

Sung narratives and critical reading in elementary school students of a public institution

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In a group of fourth-grade elementary school students, there is evidence of difficulty in the comprehension and analysis of written texts, which generates low scores in internal and external national standardized tests, which also affects the overall performance in other academic areas of the curriculum. This article presents the results of a pedagogical proposal whose objective is to promote critical reading through sung narratives among fourth-grade elementary school students at the Fabio Lozano Simonelli IED school in Bogotá, Colombia. The study is of mixed approach, with descriptive scope and sequential transformational methodological design. A survey is used at the beginning and the end of the educational proposal; observations are recorded in the field logbook. The pedagogical strategy of sung narratives is developed to encourage critical reading with different types of texts, which acquire relevance because they offer a transforming potential in the way of approaching reading topics. Singing and music are fused for the transmission of knowledge, the cultivation of identity, and the strengthening of reading processes, which improve with the development of activities that awaken an interest that motivates them to read and the creativity of composition that they share with others. This proposal allows them to recognize that reading, based on sung narratives, leads to the adoption of an analytical and critical personal attitude concerning the topics referred to; which facilitates the understanding of the variety of perspectives and promotes dialogue based on arguments, which contribute to the acquisition of skills related to critical reading, enabling the autonomous creation of their narratives.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a primordial activity that orients the reflection that fosters critical thinking in students, since it allows the development of analytical and interpretative skills, with processes of reading comprehension of texts in which own experiences and personal relationships with the environment are presented. There is a variety of narrative, advertising, argumentative, instructive, literary texts, etc., which are framed in illustrations, words, or different aspects and are currently accessed in multimedia [1]. Narrative texts are proposed for the promotion of reading comprehension in a critical way, with the premise that they contain cultural and linguistic richness.

The problem lies in the fact that students in basic education in Colombia who take the external test of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) obtain a low reading level in comparison to other countries, which is why it is necessary to promote access to texts in some social groups that do not have them. The PISA tests evaluate reading skills in the aspects of use, comprehension, reflection, evaluation, and involvement with books related to their context [2]. A total of 7500 students from the official sector participated, obtaining a score of 412, with variation in their origin: 383 rural points, 411 urban points, and 479 private points [3].

For the state of the art, consultations were made in higher education repositories, Scielo, Scopus, and Dialnet journals, on illustrated texts, among which stand out reading comprehension as a skill that fosters and promotes skills in the performance of academic tasks of students who learn to decode texts, analysis, explanation and verbal expression of the ideas of written resources [4]; the study conducted on advertising texts to strengthen critical reading in students in grade 5 of basic education [5]; another in the same line is that of skills associated with critical thinking, which gives them the possibility of future understanding as an open, flexible and critical space for the construction of appropriate decision making [6]; also the text on reading and writing processes in students in grade 2 (7 to 8 years) [7].

In the background of illustrated texts, the study of students in the first years of schooling stands out, who have the ability of oral communication and creativity that allows them to construct learning through planning, argumentation, expression, and dialogue with images [8]. As for the illustrated stories, they are used as a pedagogical strategy to strengthen textual production in elementary school students [9], the album books that facilitate the influence in processes of comprehension and expression of language [10], are also found in this same subject is the illustrated text that is implemented as a tool for strengthening reading comprehension in elementary school [11]; another on the illustrated album that is implemented for the development of pleasure in reading in the 1st grade [12], among others.

Fundamentally, the relevance of reading and writing in basic education underscores its essential role in effective communication, both in academics and in daily life. It highlights four key aspects of reading: 1) its nature as a cognitive process, 2) its interactive character, 3) its constant strategy of monitoring comprehension, and 4) its influence on memory. These elements extend also to writing considered a complex process requiring cognitive and psychomotor skills, where factors such as purpose, tone, topic, and genre are crucial for effective communication [13]. In addition, mention is made of the evolution of educational approaches over time, from prioritizing reading and writing over grammar to the consideration of linguistic knowledge and communicational determinations in language teaching. In summary, the need to integrate both skills in school activities, adapting them to the needs and contexts of language users, is emphasized [14].

