



INTERPRETIVE COMPETENCE AND ANALYSIS OF PERSPECTIVES THROUGH READING PRACTICES IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCE CLASS.

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Abstract.

The present research stems from the inquiry into reading practices and aims to analyze them in relation to interpretive competence and perspective analysis in the Social Sciences class, starting from the teaching of World War II in the 9-D grade of the Presbítero Antonio Jose Bernal Educational Institution. The work allowed for the characterization of reading practices among 9-D students, evaluation of the implementation of a didactic sequence in the same grade, and recognition of Social Sciences teachers' conceptions regarding reading practices. Furthermore, the results shed light on the purposes attributed to interpretive competence and perspective analysis through the use of reading practices, enhancing thinking skills and fostering knowledge of the world across various discourses and disciplines. It is concluded that reading practices are essential for developing skills such as description, argumentation, and interpretation, as well as for expanding knowledge of the world. School Social Sciences are deeply influenced by these practices, prompting research to contribute to the field of teaching by offering insights into the strengths, challenges, and applications of reading in this subject, while also outlining contributions linked to the experiences of some Social Sciences teachers.

Keywords: Reading practices, interpretive competence and perspective analysis, social sciences teaching.

Resumen.

Esta investigación surge de la pregunta por las prácticas de lectura y se propuso analizarlas en relación con la competencia interpretativa y análisis de perspectiva en la clase de Ciencias Sociales. El trabajo permitió caracterizar las prácticas de lectura de los estudiantes de 9-D de la I.E Presbítero Antonio José Bernal de Medellín, evaluar la implementación de una secuencia didáctica en el mismo grado y, reconocer las concepciones que tenían los profesores de Ciencias Sociales acerca de las prácticas de lectura. Además, en los resultados, se da cuenta de las finalidades que le han sido otorgadas a la competencia interpretativa a la luz de su emergencia mediante el uso de la lectura, potenciando las habilidades de pensamiento y fomentando el conocimiento del mundo a través de diferentes discursos y disciplinas. Se concluye que las prácticas de lectura son esenciales para desarrollar habilidades como la descripción, la

COMPETENCIA INTERPRETATIVA Y ANÁLISIS DE PERSPECTIVAS A TRAVÉS DE PRÁCTICAS DE LECTURA EN LA CLASE DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES.

argumentación y la interpretación, así como para ampliar el pensamiento social. Las Ciencias Sociales se ven profundamente influenciadas por estas prácticas, lo que hace que la investigación busque contribuir al campo de la enseñanza, al ofrecer información sobre las fortalezas y aplicaciones de la lectura en esta área, así como enunciar los aportes vinculados a la experiencia de profesores.

Palabras Clave: Prácticas de lectura, competencia interpretativa y análisis de perspectiva, enseñanza de las ciencias sociales.

I. INTRODUCCIÓN.

The experience of reading begins with reading the world before moving on to reading the written word
Freire 1967.

Reading practices have traditionally been viewed as an integral part of school life and formal academic education, primarily within the Spanish language curriculum; meanwhile, society expects schools to foster reading habits that enable children and young people to develop socially and culturally (Cerrillo, 2005). However, it is important to recognize that reading extends beyond a specific subject and even beyond the school itself. People engage in reading constantly, in their daily lives, but this does not necessarily mean that these activities constitute reading practices; for this to be the case, reading must be mediated by several aspects that Aisenberg (2010 and 2012) outlines as an initial guide, namely: a) that reading be shared, not individual; b) that the teacher be present as a reading

companion and facilitator of complex concepts; c) reading activities should be discussed in class as a tool for acquiring new knowledge.

On the other hand, with the aim of emphasizing reading practices as content to be taught and promoted in social studies classes, interpretive skills and the analysis of perspectives emerge as a path way for developing the knowledge and skills required of formal education as outlined in institutional documents, however, defining competence becomes complex; therefore, it has been decided to separate it to avoid any ambiguity regarding its treatment in this article (Colombian Institute for the Evaluation of Education [ICFES], 2019).

In this sense, the concept of "competence" is a polysemous and sometimes ambiguous term that may have different meanings depending on its user or the pedagogical approach in which it is framed. In this study, it is understood as "(...) a set of knowledge, skills, attitudes, understandings, and cognitive, socio-affective, and psychomotor dispositions that are appropriately interrelated to facilitate flexible, effective, and meaningful performance in relatively new and challenging contexts" (Ministry of National Education [MEN], 2006, p. 49).

