it was possible to appreciate their difficulty in understanding the lyrics of the song, a situation that led the researchers to reflect on the fact that they had to overcome the shyness of children so that they could share their opinions with their classmates. Faced with the lack of knowledge of some words, the researchers proposed to continue motivating them so that they would gain self-confidence and constantly use the dictionary.

In the third meeting, the workshop 'Structure of a poem' was developed, whose field of action was to interpret the ideas and feelings expressed in the poetic texts. The workshop was set with the song *Nació mi poesía* by Fernando Dangond Castro. Printed material with the lyrics of the song was distributed so that the students had the opportunity to read it while listening to it. Then, a brief biography of the author was projected on the television screen, so that the students could learn about his life and work.

The song aroused the curiosity of the students, who spontaneously requested to know more about the history of Valledupar: what it was like before, and how the people dressed, among other details. The achievements of the workshop were: the promotion of reading through the lyrics of the song and the author's biography, writing when analyzing and responding to the message that the song left them, and the structure of the poem when responding to the number of stanzas and verses, rhyme, and literary figures. It should be noted that, with each workshop, the motivation of the students increased, which made it possible to strengthen reading and writing through the lyrics of the songs, as well as the knowledge of the roots of their Vallenato culture. Despite the interest shown by the students, weaknesses were evident in writing and spelling, which allowed the reflection of the teachers to present new ideas to correct this weakness and strengthen, through reading and

writing workshops, the communication skills of reading and writing.

In the fourth meeting, the 'Grammatical Categories' workshop was held, for which the song *Matilde Lina* by the composer Leandro Díaz was used. Its field of action was to identify nouns and adjectives in poetic texts; it was set with Vallenato music instruments, and the video of the song with its respective lyrics was projected on the television so that students could read it to the rhythm of the music. Then, the biography of the author was projected, to learn a little about his life and his musical works. In addition, the lyrics of the song were read aloud; the students had to identify the nouns and adjectives present in the poetic text, to reinforce the classes of nouns and words that assign qualities. Afterward, they were asked to read again and answer the exercises that followed.

One of the most relevant aspects of the workshop was the motivation of the students when they were informed that another workshop was going to be held with the lyrics of the traditional Vallenato songs, which caught their attention and interest, showing the assertiveness of the strategy and generating the desire to acquire new knowledge in a different way than the traditional one. The cooperative work inside the institution was evident with the collaboration of the coordinator of the Villa Yaneth headquarters and the co-workers, helping with the technological and didactic tools, the decorative elements alluding to the music of the Valledupar culture, and the help to organize the classroom.

As an achievement of the day, the enthusiasm of the students to participate in the workshop stands out, by reading and analyzing the lyrics of the song, which allowed them to write a good concept to define the theme, find the nouns, adjectives, describe people and infer the importance for the author of some elements mentioned in the song. In the same way, the value of empathy between them was strengthened, to clarify the doubts that were arising. Some of the limitations were related to intermittent internet failures at the educational institution, which delayed the process on some occasions, a situation that was resolved because some co-workers collaborated by sharing their mobile phone data to continue with the proposed activity.

With the development of this workshop, the researchers reflected on their praxis, understanding the importance of cooperation and teamwork to implement innovative strategies in the educational process and thus achieve the effectiveness of pedagogical practice and meaningful learning.

The fifth meeting opened with the reading and writing workshop for the song *La casa en el aire*, whose field of action was to identify the ideas and feelings reflected by its composer, Rafael Calixto Escalona Martínez, from the reading correspondent. For this, the room was organized and decorated with representative elements of Vallenato folklore and the objective of the workshop was to socialize with the students. Next, a brief biography of the author was projected on television so that the students could learn about his life and work.

In the development of this activity, there was a delay in the application of the workshop, since the television in the computer room did not work, but it was resolved thanks to the collaboration of classmates from the high school area, who provided their equipment. As an outstanding achievement, the strengthening of the reading and writing of the students is appreciated, through the analysis of the song *La casa en el aire* and, the fact that they shared their concerns with their classmates, to improve their answers.

The sixth meeting gave way to the reading comprehension workshop through the song 'Sentimental absence'; its field of action was to identify the message left by a poetic text. For its execution, the hall was organized with representative elements of Vallenato folklore; the objective of the workshop was shared with the students, and the biography of the composer Rafael Enrique Manjarrez Mendoza was projected; the students listened and read his lyrics on the television. Then, the activity was delivered and the respective guidelines were given for them to read, analyze and respond to appropriately.

This motivation allowed the children to be attentive and ready to develop their activities. In addition, through the development of the workshop activities, they more easily identified the messages of the texts at the moment of

making the respective analysis. Also, it was evidenced that they strengthened their reading and writing and managed to express values with greater security.