Reading comprehension implies the ability to understand a text and relate its contents to reality, as well as the ability to express the essence of the text. In addition, the importance of the reader's previous skills, level of knowledge, and the clarity and coherence of the text's content for adequate comprehension is emphasized. As for reading comprehension strategies, they are described as elevated processes involving goal setting, action planning, and evaluation. These strategies are fundamental to teaching text comprehension, since they involve metacognitive and cognitive aspects, although they should not be treated as precise techniques, but as skills that require analysis and flexibility [15]. It should be considered that specific strategies allow readers to use them to improve their comprehension, understand the intentions of

the text, relate the content to previous knowledge, analyze the text for coherence, and implicitly interpret the information.

From the perspective of competencies, these are seen as an articulated set of knowledge that generates faculties, aptitudes, and attitudes that allow analyzing and understanding problems in a given context, as well as finding coherent and effective solutions at both individual and collective levels. These competencies can be evaluated and demonstrated through learning outcomes, from which social, professional, personal, and methodological skills are evidenced. It should be noted that competencies facilitate flexible performance and encompass knowledge, being, and know-how. Basic competencies or key competencies are those that students should develop throughout their educational process to achieve their personal goals and participate meaningfully in a constantly changing society. Furthermore, the importance of basic competencies in the educational context is highlighted, since they contribute significantly to job training [16].

The concept of educational standards is conceived from different perspectives. Standards are clear and public criteria that define what students should learn in each educational area and level, serving as a reference for teaching and evaluation [17]. They are considered progress goals subject to evaluation [18], emphasizing the importance of meeting quality standards in education through processes and controls. Indeed, standards are fundamental elements for improving educational quality and that must be implemented by the competent authorities and educational institutions [19]. These standards imply innovative management that promotes cognitive development and the achievement of educational goals [20]. In addition, their relationship with instructional strategies that promote meaningful and quality learning for students is mentioned [21].

The importance of critical thinking can be pointed out as a complex skill that involves rigorously analyzing information and arriving at well-founded solutions. It is emphasized that critical thinking goes beyond simply feeling and allows forming judgments based on demonstrable arguments. In addition, it highlights the ability to adopt informed positions on problems, respecting the opinions of others. Critical thinking is related to communication, creativity, and other dimensions, being a process that unites psychological, cultural, social, and educational aspects. Two types of critical thinking can be distinguished: vertical or linear thinking, which is based on traditional logical methods, and lateral thinking, which seeks creative and imaginative solutions. In the educational context, improving critical thinking is crucial to expanding the analytical and creative capacity of students; it is mentioned that critical thinking strengthens understanding and the ability to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical experiences [22].

It is emphasized that critical thinking is reflective and reasonable and facilitates decision-making and intellectual engagement. In addition, its importance in the development of higher cognitive skills and intellectual autonomy of individuals is emphasized. Critical thinking involves skills such as autonomy, reasoning, curiosity, creativity, and argumentation, which are fundamental for decision-making, project planning, and problem-solving. It is emphasized that continuous questioning is key to fostering new approaches and innovative solutions [23].

It is worth noting the importance of critical reading in the development of critical thinking. Reading critically implies being aware of the intention and context behind the text, as well as presenting reasonable arguments that evaluate and analyze what is read, which leads to greater understanding. It is emphasized that a solid reading competence is fundamental to acquiring rational thinking and should be implemented to strengthen critical thinking, thus critical reading is described as a set of mental operations that activate the reader's cognitive system, allowing a deep understanding of the text and the construction of inferences. In addition, the importance of motivating students to read is highlighted, since this strengthens their comprehension and cognitive skills. When a text is understood, the reader can place it in its sociocultural context, identify the author's purposes, and recognize the genre of the discourse, and teachers must develop critical thinking skills to train critical readers from an early stage [24] [25].

The didactic strategy of Sung Narratives to strengthen critical reading in basic education students highlights the creation of this theoretical category in 2008, which promotes the use of music as a tool to critically reflect

on stories and everyday situations. The development of this category through books, research articles, and master's theses is also mentioned. It also highlights how Sung Narratives influence personal and community identity, addressing cultural themes, rituals, and celebrations where their impact on individual and collective life is explored, as well as their relationship with different aspects of society.

Likewise, successful pedagogical experiences are mentioned that use sung narratives to sensitize and critically analyze, encouraging students' reflection and analysis. In addition, it discusses how sung narratives allow expressing emotions, evoking memories, and promoting critical reading through music. Finally, the importance of assessing students' prior knowledge and outcomes to develop effective educational interventions that stimulate reflection and critical analysis is highlighted [26].