Along these lines, interpretive literacy is understood as the ability to support students in constructing the meanings, causes, and intentions inherent in a particular text (García et al., 2017) that they encounter during a reading exercise. Specifically, this competency is developed during secondary education; for this reason, the research involved ninth-grade students from a public school in the city of Medellín, as well as secondary school social studies teachers, all within the framework of an intrinsic case study. Given the above, reading practices are distinguished from a narrow conception of "literary" reading typical of Spanish language instruction and from a conception of individual reading that limits the discussion of meanings and interpretations. Instead, reading is approached as content to be taught and, above all, into a facilitator of collective interpretation processes.

Therefore, the overall objective of this study is to analyze the influence of reading practices in social studies classes on the development of interpretive skills and the ability to analyze different perspectives among students in 9th grade, Class D, at the Presbítero Antonio José Bernal School. To address this objective, three specific objectives have been established, which are: 1) To characterize the reading practices of the students in 9-D in the Social

Studies class at the Presbítero Antonio José Bernal Educational Institution; 2) To evaluate the implementation of a teaching sequence based on reading practices and on interpretive competence and perspective analysis in 9th grade class 9-D; 3) To identify the conceptions that Social Studies teachers hold regarding reading practices in order to provide insights for teaching.

II. METHODOLOGY.

This research is grounded in a qualitative approach due to the interest it generates in the individual and social relationships that the research participants (students and teachers) establish with instructional content, which in this case consists of reading practices, interpretive skills, and perspective analysis. In this regard, Galeano (2004) states, "Qualitative social research aims to understand reality from the multiple perspectives, logics, and visions of the social actors who construct and interpret it (p. 21). Similarly, it does not seek to quantitatively measure levels of reading proficiency but rather to highlight and reflect on the forms of reading that emerge in the classroom and in the teaching practice of the Social Sciences.

The aim of this research is to gain an understanding of the role that reading practices play in interpretive activities carried out in social studies by a specific group of students and teachers. Rather than seeking broad generalizations, the study adopts an intrinsic case study approach (Stake, 1999) to examine a particular research context in detail and provide insights into the understanding of the topic within a limited and relatively controlled setting. As Álvarez and San Fabián (2012) note when discussing the extrapolation of case study findings, "(...) it does not seem appropriate to speak of 'generalization' but rather of 'transfer'" (p. 5).

This notion of transfer constitutes the ultimate goal of this research, serving as a foundation for future studies on reading practices and social studies. Similarly, Galeano (2004) defines a case study as "(...) the collection, analysis, and detailed, structured presentation of information about an individual, a group, or an institution" (p. 68). Accordingly, the present study focuses primarily on the experiences of ninth-grade Class 9-D and the participating teachers, with the intention of achieving this "transfer."

It is important to note that the analysis of the study's results employs techniques and tools consistent with the

Esta investigación se fundamenta en el enfoque cualitativo debido al interés que suscita los relacionamientos individuales y sociales que construyen los sujetos de la investigación (estudiantes y maestros) con contenidos de enseñanza, que en este caso son las prácticas de lectura y la competencia interpretativa y análisis de perspectiva. En ese sentido, dice Galeano (2004) "La investigación social cualitativa se propone la comprensión de la realidad desde las múltiples perspectivas, lógicas y visiones de los actores sociales que construyen e interpretan la realidad" (p. 21). De igual manera, no busca medir cuantitativamente la apropiación de cualquier tipo de lectura sino tensionar y reflexionar las formas de lectura que se materializan en el aula y en el ejercicio docente propio de las Ciencias Sociales.

III. RESULTS.

An Analysis of Reading Practices Among Students in Class 9-D.

The group consisted of 40 students. In terms of age distribution, more than 90% of them were 14 years old, while the remaining 10% were between the ages of 15 and 18. The questions in the initial diagnostic workshop sought to determine the students' definition of "reading" as well as its purpose. This activity was conducted over two class sessions, each lasting approximately 45 minutes.

The following statements were found: "Reading is understanding, analyzing, and mentally visualizing what you are reading"; "Reading is a method for comprehending or understanding something we do not know"; "Reading is understanding what we are reading, because if we do not understand it, we would merely be going through the motions." All of the responses fall, in one way or another, within the scope of those stated so far. From this, it can be inferred that the students in 9-D understand what reading is, insofar as they describe and articulate the actions involved in it. That said, with this in mind, we were interested in exploring the purpose they ascribed to the act of reading.

