

## **The dynamic process of text construction at the primary school level**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The process of text construction at the primary education level is the work of many researchers. In spite of the existence of printed and digital information on the subject, it has been verified by the authors' experience in exchanges with graduated teachers and teachers in training, that there are insufficiencies in the treatment of text construction, which limits the acquisition of knowledge and socio-discursive skills in students. The objective of the article is to explain the didactic-cognitive conception of the stages and subprocesses that dynamize the treatment of text construction from the studies carried out by Dr.C. Ileana Domínguez. The correct application of this dynamic by the teachers will help them to form the efficient text constructor that is desired based on their interests and needs.

**Keywords:** Dynamic learning; Components; Text construction.

### **Introduction**

In the process of construction of texts it is taken into account how the acquisition of knowledge goes "... from living contemplation to abstract thought and from this to practice; such is the dialectical path of knowledge of truth, of knowledge of objective reality" (Lenin, 1990, p.165 ), which is renewed in each historical moment, aimed at

transforming the material and spiritual life of society, since knowledge "is the reflection of the objective world in human thought, this can be mediate or immediate" (Rosental & Ludin, 1981, p.84).

It is a basic element to teach students to think on the basis of previous knowledge and experiences as an objective condition to solve the demands of their learning, of communicative situations and the possibilities of self-regulation in this interactivity, this is how language develops through the relationships established by students in the different contexts of action.

The category text has been defined by several authors (Van Dijk, 1983), (Lomas, 1993), (Roméu, 2003), (Sales, 2007), (Montaño, 2010); those who converge in significant characteristics or elements: the speaker or sender, the listener or receiver, the communication medium or channel, the code or message with a form and content, coherence (revealed as a semantic, pragmatic and formal category or cohesion), the context (with its different manifestations), the intention (desire of the sender of a discourse and achieve something), purpose (expected response in the receiver) and a semantic closure.

The definition is assumed to be: coherent communicative utterance, carrying a meaning; that fulfills a communicative function (representative, expressive, artistic) in a specific context; that is produced with a certain communicative intention and purpose; that makes it possible to fulfill certain communicative tasks for which the sender uses different procedures and chooses the most appropriate linguistic means. (Roméu, 2003, p. 12)

The construction of texts is a dynamic and complex process, adjusted not only to linguistic or grammatical norms, but also to pragmatic ones, which requires adjustment to the different situations and communicative intentions that characterize verbal and communicative exchanges in the various spheres of social, family and school activity.

It can be affirmed that until a few decades ago, research on writing, writing manuals and didactics, in Cuba and abroad, adopted the orientation that writing leads to a physical, finite, static product. This conception only responds to one part of the activity of writing: the final product.

The school understood that one of the primary teachings of writing is to require the presentation of texts on a neat sheet of paper, with straight lines and margins,

with exact paragraphs, without erasures or erasures. The internal writing, the non-definitive one, was discriminated. (Cassany, 1997, P. 93).

The Cuban elementary school has been the bearer of many didactics for the achievement of communication, from the linguistic and literary knowledge used for the teaching of composition, as it has been called for many years, an important skill of expression that now adopts a greater significance when referring to the construction or production of texts.

The study of these sources has not been sufficiently taken advantage of by teachers, in whom there are insufficiencies regarding the methodological procedure for the construction of texts in primary education, which has been corroborated through classroom observations during inspections carried out with the municipal direction of education and the daily experience of the authors in exchanges in workshop courses, seminars and postgraduate courses; being evident that it limits the acquisition of knowledge and socio-discursive skills that allow efficient communication to schoolchildren.

In order to achieve this goal, it is proposed as an objective to explain the didactic-cognitive conception of the stages and subprocesses for the treatment of the construction of texts from the studies carried out by Dr.C. Ileana Domínguez, in order to provide the teachers of the primary education level with tools to develop communication in their students.

The development of communicative competence is achieved in a process of interaction between comprehension and construction in the production of meanings. Comprehension occurs from the general to the particular, since it is from the global aspect of situations that it is possible to understand the specific ones. However, the development of construction presents an exactly inverse sequence: from the particular to the general; that is, from isolated elements to complex combinations.

Writing is a process of meaning production, of which the writer has no conscious control until after the ideas are written. In this sense, it is considered that ideas are produced while they are being written; they emerge at that very moment and not before. Learning to write involves a series of commitments that are never self-evident: it implies that people write, speak and read a lot. It is necessary to remember that writing is a macro skill and that the natural procedure to develop it is constant practice. Hence, at the primary level, the construction of texts, from the simplest to the most complex structures, is included as a fundamental objective from the first grades.

## **Development**

In today's elementary school, based on the studies and criteria expressed by notable linguists and researchers, steps or moments of the process of constructing texts, which are applied in Spanish Language classes and other disciplines to achieve efficient results in schoolchildren.