Consequently, cultural identity emphasizes that the human being is a social being who needs both a personal identity and a community identity. It is mentioned that identity is closely related to memory and the social groups to which one belongs, such as *barras bravas*, religious or reading groups, among others. It is also pointed out that, despite individual differences, some common elements and values unite people and allow them to differentiate themselves from others without ceasing to be themselves.

Similarly, the cultural diversity within Colombia is highlighted, with five distinct regions, each with its own cultural identity based on aspects such as music, gastronomy, customs, and agricultural production. Despite regional differences, it is mentioned that there is a national identity that is expressed through patriotic symbols such as history, the coat of arms, and the flag, although with more political, economic, and ideological characteristics, highlighting the importance of uniting cultural heritage with cultural identity to strengthen the identity of a people or community [27].

In reading comprehension, three reading levels are highlighted: literal, inferential, and evaluative-critical, which are essential to evaluate the reader's critical capacity [28]. Criteria such as central theme, title, main ideas, summary, and inference are also highlighted as indicators to evaluate reading comprehension and guide critical thinking. Three groups of reading comprehension are discussed here: comprehension, analysis, and assessment of facts, these groups involve skills such as making conclusions, recognizing assumptions, correlating text elements, evaluating the veracity of conclusions, and using appropriate language. It is emphasized that educational assessment can be an opportunity for student learning, but it can also be a tool of power, so the role of the teacher is crucial to promote changes in the evaluative culture in the classroom.

It is logical to mention that the complexity of educational evaluation involves strategies to evaluate students, the educational system, and learning standards, among other aspects. Likewise, the role of the teacher as an agent of change in educational administration is highlighted and the different roles that he/she can play in the classroom are discussed [29]. Thus, it is concluded that educational evaluation is fundamental for the progress of students, but it must be carried out in a dialogic, participatory, and team-based manner to become a source of self-learning and professional development for teachers.

2. METHOD

In this study the approach is mixed because quantitative data are collected through a diagnostic questionnaire on the sung narratives to know the previous knowledge on this topic; qualitative data are also collected from direct observation recorded in the field logbook. Quantitative data processing is done with SPSS version 26.0, frequency and percentage tables are generated and arithmetic means are compared to identify significant differences between the initial and final results in critical reading.

The qualitative data are obtained from the development of the educational process, with photographic, audio, and video recordings. The interpretations of the quantitative data are complemented with the qualitative data and the successes are justified, the difficulties of the educational intervention are pointed out, the results are discussed based on relevant theories, and the report concludes with recommendations and suggestions for future studies. Finally, the final report is elaborated. The sample is made up of 23 4th-grade students aged 9 to 10 years (11 girls and 12 boys), from I. E. Favio Lozano Simonelli of Bogotá. This

sample is directed [30] because a specific topic is worked with these students on critical reading, which is what we want to encourage in them.

The scope of the research is descriptive because it analyzes students' characteristics about the central aspect of critical reading. Quantitative data are collected to know the initial and final situation of students' reading comprehension skills, complemented with qualitative data. The methodological design is sequential transformational because the instruments are applied successively, i.e., first, the quantitative instrument is applied, then qualitative data are collected [30], and again the initial instrument to verify the effectiveness of the educational intervention, data that are complemented and discussed concerning the theoretical framework.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the application of the questionnaire on critical reading applied to 4th-grade students at the beginning and end, a comparison of the results is made, to know the effectiveness of the development of the educational proposal of sung narratives, a comparison of the arithmetic means is made with the T Student test to determine the significant difference of each item. When students are asked if they understand the reading of a text, the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = 0.05$ ($.001 < 0.05$), indicating a significant difference between the diagnostic test and the final test (Table 1).

Table 1. When you read a text, does it make it easier for you to understand what the author is saying?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Yes	17	74	8	39	0.001
No	3	13	1	4	
Sometimes	3	13	14	61	
Total	23	100	23	100	

At the beginning, 74% of the students stated that it was easy for them to understand what they read in the texts, but at the end, only 39% confirmed this. The percentage of students who said they could sometimes understand the texts increased from 13% to 14%, while those who said they could not decrease from 13% to 4%. In the initial test, more students claimed to understand the readings, but in practice, they found that it was not always easy for them. However, there was an increase in the number of students who could sometimes understand the texts.