A clear pattern emerged from their responses: reading serves to learn, understand, and recognize. These verbs are fundamental to the field of social studies, which, according to the Ministry of Education (MEN, 2006), "(...) seeks to provide knowledge about society that guides the pursuit of human well-being and peaceful coexistence among its diverse members" (p. 100).

Therefore, it is argued that reading, as a constant and directed exercise—that is, as a practice—is necessary for the teaching and learning of Social Sciences both in and outside of school.

In summary, when answering the initial questions about reading, the previously described associations emerged as part of the students' discourse. This was related to the aspect of recognizing difference, that is, a stance toward what is read and the degree of differentiation between readings on the same topic. This would be the beginning of the development of interpretive competence and the analysis of perspectives (Cerrillo, 2005). Likewise, they included issues of obligation and voluntariness as fundamental aspects of the reading process; key aspects that will be revisited later. From the above, it can be inferred that, although the students mention these verbs, it does not mean that they understand and use them to their full potential, but this can be understood as a first step toward achieving one of the purposes of the Social Sciences, which is to describe and compare social phenomena.

Resources used in the reading process by the students in 9-D.

The use of electronic entertainment resources, such as social media, video games, and other activities, contributes to changes in reading levels. This assertion is based on comments made by some students who reported greater attention, retention, and comprehension when reading texts electronically, which they consider a source of entertainment. Due to time constraints, this aspect could not be explored in greater depth, but the topic of texts in video games and social media proved to be particularly interesting. In this sense, a large part of the students recognized that social media involves reading and that they used them constantly, thus, they are exposed to the need to read in different contexts and through different media, which highlights the importance of reading skills for all kinds of activities.

Along these lines, the students also commented that the way the text is presented is important to them: "We read memes," "I like memes because the font is big." According to Córdón (2018), the font type, size, shape, and tone of a text can predict whether it will be read by its target audience or go unnoticed. This reasoning suggests that adolescents consistently prefer using digital media for reading, rather than traditional paper-based reading.

The reason stems from the possibility of modifying the

textual features mentioned earlier (font type, size, etc.), which gives them a certain degree of control over their own reading. One of them expresses, in response to the question “Is social media reading?”: “Yes, since social media contains content such as news, articles, memes, stories, tweets, threads, blogs, and even digital books, as they are very common nowadays” (Initial Diagnostic Workshop, 2023). Thus, reading practices are permeated and impacted by digital media, because, as Dussel (2018) states

The introduction of digital media does not, in and of itself, represent a rupture with the “traditional” school-based approach to knowledge; however, certain changes are evident, including the fragmentation of reading materials, the demand for greater speed and productivity, the mechanization or automation of media, and the reduction of information to data (pp. 21–22).

The author highlights the importance of adapting to new social conditions and examines how digital media impact teaching and learning. In doing so, the author explores the challenges and transformations in pedagogical practices, emphasizing the need for a critical and reflective integration of digital media into education. This integration should take into account the specificities and challenges of each context, rather than assuming a position of technological determinism.

Furthermore, teachers possess pedagogical and didactic knowledge—or, in other words, “teacher know-how”—which guides the identification of the most appropriate teaching strategies and methods. In this context, it was proposed that presenting historical, economic, political, and other texts typical of the social sciences through ICT and social media—while ensuring language appropriate to students’ cognitive development and prior knowledge—facilitates the exploration, dissemination, analysis, and strengthening of students’ engagement with reading processes (Pedagogical Journal 1-2-3, 2023).

In this regard, the use of social media offers significant potential for improving reading practices, given the wide variety of texts available and the opportunity it provides for frequent engagement with other spaces that students encounter in their daily lives. In other words, ICT and social media are resources that can and should be leveraged in the classroom as a teaching and reading strategy.

In conclusion, the analysis of the reading practices of the students in 9-D revealed evidence of recurring and well-documented issues, such as the adolescents’ low reading levels; a preference for short readings presented in electronic formats, difficulties associated with reading

complex texts independently, as well as the potential benefits of peer-to-peer and teacher-guided reading in the classroom—that is, reading should be a classroom activity rather than a mandatory homework assignment. Finally, a concerning situation was observed regarding the vocabulary mastered by students, which presents itself as the greatest obstacle they face when learning social studies.