It is necessary to point out that the day led to the reflection of the teachers, wondering why some students still had shortcomings in terms of the analysis of the Vallenato songs. This question allowed a brainstorming about what to do with them, concluding that it was necessary to carry out parallel reading activities to solve this difficulty and make them level with the rest of the group and end up analyzing the lyrics of the traditional Vallenato songs without any barrier that prevented the strengthening of their communication skills of reading and writing.

The last meeting was the reading comprehension workshop for the song *Pedazo de acordeón*, whose field of action was to understand poetic texts through inference processes. For this, the students were located keeping a distance; the classroom was decorated with representative elements of Vallenato folklore and the objective was socialized. Then, the biography of the composer Gilberto Alejandro Durán Díaz, better known as Alejo Durán, was screened so that the students could learn about his life and work.

In the end, children corrected their shortcomings through socialization. The presentation of a vallenato group made up of fifth-grade students who study music at the COMFACESAR School of Arts, led to advances in reading and writing, through the analysis of the lyrics of the songs, since it allowed them to improve their skills in all the areas of knowledge and their friendship ties with classmates, while awakening in them a sense of belonging to the elements of Vallenato culture. Most of them strengthened their communication skills to read and write and increased their motivation and interest in cooperating with their peers, which had an impact on their personal and cognitive growth, and their social values.

Although the workshops were relevant and with them it was possible to strengthen communication skills, there are still students who present weaknesses when analyzing texts. Given this reality, the researchers propose to continue applying strategies to correct and

strengthen these skills, using especially the traditional Vallenato songs, which were of great interest to them.

The evaluation of the application of the reading and writing workshops based on the analysis of vallenato songs was developed through a written test that contained the analysis of a vallenato song so that students could analyze it and shape their respective references. 90% of them managed to capture their ideas correctly and coherently, verifying the development of communicative skills in reading and writing.

It can be affirmed that students not only overcame shyness but also strengthened the ties of friendship and cooperation to solve difficulties. Likewise, motivation and interest in reading and writing were promoted. Students highlighted the importance of using the dictionary to find the meaning of unknown words, thus strengthening reading comprehension and the ability to write texts with clear and pertinent arguments.

The use of traditional Vallenato songs allowed us to identify the feelings of each of the composers, learn about their life and then understand the meaning of their writings, beginning to strengthen the communication skills of reading and writing, confirming that music is important to capture the interest and desire to learn from students, as well as the fact of valuing their culture and strengthening their cultural identity.

In addition, it was essential to detect the weaknesses found in some students to correctly carry out the activities assigned in the workshops, which led to the reflection of the researchers to attend to the particularities of each one of them, to level them, and thus guarantee their school success.

4. Discussion

For Hernández et al. (2014), the results constitute "the product of data analysis" (p. 343); therefore, the researchers compared, contrasted, and discussed the results and procedures, while recognizing the weaknesses and limitations, the strengths, and the contributions that the study provided to the problematic situation, framing the results within that context to, finally, draw conclusions and offer recommendations based on what was investigated.

Consequently, considering the results of the systematization and analysis of the data, taking the research question as its guiding principle, an initial diagnosis was made, a review of the literature and preliminary investigations around the subject, to proceed to design and apply workshops to strengthen communication skills related to reading and writing through the analysis of Vallenato songs.

In the first place, within the phase of deconstruction of the practice of the actions and by the method of pedagogical action research, the inquiry process was addressed through a diagnosis made to the teachers, to know the mastery of the fifth-grade students of the educational institution under study, with the purpose of identifying the situations that denoted the little development of the communicative skills of reading and writing. This allowed recognize the context in light of the theme and make inferences that enabled the researchers to direct the activities.

Results of the diagnosis confirmed what was stated in the referred problem: the weakness of students in the communicative skills of reading and writing, causing problems when expressing ideas orally and in writing, given the scarce vocabulary and low academic performance; this allowed the documentary investigation to carry out planning to overcome the weaknesses found.

The results of the diagnosis were similar to the previous study carried out by Guerra et al. (2019), who confirmed that pedagogical mediation made it possible to reduce distracting elements in classes, increase interest in learning, and increase academic performance. Equally, there was a similarity with the study by Álvarez et al. (2018), who recognize the importance of teaching to read comprehensive texts, different from those that have traditionally been used in schools; in this case, authentic texts of the Vallenato culture. In this way, the implementation of the didactic strategy based on the use of context elements allowed a better development of the teaching and learning process. With these similarities, it is pertinent to recommend to teachers reinforce the communication skills of reading and writing, to achieve significant learning in students.