In the item, whether it is easier for them to understand the reading of texts, the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.001 < .05$), since there is a significant difference between the diagnostic test and the final test (Table 2). In the first place, 17 students say that it is easier for them to understand when they read the texts, but then 8 affirm it, increasing from 3 to 14 that sometimes they manage to do so, and not decreasing from 3 to 1. However, this increases the number of those who can do it sometimes. Reading comprehension is an intellectual activity that contributes to the discovery of ideas in the readings, which improves intellectual abilities and increases culture.

Reading is considered the art of transformation of words into experienced images, it is a source of understanding of delight with literary or scientific written passages and, it is a wonderful journey through the abundant world of ideas. In this sense, reading becomes a fascinating adventure in which one travels without traveling, lives without experiencing, cries without suffering, and laughs without participating directly in joyful action [31].

Table 2. When you read a text, do you find it easier to understand what the author is saying?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Yes	17	73.9	8	34.8	0.001
No	3	13.0	1	4.3	
Sometimes	3	13.0	14	60.9	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

To answer the item question about what motivates them to read a text, a significant difference is observed between the results of the diagnostic and final tests, since the bilateral significance is lower $\alpha = .05$ (.008 < .05), as shown in Table 3. As shown in Table 3, 7 students initially answered that the good characters always win over the bad ones, but when they passed the final test, their opinion was different, since according to the experience obtained when doing several readings, 14 students highlighted that when they decide to read a text, they always learn new things, and 20 students affirm it in the final test. They decide to read a text when they are motivated by curiosity to learn something new, interest in a specific topic, or the recommendation of someone they trust [32]. The promise of an enriching or entertaining experience is also a great incentive.

Table 3. When do you decide to read a text that motivates you to do so?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
That there are good and bad characters	0	0	0	0	0.008
That good characters beat bad characters	7	30.4	2	8.7	
That the story is fun	2	8.7	1	4.3	
That I learn new things	14	60.9	20	87.0	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

Given the results of the item in Table 4, there is a specific difference between the initial and final tests, given that the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ (.000 < .05). The results of Table 4 show a specific difference between the initial and final tests, given that the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ (.000 < .05), how reading texts helps them to improve their vocabulary is taken into account, initially 4 decreases to 2 since they argue that they easily recognize words if other people speak them, 16 decreases to 4 because they express themselves better, 3 students who at the beginning of the test answered that when they read a text it allows them to make better use of the words, and 17 students answer the final test and affirm it.

Table 4. How has reading texts improved your vocabulary?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
I recognize words when they are used by other people	4	17.4	2	8.7	0.000
I express myself better	16	69.6	4	17.4	
I use words better	3	13.0	17	73.9	
All of the above	0	0	0	0	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

Reading texts has significantly improved the vocabulary of the subjects as it exposes them to a wide variety of words and expressions in different contexts. Reading not only increases intellectual skills but also enriches cultures. By encountering unfamiliar words [31], one learns their meanings and usages, which expands one's ability to communicate more effectively.

For the answers to this item, what type of texts do you know? there is a relevant difference between the diagnostic test and the final test (Table 5) since the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ (.000 < .05), therefore, 1 means that none of them knows argumentative texts, but 21 means that 23 state that the texts most worked on are narrative. Regarding the topic, a wide variety of texts are known, including literary, scientific informative, and technical texts. Reading offers a wonderful journey through the endless landscape of ideas, allowing exploration of everything from novels and poetry to research articles, essays, news, and technical manuals [31]. Each type of text has its style and purpose and contributes in different ways to our scientific knowledge and enjoyment.

Table 5. What kind of texts do you know?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Narratives	21	91.3	23	100.0	0.000
Argumentative	1	4.3	0	0	
All of the above	1	4.3	0	0	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

The answers to the item in Table 6 show explanatory differences between the diagnostic and final tests, since the bilateral significance is lower $\alpha = .05$ ($.000 < .05$), this happens because from 4 to none, they state that they make a tour to visualize and understand what happens there, on the other hand, 13 students state that they know the narrative that happens in front of the image, which goes to 22, which shows that the maturity of the students is manifested in the way they answer the questions asked.

Reading an image involves interpreting and analyzing its visual elements to understand its meaning. Like reading text, interpreting images is an intellectual activity that enables the discovery of ideas and enhances intellectual and cultural skills [32]. This includes observing details such as colors, shapes, compositions, and contexts, and relating them to prior knowledge and experiences to build a complete understanding.

