



# Social Sciences pedagogical strategies for developing research training skills to mitigate students' lack of reading

Las ciencias sociales estrategias pedagógicas para el desarrollo de habilidades formativas en investigación para mitigar la ausencia de lectura de los estudiantes

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## Abstract

This article helps to understand research as an academic practice by proposing strategies against the weak habit of reading in training settings and establishes the possibility of articulating interests in the design of forms and methods that allow responding to the crisis of interpretation of social problems. This reflection arises from the phenomenological-hermeneutic methodology with a social critical approach in a period of two years, training and accompanying 436 students with 145 proposals for formative research; the collecting of the information was through 5 semi-structured interviews with teachers and 50 student surveys. Therefore, this reflection is the initial point of view of a pedagogical proposal that promotes reading and critical reflection exercises.

**Key words:** Research, reading habits, critical reflection, pedagogical practice.

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## Resumen

El presente artículo ayuda a la comprensión de la investigación como práctica académica al plantear estrategias frente al débil hábito de la lectura en escenarios de formación y al establecer la posibilidad de articular intereses en el diseño de formas y métodos que permitan dar respuesta a la crisis de interpretación de los problemas sociales. Esta reflexión se plantea desde la metodología fenomenológica-hermenéutica con un enfoque crítico social en un período de dos años, formando y acompañando a 436 estudiantes con 145 propuestas de investigación formativa; la recolección de la información fue por medio de 5 entrevistas semiestructuradas a docentes y 50 encuestas a estudiantes. Por tanto, esta reflexión es el punto inicial de una propuesta pedagógica que promueva la lectura y los ejercicios de reflexión crítica.

**Palabras clave:** investigación, hábitos de lectura, reflexión crítica, práctica pedagógica.

## Introduction

The social reality of the Colombian context has the urgency in the development of pedagogical strategies that allow social transformation through research and innovation (Robledo, 2007). This generates a recognition of the role of social sciences in promoting new readings of reality that allow us to respond to multiple phenomena (Araya, 2011). For this reason, reflecting on the training processes for progress in investigative skills for social transformation, human development and social management is of vital importance (Viniestra, 1990).

In this way, social sciences have the challenge of strengthening research for the generation of new knowledge (Bonilla-Castro & Rodríguez, 2005), if this the case, from the process of teaching and learning in research the transformation of curricular and pedagogical contents is considered to be more inclusive of the needs and interests of students (Palacios, 1998). This means that research training must start from the interest and motivation of the student, recognizing reflection, analysis and interpretation skills for the creation of research proposals (Amestoy de Sánchez, 2002).

Then, the generation of knowledge in the training processes seeks to generate structures of contextual, innovative and pertinent thought to the population and territorial demands (Guerrero, 2007), which in turn improve not only in reflection but also in the processes developed with the

communities (Nistal, 2008). In this sense, it is important to build spaces that allow successful encounters of formative research practices that show progress in the development of reflection skills but also argumentative.

In the same way, social sciences must recognize that the research procedures make a contribution in the disciplinary and the professional in the perspective of knowledge construction (Roa-Mendoza, 2016), but also the role that students play in the spaces of reflection to the design of investigative methods that materialize ways and forms of seeing and interpreting reality in response to gaps in knowledge and demands of professional practice.

Thus, the central axis for social sciences in research training is the recognition of students' skills (Balbo, 2008), which allow them to contribute to knowledge through the use of instruments and tools given by the discipline in the critical and innovative reflection of social realities in the field (Vera, 2014). However, the skills of students in research training in social sciences arise in the little love for reading, problems in writing and weaknesses in argumentation (Reyes, 2013).

In this way, research becomes a challenge and fundamental function of the social sciences (Zemelman, 2001), because it allows students to develop and strengthen critical, proactive and inclusive thinking in new ways of understanding social realities (Beltrán-Llavador, Íñigo-Bajos & Mata-Segreda, 2014). In this way, it becomes a duty of social sciences to not only identify the shortcomings of students but also to propose different ways or channels that strengthen investigative procedures (González et al., 2004).