Implementation of a lesson plan.

Through the Instructional Sequence (hereinafter IS), various reading strategies were implemented to develop interpretive skills and the ability to analyze perspectives. This competency is outlined by the Colombian Institute for the Evaluation of Education (ICFES, 2014) in the document National System for Standardized Educational Assessment: Alignment of the SABER 11 Exam. General Guidelines 2014–2, and is presented as one of the most important skills to be developed in the social sciences, as it enables students to form their own criteria and express informed opinions based on the evaluation of multiple alternatives for interpreting and solving problems.

The IS focused on racism as a persistent issue in the context of World War II and its impact on the present, particularly through the concept of “race,” and consisted of eight class sessions. During these sessions, strategies such as an introductory activity on reading practices in the social sciences, a museum guide, letter writing, and a student self-assessment were implemented.

Regarding the results, reading levels were structured with the aim of developing students’ reading comprehension skills, as well as their ability to recognize text types and concepts specific to the social sciences. To achieve this, different types of questions were designed to address various aspects of the texts. First, questions focused on explicit elements—such as the characteristics of events and descriptions of characters and situations—were used to assess the literal level of comprehension. Second, questions requiring the interpretation of events involved inferring implicit information, thereby addressing the inferential level. Finally, analytical questions were included to promote critical thinking among students, corresponding to the critical level of reading comprehension.

In this context, it was observed that a significant proportion of students remained at the literal level, as they primarily responded to explicitly stated information in the texts. Nevertheless, they reported that the activity was engaging: “I can say that ‘Text Types’ was a very

educational activity, since I didn't know anything about that kind of thing." These students experienced difficulties in grasping the overall meaning of the texts and in identifying the causes and consequences of historical events such as World War II. Furthermore, when faced with texts containing subject-specific vocabulary, they struggled to establish connections between concepts; consequently, their ability to draw conclusions and make inferences during the reading process was limited.

Social Studies Teachers' Perceptions of Reading Practices.

In exploring how reading is used in social studies classes, the aim was to understand an aspect of teaching practice that teachers have developed over the course of their careers, in order to identify similarities or differences that reveal aspects of the dynamics of the social studies classroom in relation to their conceptions of reading.

In this regard, we highlight patterns that were recurring or problematic in achieving this goal. In response to this, Professor Antonio (2023) states that, "(...) reading can be engaging when dealing with primary sources or when I read and explain it, but if I simply assign the reading and leave them to it, there will surely be no connection" (L. 94–96). In this case, Professor Antonio (2023) expresses a distancing from the idea of reading as a mechanical exercise of "reading and responding," highlighting the idea of "abandonment" as a hallmark of those readings that are assigned and left to the student's freedom to read, understand, interpret, and critique, without guidance from the teacher. Similarly, this professor mentions the importance of pre-sending short texts to achieve a more effective reading experience.

For his part, Professor Sebastián (2023) described a practical approach to reading—that is, one that aims not only for students to read texts on a social science issue, but also to go beyond that, discuss what they have read, and develop a school project based on it, (...) I usually ask them to create a radio drama for the final assignment, but first I have them choose a topic of interest to them from eastern Antioquia. To do this, they have two weeks to research certain topics, for example: the massacres, the role of certain actors in the conflict, such as children; recruitment or anti-personnel mines; various forms of violence associated with the armed conflict. They choose one that interests them and begin to investigate it. I always bring them a little book called "Nunca más" ("Never Again"), which is produced in Granada based on some accounts; it's a way for them to learn the story of

how those events unfolded. (Personal Communication) However, another concept mentioned by the teachers stemmed from the remarks made by Professor Franco (2023), who emphasizes the physical nature of reading—that is, proper reading should involve a physical copy of the text to be read, one that students can see, smell, and touch. Consequently, he states that, (...) When it comes to strategies, it's important to understand that sometimes they work and sometimes they don't—every group is different. What I do first is get them motivated and then bring them the book, showing it to them and talking about the author and the context. There is one key aspect, and that is the subject matter. For example, we're in tenth grade and we're going to look at—I don't know—geopolitics or bipolarity, and multipolarity; you have to present various texts, ranging from simple ones to others that are a bit more complex, and interestingly, the students tend to like the complex text. But as I said, it's very important to keep in mind the group's prior knowledge—which you, as a teacher, should already be aware of. I don't assign the reading right away; I wait a few weeks, get to know the group, and then choose the readings accordingly, and these can vary from one group to another (Personal communication).