Table 6. How to read an image?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
The image scenario and the characters are described	6	26.1	1	4.3	0.000
What is happening in the image is narrated	13	56.5	22	95.7	
A visual tour is made to understand what happens there	4	17.4	0	0	
Images are not readable	0	0	0	0	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

For the item in Table 7, on what reading academic texts helps them, there is a relevant difference between the two initial and final tests since the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.040 < .05$), since, from 5 it goes to 1 that clears concerns of things that he was not clear, from 12 it goes to 3 and 3 remains the same that it supports them to perform tasks, but concerning the link that says bringing new knowledge from 3 students it goes to 16. It can be inferred that, at the end of the process, more students benefit from reading because it helps them acquire new knowledge.

Reading texts helps them to broaden their knowledge, improve their understanding of the world around them, develop their intellectual skills, and strengthen their communication skills. Reading is an intellectual activity that allows discovering ideas contained in texts and increases skills and culture [33]. In addition, it fosters the development of critical thinking, and empathy by putting oneself in the place of other characters or authors, and provides a source of entertainment and enriches their way of thinking.

Table 7. Reading academic texts helps me to

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Clarify doubts about things that were not clear to me.	5	21.7	1	4.3	0.040
Acquire new knowledge	3	13.0	16	69.6	
Improve reading speed	3	13.0	3	13.0	
Helps me solve tasks	12	52.2	3	13.0	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

For the item corresponding to this question, when I read a text, do I identify the main idea? Here there is a relevant difference between the answers of the diagnostic and final tests, the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.013 < .05$), since, in the first alternative from the pretest, 16 students state that they imagine what the text is about, and this changes to 3 in the final test.

None of the students indicated that they recognize the main idea and the secondary idea in either of the two moments of application of the test; but in the alternative where they affirm that they can express in their own words what the author means, it goes from 4 to 14, and in the alternative where it is easy for them to identify the main idea, it goes from 3 to 6 (Table 8). The results show that they have improved their reading comprehension.

The critical reader can identify the purpose of the text, distinguish between facts and opinions to evaluate the information communicated by the author, and compare it with the knowledge he/she already has on the same subject [34]. At the creative level, the reader can transform the information read into new ideas.

Table 8. When I read a text do I identify the main idea?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
I can imagine what the text is about.	16	69.6	3	13.0	0.013
Because I can express in my own words what the author wants to say	4	17.4	14	60.9	
I recognize the main idea and the secondary idea.	0	0	0	0	
I easily identify the main idea	3	13.0	6	26.1	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

About this item, when asked the question When you read a text, is it easy to understand what the author wants to say? There is a significant difference between the diagnostic test and the final test and the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.015 < .05$), in the first place 9 students say that, if it is easy to understand what the author says, in the final test 6 state that no and in the indicative sometimes 8 students state that if they understand and it passes to 17 who say that it is easy to understand what the author says (Table 9).

Table 9. When you read a text, does it make it easier for you to understand what the author wants to say?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Yes	9	39.1	6	26.1	0.015
No	6	26.1	0	0	
Sometimes	8	34.8	17	73.9	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

This is evidence that in the process carried out with the students, they acquire and strengthen skills to understand the reading of texts. A reader should be able to understand and analyze different types of texts. Use advanced language models to interpret the meaning and context of these texts. However, the interpretation must be based on the pattern and structure of the language, as well as prior knowledge stored during training [35]. Although a wide range of texts can be understood, comprehension may not be perfect in all cases, especially when dealing with very specific contexts.

In Table 10, which asks about the definition of a sung narrative, there is a significant difference between the two diagnostic and final tests, the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.029 < .05$), mainly in the first two items in the pretest 4 to 0 and 6 to 0 but if it is observed already in the third item, oral or written description of a real or fictitious event at the beginning 4 students answer and it passes to 3, in the link all the above in the pretest 9 students answer and the posttest 20 testify this answer.

Table 10. A sung narrative is

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Event account	4	17.4	0	0	0.029
Explore and elaborate on what can happen	6	26.1	0	0	
Oral or written description of a real or fictitious event	4	17.4	3	13.0	
All of the above	9	39.1	20	87.0	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

This shows that between the diagnostic test and the final test, there is an important process of understanding and reflection on the part of the students in this course because they demonstrate that they have acquired knowledge concerning the sung narratives. This topic has been approached from the theories that account for identity processes, interculturality, and historical memory; it is important to recognize - in addition to their production of identities in intercultural relations and recovery of memory - the transforming potential implicit in them, a potential that is constituted by elements that counteract the control models that restrict freedom and human expressions [36].