Continuing with the first phase, the workshops were planned to respond to how to use the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs to strengthen communication skills related to reading and writing, thus fulfilling the objective of implementing reading and writing workshops through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs in fifth-grade students, through the approaches of cited authors.

For the fulfillment of the objective, the opinion of experts was used, to know their perceptions on the subject matter. Clarke and Winch (2006, as cited in Portillo-Torres, 2017) state that it is necessary to develop in students, skills that can only be "demonstrated in performance (doing something), while knowledge can be obtained by more abstract means, such as the conversation. Therefore, this ability is identified as practical or technical knowledge; the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical context" (p. 119). These arguments allowed starting the design of the workshops for students to learn by doing, listening, reading, speaking, and writing.

The music, another element taken for the design is, according to Díaz et al. (2014), an artistic expression that "can be used as a pedagogical resource that favors intellectual, motor, and language development in boys and girls, through the strengthening of cognitive processes such as memory, attention, perception, and motivation" (p. 102). For Caprav (2003, as cited in Díaz et al., 2014), "music is not only an artistic expression but also a pedagogical resource that can be used to promote the development of people" (p. 103) from childhood. The search to understand the sound of the world is part of the human essence, which shows music as a pedagogical resource that promotes the integral development of human beings (Díaz et al., 2014). These arguments of the theoretical experts allow recommending to the teachers, to clarify their ideas to propose strategies that improve the reading and writing processes of the students.

At the end of the planning of the workshops, the second phase of the methodological process was completed: the reconstruction of the practice, asking what strategies should be implemented to improve the reading and writing levels of fifth-grade students. To respond, the objective of establishing reading and writing workshops

through the analysis of traditional Vallenato songs was set.

This execution was carried out in seven workshops: the first was a conversation about traditional Vallenato songs, such as *La gota fría*. The results were great; students were motivated and encouraged by listening to the song, demonstrating their interest in learning, and developing an environment of spontaneity and trust, which is related to Blacking's approaches (as cited in Guerra et al., 2019), who considers that music has as destiny, to involve people in their own experiences and cultural references, which suggests that it can generate an impact in the process of arguing and interpreting their manifestations or those of society, facilitating the learning process.

The second workshop was reading comprehension through the vallenato *El verano*. The results showed that students understood the lyrics of the song, by writing the response paragraph and knowing new terms, to strengthen the communicative skills of reading and writing, which is in line with Galli et al. (2017), who express:

Communication skills are understood as a set of linguistic processes that are developed during life, to participate efficiently and skillfully in all spheres of communication and human society.

Speaking, listening, reading and writing are language skills. From them, they develop in culture and society, and through their development, they become communicatively competent. (p. 3)

Likewise, the results coincide with Rincón (2018):

Vallenato is described as a genre that has narrated in a poetic way, the stories of the Colombian Caribbean and that is, in the words of Santander Durán Escalona, in the heart of the old minstrels. Created in contact with the landscapes, with nature, the traditional vallenato lives with all its might in the towns of the Caribbean and constantly fights to expand its audience. (para. 1)

The third workshop was the structure of a poem with the Vallenato song *Nació mi poesía*. Through the lyrics of the song and the biography of the

author, students reinforced reading and writing, by analyzing and responding to the message that the song left them and, the structure of the poem, by responding to the number of stanzas and verses, the rhyme, and literary figures. It should be noted that, while they developed the workshops, the greater their motivation for reading and writing, while they were getting to know the roots of the Vallenato culture.

These results are related to the approaches of Greimas and Courtes (as cited in Sánchez, 2003), who expressed that the act of reading or constructing the meaning of a text, is to establish a relationship between linguistic signs and their objects using a set of interpretants; the meaning is to reach the semiotic process of interpretation. There is also a similarity with the approaches of Segura (2016), who stated that reading is essential in the development of human communication skills and competencies; as an intellectual achievement, it is an indispensable collective good in any economic and social context.

Similarly, the results are related to the approaches of Ariza (2006):

The lyrics of the Vallenato songs constitute a fundamental element to understanding the ethical systems of an entire region that, from the popular and the daily life, builds its poetic imaginaries based on customs and value systems [...] that, to a good extent, they are interpreted by a cultural subject who speaks on behalf of an entire community based on mental categories. (p. 2)

The fourth workshop addressed the grammatical categories through the song *Matilde Lina*, whose results were focused on the enthusiasm of the students when developing it, on reading and analyzing the lyrics of the song, writing the arguments of the theme, the facility to find the nouns, the adjectives to describe people and infer the importance that the author gave to some of the elements mentioned, and the mutual and spontaneous empathy to clarify, among them, the doubts that were arising.