1. **Planning.** This consists of defining the objectives of the text and establishing the plan that will guide the entire production. This operation consists, in turn, of three sub-processes: the conception or generation of ideas, the organization, and the establishment of objectives according to the rhetorical situation. Two types of plans can be distinguished: process plans, which deal with the way in which writers will carry out the process. The content ones, whose function is to transform ideas into written text. These may consist of guiding ideas or phrases, key words or central ideas.
2. **Textualization.** It is constituted by the set of operations of transformation of contents into linearly organized written language. The multiplicity of demands of this operation (graphic execution of letters, orthographic, lexical, morphological, syntactic requirements), which consists of moving from a hierarchical semantic organization to a linear organization, requires frequent revisions and returns to planning operations.
3. **Revision.** This consists of reading and subsequent correction and improvement of the text. During reading, the student evaluates the result of the writing in terms of the objectives of the writing and the coherence of the content in terms of the communicative situation, the unity, quality and clarity of ideas and the creativity that may have been achieved.

They are distinguished as moments or sub-processes, to distinguish them from the teaching stages that the teacher must attend to in any writing activity, which according to the Didactics of writing are three: Orientation, Execution and Control. This is why we insist on the need not to confuse the student's process when writing with the stages of the writing activity.

The following are different positions of authors with respect to the construction of texts, important in the preparation of teachers, so that when planning and executing classes, they can recognize which position they take.

Ernesto García Alzola names four stages that must be taken into account in written expression: the motivation to write, the structure of the composition, the critique of the work, and functional self-criticism. (García, 1978). Angelina Roméu names stages in the process of constructing written texts, expressed in four moments: motivation, planning, realization and achievement of the purpose. (Roméu, 2003).

Other authors name them: 1st stage: text preparation, 2nd stage: text fixation and 3rd stage: text revision. Among these are the researchers of the Group on Didactics of Writing at the University of Geneva (Monereo, 1990). (Smith, 1989) names them: prewriting, writing and rewriting. Hayes, Scardamali and Cassany propose: planning, textualization and revision, although some of them prefer to call the last moment self-revision, due to the individual character of this moment (although it may have collective participation).

(Van Dijk, 1983), (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1997) among others, propose that three specific moments should be taken into account for the production of the new text: planning of the writing, elaboration of the writing and revision of the writing.

The following sub-processes are assumed: Student activity: planning, textualization and self-revision; and the stages of the writing activity, whether it is a complete class or part of it: Teacher activity: guidance, execution and control (Domínguez, 2000),

Likewise, it is considered appropriate to offer some requirements that make the text achieve the required quality. Aspects to be mastered by teachers that are not at all part of the concepts to be mastered by schoolchildren.

-Cohesion, which establishes the different connections that occur on the textual surface. The cohesive mechanism par excellence occurs when the referent is related to an element previously mentioned in the text, and when the relation is established with an element that is yet to appear in the text). The verbal system and the connectors also cohere the events that make up the textual world. The main mechanisms of cohesion are conjunction, disjunction, adversation and subordination.

- Coherence regulates the interaction between the concepts (structuring of knowledge) and the relationships (links established between concepts) that underlie the surface of the text. These relationships do not always appear

explicitly on the textual surface and, therefore, need to be inferred. Coherence is a result of the cognitive processes put into operation by text users.

- Intentionality refers to the attitude of the one who constructs the text, to achieve a specific goal within a plan: to transmit information, to express feelings, to create beauty.

For this, the writer has different types of text that will allow him to greet, ironize, inform, comment, value; so that the result is a cohesive and coherent text.

- Acceptability depends on factors such as knowledge of the type of text, the social or cultural situation and the goals to whose achievement the received text contributes or not. For a given organization of linguistic elements to constitute a text, it must be the result of an intentional choice on the part of the textual constructor and, for that same organization to be used in communicative interaction, it must be accepted by the receiver of the text.
- Informativeness is related to the degree of novelty or unpredictability that the content and structure of a text has for its recipients. Processing sequences with a high level of informativity requires a great effort; therefore, the textual constructor must prevent the processing task by the reader from being so arduous that it jeopardizes communication.
- Situationality involves the factors that make a text relevant to the communicative situation in which it appears. It can broaden or narrow the communicative exchange. Its influence is mediated by the subjectivity of the interlocutors, who usually introduce their own beliefs and their own goals in the mental model they construct of the communicative situation in progress.

There is currently a growing interest in considering in an integrated manner both the cognitive components and the motivational processes that influence learning, because in order to learn it is essential to "be able" to do so, which refers to the necessary capabilities, knowledge, strategies and skills, but it is also important to "want" to do so, to have sufficient willingness, intention, motivation and persistence. On the other hand, learning is not reduced exclusively to the cognitive level in the strict sense, but is also affected by other motivational aspects, which underlines the enormous interrelationship between the cognitive and affective-motivational spheres.