Consequently, reading will require a strategy that will not always be the same for every group—or even for every reading session—which reflects a holistic approach to reading. Everything will depend on the teacher's expertise in establishing a connection between the learning objective, the students' interests, and the content to be covered.

That said, one strategy that consistently emerged in the teachers' comments was that of reading support, including approaches similar to those mentioned by Siede (2023) and described in the theoretical framework. Thus, Professor Ismael (2023) extends the concept of reading support to include a matter of "social justice," insofar as, (...) We need to promote reading, we need to spark an interest in reading, and we need to provide some evidence that gives us the peace of mind that, at the very least, as teachers, we did our part—that is, we tried to promote reading, teach it, and encourage students to read. (Personal communication)

This professor presents a view of reading in which teachers are responsible for creating opportunities and spaces for its development in the classroom, thereby providing the necessary support to encourage the practice of reading. For his part, Professor Juan (2023)

believes that reading should be “sold” to the student, not imposed; that is, the teacher has the obligation to foster a habit of reading and establish a knowledge base so that the student understands what is being covered in the session—in other words, the teacher should be an active participant in the student’s reading process.

Along the same lines, Professor Sara (2023) emphasized the importance of an appropriate and varied selection of reading materials, as well as constant teacher support throughout the reading process, as she explains below: “There should be an appropriate and varied selection of reading materials, and there should also be constant support for students’ reading processes” (Professor Sara, 2023, Personal communication).

The questions about the “why” and “what for” of reading instruction sought to understand the reasons and objectives behind it, in order to grasp the conceptual and practical framework that guides the work; as the teachers put it: the social sciences are mastered, understood, and constructed through reading,

Yes, it’s non-negotiable. It should be non-negotiable, in fact; they ask me, “So why do we have to read?” (...) “No, to learn social studies, you have to read (and I make that the top priority), speak, write, and create.” In other words, let’s say I’ve simplified it—obviously, theorists of social studies pedagogy would say there’s more to it, but I narrow it down like this to explain to them that there are also certain practices that are non-negotiable in Social Studies, and one of those is reading—and they already know that in my case. Read, read, and read. (Professor María, 2023, Personal Communication).

In this regard, according to Professor María (2023), reading is mastered through reading itself; this highlights the need to introduce reading practices from the very beginning of formal education, so that each student becomes accustomed to regular and sustained reading over time—only in this way can they achieve true mastery.

On the other hand, Professor José (2023), addressing the question of why we should teach reading in CS, states, (...) because it is one of the means we have to help young people understand reality—not just their immediate reality, but also distant social or cultural contexts, or geographical contexts. So, when there is no direct experience of that context, reading is the other way to gain access to that knowledge” (Personal communication)

Professor José (2023) notes that reading is important because it is seen as a way to gain knowledge about the world; when students lack direct experience with a particular context, reading provides them with an alternative way to acquire that knowledge.

Since the question of “why” we teach through reading aimed to understand the reasons behind this approach—recognizing that it is essential for understanding contexts outside the reader’s own experience—the question of “what for” in the teaching of social sciences similarly aims to understand the purposes, goals, and scope of this approach. Regarding the latter, some teachers provided us with insights.

The first thing that comes to mind is making connections with and within the world. I really like—as I mentioned yesterday—the text by Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons in defense of school. I don’t know if you’re familiar with it, but one of the functions of school is to open up the world to students. (Professor Juan, 2023, Personal Communication)

Professor Juan (2023) and Professor José (2023) both believe that reading opens up the world to students, since reading in the social sciences is essential for broadening their perspectives and making deeper connections with reality, allowing them to see beyond their own interests. Furthermore, they emphasize the need to stimulate students’ imagination, not only to promote critical thinking but also to foster creativity and creation.