These results are similar to the postulates of Solé (2010):

Reading [...] implies a new attitude towards knowledge, a new way of reading and

learning, in which the merely reproductive or the strictly interpretative, give way to an epistemic attitude in which the reader rationally searches for a plausible meaning for the text.

We can approach texts as different readers: as the reproductive reader, who seeks to say what the text says; or, like the critical reader, able to interpret it and think about what it understands. (p. 19)

The fifth workshop was the reading and writing with the song *La casa en el aire*, where the results showed that students strengthened reading and writing by analyzing it, as well as cooperative work, by sharing their concerns on the subject, to better write the answers.

These results are similar to what was stated by Greimas and Courtes (as cited in Sánchez, 2003) in that writing starts from the manifestation of a natural language with the help of a signifier, whose substance is visual and graphic or pictographic. In this sense, writing is the pragmatic-somatic process of graphic production that a subject, using various instruments, carries out on a matter in a specific social and individual situation, during a determined time, whose result is a sequence of graphic inscriptions.

The sixth workshop dealt with reading comprehension through the Vallenato song *Sentimental Absence*. The results indicate that the fifth-grade students could more easily identify the messages of the texts at the time of making the respective analysis. It was also evidenced that they strengthened their reading, writing, their values and, they managed to express themselves with greater confidence. These achievements are related to what Ong (1999, as cited in Ocampo & De Castro, 2013) stated:

Without writing, thought [...] would not have weight and could not think how it does, not only when it is busy writing, but even [...] when it articulates its thoughts orally. More than any other single intervention, writing has transformed human consciousness. (p. 25)

The foregoing is also related to what Solé (2010) expressed: "a reproductive reading will have as its product, the oral recapitulation or

written paraphrase, more or less mimetic of the text read (in response to literal questions, in summary, or even in comment)” (p. 19).

The last workshop was related to reading comprehension through the Vallenato song *Pedazo de acordeón*. The results showed that, in most of the students, it was possible to strengthen the communication skills of reading and writing, generate motivation and interest them to cooperate with their classmates, a fact that was relevant since it favored their personal and cognitive growth.

These results are similar to the approach of Segura (2016):

Reading is essential in the development of human communication skills and competencies. As an intellectual achievement, it is an indispensable collective good in any economic and social context. As a cognitive function, it allows access to technological, scientific, and information advances. It gives the possibility to recreate and better understand reality. Reading is, being able to critically dialogue with the text, take a position in front of it, and value it by integrating it into one’s mental world. (para. 4)

Results are also related to the opinion of Ariza (2006): “Vallenato music is framed within regional Caribbean music that is based on orality” (p. 3) and, with the approaches of Ong (1999, as cited in Ocampo & De Castro, 2013), by stating that, in writing, thoughts are articulated orally.

Taking into account all these processes and the cognitive advances achieved through reading and writing, it is expected that the fifth-grade students of the Bello Horizonte Educational Institution, Villa Yaneth campus, can consolidate their writing skills to achieve better performance in all areas of knowledge. With the discussion of these results, it is recommended to carry out, in the teaching processes, reinforcement activities to strengthen knowledge and develop oral and written expression in them.

5. Conclusions

For the first specific objective, a diagnosis was made through a questionnaire, which confirmed what was stated in the study problem, denoting that the students had weak communication skills

in reading and writing, with a poor vocabulary. Similarly, insecurity and shyness were observed, which caused ineffective learning and, therefore, poor academic performance.

Given these weaknesses, the purpose of designing workshops to strengthen the communication skills of reading and writing through traditional Vallenato songs was proposed. For this, it was necessary to carry out a bibliographical review and to know the behavior of the category in other contexts, in addition to attending to the opinion of the experts regarding the subject of study, which allowed the elaboration of a proposal based on reading and writing workshops, supported by the traditional vallenatos, to solve the difficulties evidenced by the students.

With the elaborated design, we proceeded to fulfill this objective, whose strategy was innovative, accessible, viable, and feasible. The evidence shows the acquisition of new terms, with which the students were able to enrich their vocabulary, gain confidence and security, argue their ideas, and defend or refute any approach. This indicates the effectiveness of the reading and writing workshops through traditional Vallenato songs.

Once the implementation of the aforementioned workshops was completed, the objective of evaluating their application was fulfilled; for this, instruments such as the logbook and direct observation of the students were used, resulting in that they achieved greater reading and writing fluency, which provided them with better writing of texts, conclusions or arguments; they learned to work as a team, showing confidence and security. Therefore, it can be concluded that the development of the activities was successful and students strengthened their communication skills related to reading and writing, fulfilling the general objective of the article.

6. Conflict of interest

The authors of this article declare not to have any conflict of interest regarding the work presented.

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