The construction of written texts thus seen reveals, on the one hand, the cognitive sub-processes involved in it: planning, textualization and self-revision, in which the

components explained above are activated, and, on the other hand, the stages of its teaching: orientation, execution and control, terms coined from the Didactics of Writing. Both are represented to guide the teacher in the conduction of the process as well as the student himself so that he can regulate himself.

Hence, in order to update teachers in the text construction process, the authors explain the practical and restructured instrumentation of (Domínguez, 2000) in "The competencies of an efficient textual constructor" (The competencies of an efficient textual constructor), which are expanded below:

In the first stage, the pragmatic, semantic and syntactic orientations of the task are offered and the means of communication is specified, in this case through the written channel. In this planning subprocess, the learner's culture is updated, his or her personality is revealed, and he or she adapts to the production context. From the beginning, cognitive and metacognitive strategies are activated. It is the moment of:

Motivation; feeling desire to, getting ready to work and invest time in it, feeling capable of doing the task, generating expectations; the formulation of objectives that allow defining the purposes of the text, (general, specific, informative and attitudinal objectives); ideation by retrieving ideas from memory that may be relevant to the writing task: knowledge about the topic, discursive schemes, work techniques, data about the possible recipient to make rhetorical decisions; orienting oneself in the organization of ideas according to the objective; creativity, ways of looking, thinking and doing: imagining how to perform the task, creating alternative ways to face it, proposing changes to the topic, content, form; elaboration of the plan: of questions, statements, thesis; rereading and reevaluation of everything planned.

The product: initial texts: lists, diagrams, plans, concept maps, graphs, free annotations. In the previous stage, which can be based on the production of oral texts, reading texts or other activities, it is important that teachers use procedures for the prevention of errors, mainly orthographic or grammatical.

The teacher must understand that the essential purpose of the initial preparatory activities is to provide the learner with the necessary and sufficient knowledge to be able to successfully face the writing task. If he/she considers it, at this moment he/she can work on the comprehension of the communicative situation in a creative way, without making a formal orientation.

Execution is the second stage to which the teacher leads the student to textualize the previously planned information. This writing is not definitive, it can be done in parts

and come back to them. The elaboration of the meaning often causes continuous erasures to adapt it to a certain syntax, to a specific objective. The order of elements is changed, one word or idea is replaced by another, sentences and paragraphs are articulated and disarticulated. Furthermore, the formal and presentational aspects required by any written text are specified and evaluated, and what is produced is reread and reorganized.

Textualization is the sub-process that bears the greatest cognitive overload, so it also requires the activation of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and creativity, in order to positively face difficulties with appropriate solutions. The teacher must actively and adequately guide this moment, especially if it does not occur in his presence, so that the motivation for the task does not decline and the activity is an enjoyment, rather than a class task. It should be taken into account that, according to the development of the students' skills, the subprocesses that occur in them will manifest themselves in different ways and speeds, so it is necessary to attend to all of them and, in addition, consider the possibility of the students to make mistakes. The product: intermediate texts: first, second, third drafts...you can elaborate as many as you consider necessary.

It is important to point out to teachers that in this subprocess, students go through the different subprocesses: planning, writing, revision and adjustment, which have a certain consecution, but not in a linear way, because the recursive nature of writing encourages the student to return to his writing to revise, readjust and reverse it until a satisfactory version of the text is achieved. These actions must be closely controlled because the elementary school student, especially in the early grades, does not possess sufficient skills and abilities to allow self-regulation and self-correction of his product without external support.

Although control is present throughout the process, there is a final didactic moment of closure, when the activity is concluded, listening to some finished texts, or to the concerns expressed by the students during the process, or providing guidance on how to continue. Allowing dialogue, exchange, suggesting ideas, exemplifying, creating productive activities that help them to improve, is also a way of concluding the process, so that it is open to a new writing task.

The self-revision subprocess is activated from the moment the student rereads what he/she plans, revises his/her plan, fixes what he/she has written, erases and rewrites throughout the process. It has a final moment when the text is finally written. The product: the finished text, when the student is satisfied with its construction. This will



be the final moment of the process and will mark the beginning of a new writing task and a new process.

The above presupposes an updating process for teachers in the procedure of the text construction component, resulting in a better preparation to plan their class system and to carry out an adequate conduction of the teaching-learning process in primary education. Its implementation will show the dynamics revealed in this process, as the student constantly interacts, under the teacher's direction, with the text, overcoming the levels established for each subprocess and becoming efficient communicators adjusted to the communicative situations of the different contexts of interaction.

## **Conclusions**

The explanation of the didactic-cognitive conception of the stages and sub-processes for the treatment of the construction of texts issued by the experts, updates the teachers in the correct conduction of the teaching-learning process of this component at the Primary educational level.

The correct application of the dynamics that characterizes the treatment of text comprehension by teachers, will succeed in forming the desired efficient text constructor based on their interests and needs.