For the item asking what is a sung narrative, there is a significant difference between the diagnostic and final tests, the bilateral significance is lower $\alpha = .05$ ($.002 < .05$), (Table 11). Since in the first three alternatives in the initial test, their frequencies are reduced in the final results, alternative 4 belongs to all the previous

ones initially 11 labels this alternative and then 21. This means that most of the students recognize that a sung narrative is a story that makes dialogue possible, that has to do with music, and that tells a frequency or a continuation of their events.

Table 11. What is a sung narrative?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
It is a story that enables dialogue between cultures.	0	0	0	0	0.002
It is a story through music	7	30.4	1	4.3	
It is a way of telling a sequence or series of actions or events	5	21.7	1	4.3	
All of the above.	11	47.8	21	91.3	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

The Sung Narratives are understood as experiences, lessons learned, and anecdotal stories that are expressed through music, they significantly intervene with human beings and are present in the construction of cultural identities with crucial contributions. As its name indicates, they sing, dance, and build stories that seek to eliminate hierarchies that belong to ancestral origins, to cultures, to the sowing of feelings thoughts, and customs. It is to rescue those things that were stripped, it is to give light to the voices of people who in one way or another have been silenced, and to answer those questions of where I come from. They are also lessons learned, anecdotes that are told through music, they also eloquently mediate human beings and contribute to the construction of cultural identities that generate significant results [37].

According to the results of Table 12, there is a significant difference between the two diagnostic and final tests, since the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.010 < .05$), in the question: Have you been taught at school what you should do to understand when you read? For the diagnostic test, 12 students marked the alternative all of the above, in the final test it increased to 22, this shows that a large number of students in this course are clear that they read daily and make their analysis of it, that they consult the meaning of each word they do not know and read short stories. In formal education, students are provided with techniques and strategies to understand what they read, such as identifying the main ideas, underlining, taking notes, and asking questions [38], which help them to have adequate comprehension.

Table 12. Have you been taught at school what to do to understand when you read?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Read daily and analyze what you read	5	22	0	0	0.010
Read short stories	2	9	0	0	
Look up the meaning of the words you do not understand	4	17	1	4	
All of the above	12	52	22	96	
Total	23	100	23	100	

When asked what they do with the words they do not know when reading a story, a difference is observed between the diagnostic test and the final test (Table 13), therefore, the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.004 < .05$), in the first test 6 students state that they look up the meaning in a dictionary and the second or final test 19 of these affirm it. For the other response alternatives, in I read the text again from 7 to none, I comment with the teacher what I have read 8 decreases to 3, and I ask myself questions about the text 2 decreases to 1.

Table 13. When you are reading a story, what do you do with the words you do not understand?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
I look up the meaning in the dictionary	6	26	19	83	0.004
I read the text again	7	30	0	0	
I discuss with the teacher what I have read	8	35	3	13	
I ask myself questions about the text	2	9	1	4	

Generally, when they find words, they do not know while reading, they must stop reading and try to deduce the meaning according to the context in which it is found [38]. If they still fail to understand, they should

resort to the dictionary to clarify the meaning, thus developing the reading process and autonomous learning.

To the question, if they read accompanied by their parents (Table 14), the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.015 < .05$), that is, there is evidence of a difference between the diagnostic test and the final test. Initially, in the alternative Yes responds to 3, which passes to none in the final test, in No from 16 decreases to 12, and sometimes from 4 increases to 11. This shows that the accompaniment provided by parents at home in terms of students' reading improves, but there is still room for improvement both by parents and caregivers. Reading with children at home from an early age creates a positive bond with books and reading.

Table 14. When you are at home, do you read with your parents?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Yes	3	13	0	0	0.015
No	16	70	12	52	
Sometimes	4	17	11	48	
Total	23	100	23	100	

This helps them develop a habit of reading for pleasure, which is crucial to their academic and personal success throughout life. When parents read to their children, they are modeling reading behaviors and showing that reading is a valuable and enjoyable activity. In addition, reading aloud exposes them to richer and more varied language than that used in everyday conversation. This helps expand their vocabulary and improves their language comprehension [39]. Students who are read too regularly tend to have better language skills and a greater ability to express themselves verbally.