Thus, the reflective analysis of the students' reading skills allows us to understand the evolution of the research (Ramírez, 2009), where the training process is the setting through which knowledge can be communicated or transmitted (Ordóñez et al., 2007). This should aim at comprehensive training to develop skills, habits and aptitudes that have been able to undertake and participate effectively in research procedures.

Therefore, the challenge lies in the rigorousness that the students pose in the procedures to generate a systematic analysis of reality, which contributes considerably to the professional intervention practices in rigorous and disciplined actions (Serrano, 2000). This exercise has allowed the identification of student attitudes such as anxiety, disgust and frustration against research work (Aldana & Joya, 2011), these are acquired and learned throughout the student's life and raised in research training a challenge against experience determining the proximity with the exercise of research (Blanco & Alvarado, 2005).

In this way, it is important to contribute to the accumulation of knowledge generated from and for the practice of social sciences by means of research (Batthyány et al., 2011), based on motivation versus the consolidation of habits of critical reflection of the objects of study of interest. Understanding that training must be understood as focused and organized actions

that guide and facilitate the appropriation and development of knowledge through skills and attitudes that are based on an individual interest (Guerrero, 2007).

In this sense, it seeks to promote the capacity for reflection and analysis to carry out certain tasks in the investigative procedure (Osses, Sánchez & Ibáñez, 2006), such as bibliographic tracking, construction of concepts or categories and the development of objectives, that is, knowing how to structure an investigative procedure. This allows to pose as a question for reflection, How Social Sciences promote pedagogical strategies for the development of training skills in research to mitigate the absence of reading by students?

Thus, within the theoretical review, it is evidenced that consolidating capacities in a model of competencies about the research process is made explicit from academic exercises (Gallardo, 2008), such as study groups and research hotbeds that contribute to the strengthening of research skills. In this proposal, an approach to reality is proposed from a curious attitude not limited by prejudices before the exercise of investigating a social context, and also a process of recognition of sources of information, which allow through, of reading a situated and truthful learning exercise (Teberosky, 2007).

In this sense, the experience of working in real contexts allows the student to put their skills and abilities to the test in relation to their theoretical knowledge (Estrada, 2014), enabling the construction of an investigative procedure from their interests that begins with the identification of the topic to the methodological procedure to respond to the knowledge gap proposed in the research question (Padua, 2018).

In this way, the reader can identify the researcher's skills (Rivas, 2011), understood as the practical ability of a student in the investigative procedure of observing, listening and recording information according to the object of study (Rodríguez, 2003). This is relevant in the exercise of delimitating and targeting a study object, which is based on the student's interest (Booth et al., 2008).

That is, lack of experience in investigation procedures should not impede the value of discovering, and generating a new knowledge of the realities requires being able to identify that all human beings possess investigative skills (Martínez & Márquez, 2014). Thus, a research exercise must start from a primary and disciplined procedure that emphasizes reading, with a purely exploratory character (Argudín & Luna, 1994).

Therefore, one of the actions that must be taken in the investigative procedure is to consolidate the habit of reading (Gatti, 2005), being a challenge for the social sciences in the current context (Martínez & Márquez, 2014). Where, young people associate the exercise of reading with boredom (Teberosky, 2007), this enhances the imaginary of relating reading as an activity linked more by obligation than by the own will that the researcher must have (Iturrizaga, 2012).

Finally, the above regains strength when many students in training do not give importance to the reading exercise (Roque et al., 2012), showing weaknesses in the argumentation without theoretical foundations, in the weak identification of theoretical references since they limit their search to the former found on the internet without filtering or simply making the decision not to read. Consequently, this results in the weakness and not goodness of the investigative procedure.

## Materials and Methods

In this way, this reflection arises from the phenomenological-hermeneutic methodology supported by the notion of lived experience (Carabajo, 2008), in the formative accompaniment determining as interest the identification of habits in reading, abstraction and content articulation, which allow formulating thesis with arguments. In this sense, it was sought to promote the capacity for reflection and analysis in carrying out specific tasks such as bibliographic search, construction of concepts or categories (Cárcamo, 2005).