Likewise, Professor Sebastián (2023) states that, (...) to develop critical thinking skills, Why, then, develop critical thinking skills? Well, I can’t imagine—reading significantly improves one’s reading proficiency, not only in terms of semantics, but because it provides the tools to construct an argument, and when engaging in a conversation with someone else, one becomes more fluent and confident. So, I believe that thinking skills are fundamental insofar as they strengthen one’s ability to navigate situations involving narrative, arguments, justifications, and explanations—that is, to view the world through language, recognizing that it is problematic, multifaceted, complex, and dynamic. Thus, having that full range of tools and skills allows one to better address these challenges. (Personal Communication)

That said, one of the goals of developing reading skills in social studies class is to cultivate critical thinking skills. In this regard, these skills aim to improve reading comprehension by enabling students to construct

arguments, engage in fluid conversation, and navigate situations that require verbal expression. Ultimately, understanding this range of tools empowers students to address social issues assertively.

As for the question of why we teach reading, Professor María (2023) notes, (...) That's a very profound question. I'd say that one reads in the social sciences to understand, of course, the multiple perspectives on an event, but also to confirm, or to contradict, or to disagree with the existing views of the world; I believe that's why we read in the social sciences. Often, one seeks out readings to confirm, and one intentionally selects what to read (...) I have tried to introduce a variety of readings, including those with which I don't entirely agree, but that is precisely the point—so that students can learn about, confirm, contradict, or disagree with the things happening in the world (...) Why do we read in Social Sciences? I wouldn't say it's to awaken critical thinking, because it's not just about reading; it's what you do with the reading. I would say it's to lay the groundwork that will later strengthen that critical thinking, I believe. (Personal Communication)

Therefore, reading in the social sciences must be approached from an interpretive perspective, since our field of knowledge is eminently interpretive and critical; consequently, this leads us to believe that, for teachers in this field, reading is a preferred "vehicle" for teaching basic social science skills.

Finally, it is recognized that reading has multiple causes and purposes, highlighting the diversity of perspectives among different teachers. It is acknowledged that reading is essential for understanding and questioning multiple viewpoints on social events, allowing students to confirm, contradict, or even disagree with different worldviews. Furthermore, it is emphasized that reading in the social sciences is not only about acquiring knowledge but also about strengthening thinking skills, such as argumentation and interpretation. Thus, reading practices are not an end in themselves but a means to deepen understanding of the social world, foster creativity, and strengthen the skills necessary to address social problems in new ways.

Teachers state that reading is essential for teaching social studies and, when asked to rate its importance on a scale of 0 to 10 (where 10 means very important), they responded as follows (see Figure 1):

Figura 1: Respuestas a la pregunta sobre la valoración de la lectura en Ciencias Sociales.



Source: Compiled by the autor.

As shown in the figure above, on average, teachers place a high priority on reading because it enables students to develop habits that can later facilitate the presentation of content in class, helps them build essential skills for the social sciences—such as description, interpretation, and argumentation—and contributes to the development of students' critical thinking.

In this regard, the comments made by some of the professors interviewed are presented in greater detail below (...) I see it [class reading] more as the seminar-workshop we experienced in college with Ezequiel Ander—that is, where students read the material beforehand and are expected to discuss it in class. So it works with tenth and eleventh graders, but I don't think it will work with everyone. However, for those with whom it does work, it's because they've already developed the habit and know that I'm unlikely to change my perspective. (Professor Juan, 2023, Personal Communication)

Here, the teacher refers to the challenge of introducing reading into the classroom without first having begun a gradual process with the group in question; one cannot expect students to read extensively and/or effectively if they are not accustomed to this approach to studying the social sciences. For him, there is an opportunity to assign reading before class, and then to pool the knowledge gained and guide students toward achieving the learning objectives established by the chosen methodology.

On the other hand, Professor Gregorio (2023) states that,

I sometimes read to the sixth graders—actually, I often read to them myself because my voice is a little louder, and because the process with them is slower; that is, in sixth grade, you find kids who don't read. So if I have them... I ask them to follow along with me at first: "Come on, I'll read it and you follow along. Let's do it," and sometimes I end with "you continue," and sometimes we take turns. (Personal Communication)

In this case, Professor Gregorio (2023) believes that reading should take place in the classroom with clear guidance from the teacher; for this reason, he begins reading and asks the students to follow along. It is important to reflect on what the professor himself later states