Concerning the question How have you been taught to argue what you read (Table 15), the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.001 < .05$), and there is a significant difference between the answers of the diagnostic and final tests; it is evident that in the diagnostic test, only one student indicates that he knows a topic in which he had doubts, passing to 17 who indicate this answer. Being sure of what is said from 8 to 1, recognizing and respecting the opinion of others from 8 to 1, and explaining what happens in the text from 6 to 4. Before being able to argue about a text, students must understand it completely.

Table 15. How have you been taught to argue what you read?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
Recognizing a questionable issue	1	4.3	17	73.9	0.001
Be sure of what you say	8	34.8	1	4.3	
Recognize and respect the opinions of others	8	34.8	1	4.3	
Explaining what happens in the text	6	26.1	4	17.4	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

This includes identifying the main themes, understanding the context, and recognizing the key points that the author communicates. They must then identify the main arguments presented in the text and the evidence that supports them [38]. This helps them build a solid foundation for their critical reasoning and analysis the formulation of informed opinions, and the expression of their ideas clearly and persuasively, where they contribute to a deeper understanding and analysis.

About the question that when they finish reading a text, how do they identify the most important events that happened (Table 16), between the responses of the two moments of application of the instrument, the bilateral significance is less than $\alpha = .05$ ($.000 < .05$), there is a significant difference. The majority at the end indicate that they say what happened at different times. This shows that the group of students can argue about the facts read. Generally, at the end of reading a text, they should perform the identification of the most important facts implies reflection on the key events that have occurred throughout the story [11]. This is achieved by identifying the moments that have the greatest impact on the development of the plot, significant changes in the characters or the situation, as well as any other element that is crucial for comprehension.

Table 16. When you finish reading a text, how do you identify the most important events that happened?

	Diagnostic test		Final test		Sig. Bilateral
	F	%	F	%	
I describe the organization of the text	6	26.1	0	0	0.000
I recognize the initial situation of the characters	7	30.4	0	0	
I recognize the initial situation of the characters	2	8.7	1	4.3	
I tell what happened at different times	8	34.8	22	95.7	
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	

The Sung Narratives program is an educational strategy that combines music and narrative to promote critical reading and comprehension among elementary school students, which has captured the interest of students in a significant way because music and rhythm allow for a more attractive and exciting reading experience with greater interest and motivation to actively engage with the texts, which enhances the ability to analyze and critically evaluate what they read.

The combination of music and storytelling strengthens language development and listening comprehension, and helps students better understand story structure and narrative elements, in turn, these skills facilitate text comprehension and allow students to identify arguments, themes, and points of view more effectively.

The music and lyrics of the sung narratives have the power to evoke emotions and create affective connections with the stories and characters, which motivates students to reflect on the topics discussed, enriching their ability to form arguments and opinions. It also stimulates creativity because it allows the exploration of different forms of artistic expression and reinterpreting stories through music. Thus, the effect of critical reading encourages students to develop unique perspectives and to question different interpretations of texts, thus promoting deeper critical thinking.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The results show a significant difference between the diagnostic tests and the final tests, indicating remarkable progress in the student's reading comprehension skills. In coherence with the theoretical foundation, in addition to deepening the interpretations that emerged, it also reveals significant connections between the findings and the conceptual foundations of the study.

These results provide a valuable contribution to the educational field, demonstrating the potential of sung narratives as a pedagogical tool to encourage and strengthen critical reading and the development of cognitive skills in the students participating in this study. It also reflects the effectiveness of the techniques and strategies taught in the school.

The improvement in the accompaniment of parents in the habit of reading at home and the ability to argue what they read, have also improved and demonstrated a deeper analysis and a clearer expression of ideas. This is reflected in their ability to identify and analyze issues and motives, as well as to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The improvement in student's ability to argue and express their ideas clearly and coherently is particularly notable, suggesting a greater mastery of cognitive and communicative skills.

Activities related to the sung narrative encourage teamwork and collaboration among students. The discussion and exchange of ideas during these activities enrich the understanding of texts and allow students to consider different perspectives and arguments more effectively.

The Sung Narratives program impacts critical reading in elementary school students; the elements inherent in this approach suggest significant positive effects. Future research may focus on empirical studies that evaluate how these types of specific interventions influence students' critical reading skills, using methods such as comparison with control groups and measurement of long-term outcomes.

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