But sometimes in sixth grade, you come across students who are repeating the grade and have much more advanced reading skills. So what we do is, once we identify the student, they read aloud, and I prefer that they take turns reading to each other. Then, when the student has a good tone of voice and reads a bit more fluently, we ask them to read. In seventh grade, it's very different, because in seventh grade, when you say "take turns," well, I don't really care about taking turns, but 15 or 20 of them raise their hands, line up in front of me, and say, "Teacher, teacher, I want to," and then they start: "The first one reads, and tell me where they've read up to," "Okay, teacher, up to here," and the next one follows, so it's a continuous reading process, and that's how we've read—pew—long stories, books, half of books (...) (Teacher Gregorio, 2023, Personal Communication)

Two important ideas emerge from this: first, when there are students with greater reading proficiency, they can be assigned the role of reading guides for the other students; and second, it has been shown that consistently using reading in the teaching of social studies fosters a habit that can later facilitate the presentation of content in class. If, in the context of Professor Gregorio (2023), a sixth-grade student is not yet capable of reading independently, by seventh grade they will have a more established reading process that will even allow them to serve as a reading guide in class.

However, Professor Antonio (2023) expresses doubts about the finding that students' reading skills improve as they progress through the grades, including those with whom he has had ongoing contact.. And when you ask me if reading skills are higher in eighth grade, it doesn't really feel that way. And I think that question about the

national budget—that's material for tenth and eleventh grade. So, the kids' reading and comprehension skills are very poor. Maybe that's also why I've even tried to diversify the media we use or, at the very least, rely on texts that are very strategic. I also use a lot of secondary sources, and they are short texts (...) (Professor Antonio, 2023, Personal Communication).

These dynamics give rise to a set of challenges that cannot be ignored when bringing reading into the classroom, nor when it comes to conceiving of it as a practice—that is, as something constructed in collaboration with others. Thus, we return to the observations of Professor Sofía (2023), who identifies two challenges in addressing reading in the Social Studies classroom: the first is that students are given readings to complete on their own, but they avoid them because they prefer to use Google, which provides immediate answers. The second challenge is a lack of comprehension when reading a text; from this, it can be inferred that the speed of technology has affected students' ability to understand the readings they and others do, since they are accustomed to obtaining instant answers without delving deeply into the analysis of the data.

Similarly, the challenge of teaching and using reading in school arises. In this regard, Professor Lucía (2023) notes that, I believe the challenge lies primarily in understanding that reading, like many basic mathematical operations, should be taught across all subject areas and is not the sole responsibility of Spanish language teachers. It is often assumed that students have already learned to read, but there is a lack of awareness that this skill must be reinforced from multiple perspectives. (Personal communication)

This teacher highlights the importance of not taking the process of teaching reading for granted, emphasizing that it should not be assumed that once students reach higher grade levels, this process no longer requires reinforcement. Furthermore, she emphasizes that this reinforcement should not be limited exclusively to the Spanish language arts curriculum.

In summary, there is no general consensus on the role of reading in social studies education, given the diversity of educational needs, content requirements, student populations, and teaching approaches. Regarding the challenges, similarities can be identified among the teachers consulted. It is widely acknowledged that one of the main challenges lies in promoting reading

habits among students, particularly in contexts where conditions are not always conducive to this activity. However, this does not make it an impossible task.

The potential of reading for intellectual development and for understanding the world around us is widely recognized, as are the opportunities that arise from approaching reading as a practical activity, especially in the field of the social sciences. Consequently, reading should not be confined to a specific subject area; rather, it should be fostered from an early age and sustained throughout the entire educational process—not in a forced manner, but in ways that create meaningful opportunities for student participation. This can be achieved by recognizing that every teacher plays a key role as a guide in this process.

In short, this is why reading is presented as a journey to be undertaken together, since working individually on such exercises—at least in the classroom—can lead to demotivation and difficulties in achieving conceptual understanding and excellence in assessable skills. Teachers should strive to provide active guidance during reading activities, while ensuring that they have a thorough understanding of the text they present to students, as this is essential for supporting the process of critically engaging with the material.

Finally, it is worth noting that most of the teachers interviewed agree on a conception of reading practices that is shaped by broader considerations; in other words, reading is not merely an ordinary task, and using it as a tool in the classroom is of vital importance for achieving meaningful learning outcomes.

The question regarding interpretation was posed with the aim of exploring the ways in which social phenomena are approached from different perspectives in social studies classes, always through the lens of reading practices. In addition, the study sought to understand teachers' experiences in order to capitalize on the opportunities that this skill offers for classroom development and to generate potential insights for teaching.

IV. CONCLUSIONS.

With regard to the first objective, the study concludes that students view reading processes as a means of acquiring knowledge, understanding and

interpreting perspectives, and/or developing skills such as description, comparison, and interpretation. Furthermore, the study highlights that students prioritize reading materials that align with their interests, and that basic resources for teaching and learning social studies—such as essays or history books—are not among their preferences.

Second, the reading assessment conducted as part of the Initial Diagnostic Workshop revealed significant difficulties across all three levels of reading comprehension (literal, inferential, and critical), as well as gaps in basic social studies concepts. For this reason, it is essential to implement guided reading strategies that supported by digital tools, given students' interest in social media and the need for closer teacher support. As for the second objective—to evaluate the SD—it was deemed appropriate to integrate key elements, namely reading practices, interpretive skills, and the analysis of perspective. This connection is relevant insofar as, to understand multiple perspectives on the same social phenomenon, it is necessary to engage in reading exercises; these exercises capture the “objectified” and “subjectified” experiences of groups of people who have lived in a shared space-time.

To foster interpretation, teaching strategies such as museum guides, letter-writing, and reading from various sources were used. These activities helped highlight the value of shared and guided reading as a way to complement individual reading, which is often the dominant approach in social studies classes. They also underscore the need to teach reading in all grade levels, since it is a vital skill; therefore, the notion that reading skills are developed only in Spanish language arts classes should be challenged.

Finally, the third objective provided insight into the views held by some teachers in the immediate vicinity and within the 9-D context regarding reading practices. It was concluded that teachers view reading as a tool, a pathway to learning about phenomena—particularly political, historical, and geographical ones. Reading is an integral part of all instructional content, with each teacher serving as an active guide in the students' reading process; for this reason, it promotes the learning of concepts specific to the social sciences, and to that end, it is important to start with shorter, simpler readings and gradually move on to more complex ones.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS.

Teachers and researchers interested in implementing reading activities in the classroom are encouraged to use a variety of formats (both physical and electronic) and, in particular, to adapt readings to students' needs—that is, the font, length, and relevance of the text—bearing in mind that reading is always an ongoing process open to improvement. In this regard, it is important to remember the responsibility to foster knowledge that aligns with the learning objectives and goals of the social sciences.

In this context, it is recommended that, when implementing these reading practices, consideration be given to developing activities outside the Spanish language arts curriculum. This is because these practices are intended to provide a deeper understanding of what is being read.

On the other hand, reading practices in the social sciences—particularly those related to interpretive skills and the analysis of perspective—aim to foster the development of critical stances, distinguish between facts and opinions, discern criteria for truth, question and interpret texts to understand social issues, and identify society's role in shaping the individual. However, it is important to recognize that narrative literature can also be a useful tool for understanding this field. In other words, its content should not be dismissed, but rather approached through an analytical lens that takes into account the disciplines of the social sciences.

In this regard, it is essential to emphasize that reading practices cannot be separated from writing practices. First, writing provides students with a means to express what they have understood while reading, organize their ideas, and ask questions. Second, it allows the teacher to observe and evaluate the student's reading process. Furthermore, these practices—whether reading aloud, guided reading, commented reading, or shared reading; individual or group—must be grounded in respect for individual interpretations of the text, establishing themselves as an exercise designed to foster critical thinking skills, without overlooking the central role of reasoning in supporting opinions and identifying points of agreement and disagreement.

Likewise, a recommendation is made to undergraduate teacher-training programs in the social sciences: they should recognize the educational value of reading practices in the teaching of this field of knowledge, as reflected in general courses and teaching practices, since this aspect is currently addressed explicitly only in history courses.

In this vein, it is recommended that research projects focusing on reading practices begin with a sufficient time frame to ensure the research is conducted properly, taking into account potential institutional and researcher-related contingencies. Therefore, when planning this type of research project, it is necessary to allocate an adequate number of months to cover all areas of study thoroughly.

Finally, we leave the discussion open, but not before raising the following questions that invite further exploration in this field of study, which is still in its early stages in the country. How can social studies teachers move beyond simply teaching reading so that it is viewed as a living experience that impacts students' daily lives? What are the specific characteristics of reading in social studies, given its differences from reading in other academic disciplines?

What is the pedagogical potential of shared and read-aloud reading in non-school contexts? And finally, how can reading practices in social studies be taught to students with special educational needs?

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