The approach used in this reflection is the social critic according to Cebotarev (2003), the intention is to explore the reading bases of students in training in social sciences in the investigative procedure and the uses of critical thinking, defined as an analytical and self-reflective method (Melero, 2012). Thus, the relevance of this approach raised the possibility of identifying the skills developed in research training through the habit of reading.

This reflection is supported thanks to the work done during two years, training and accompanying the academic practice in research to 436 students with 145 proposals for formative research of the Social Work program of Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios (Centro Regional Soacha). Where research is recognized as a procedure that goes beyond the classroom (Díaz, 2018), this develops an academic experience for the social sciences that allows direct contact with realities, academic technical teams and institutions.

That is, research as academic practice proposes the need for continuous and timely support from teachers to students to obtain consistent knowledge (Prieto, 2004). In this way, the collection of information was proposed with the categorization of these 145 proposals in a research matrix and the application of a perception survey to 50 students of fourth and fifth semester of the Social Work program, these students were selected randomly.

Consequently, this is contrasted with the information provided by 5 teachers from the Social Work program who are part of the research training process and enrich reflection. In this way, the information is collected through 5 semi-structured interviews with teachers and the application of 50 surveys to students, crossing it with the 145 proposals.

Therefore, this exercise allowed to know the reality of the pedagogical strategies in research in the social sciences, given in an environment of trust that minimizes the risk that students are afraid or complicate the investigation but, on the contrary, develop proposals that allow the honesty and simplicity in the realities that are the object of knowledge, generating critical subjects in the face of the construction of research spaces and the incidence or changes in the construction of social realities.

## Results

Consequently, this reflection allowed to identify the scenario of research training in the Social Work program through six lines of research such as training and praxis in Social Work, contemporary subject, critical social thought, culture and politics, community, poverty and family problems and Minuto de Dios thought. This allows to give a context to the interest for the development of skills, habits and aptitudes in students capable of undertaking and participating effectively in research projects, this suggests that knowledge of realities in 38.4 % of students allows a more rewarding and meaningful experience in their training, generating a broader and more complete vision of the different social dynamics (Amestoy de Sánchez, 2002).

This is based on the type of skills that students develop, since 53.8 % promote the skill in the habit of reading through a change in behavior (Argudín & Luna, 1994). Where 30.7 % state that knowledge makes it more competitive in research settings (Balbo, 2008), raising the responsibility of social sciences to be changing to the demands of realities (Gallardo, 2008) and to the need of students in training to develop skills that allow assertive responses to personal, institutional and social dynamics. Consequently, it is identified that 23 % of the respondents state that when they develop reading, what generally happens is that they develop critical skill (Martínez & Márquez, 2014). In this way, the research teaching-learning process in social science scenarios focuses on the interest of students through the arrangement, ordering and sequences of ideas in an original, flexible and feasible way in the spaces of reflection (Blanco & Alvarado, 2005), where 60 % of teachers state that students' research initiatives are good since they manage to identify and interpret social realities allowing to recognize the importance of the procedure in a knowledge gap (Osses, Sánchez & Ibáñez, 2006).

It is also identified that 75.3 % of students recognize the non-habit of reading and knowledge gaps, articulated to ignorance in the search classification in 45 %, to the non-development of bibliographic search in 35 %, to little interest in reading in 15 %. In this way, 40 % of teachers state that reading comprehension is regular or bad, associating difficulties in methodological resources for understanding and reflection on social realities.

Then, social sciences raise the need to seek the way in which research experiences mediate and transform learning, as a result, 30.6 % of students identify the relevance of knowledge and critical skill already that allows to identify misinterpretation or gaps in knowledge to understand

reality. In this way, formative research experiences generate processes that modify behaviors, through the strengthening of skills, values and attitudes of students (Aldana & Joya, 2011).

This exercise shows a significant advance in academic practices in research in social sciences and a marked interest of students in investigating issues related to community, poverty and family problems with 48.3 %, where the reflection of social reality starts from a theoretical review that requires instrumental knowledge that configures the action in real contexts from an approach.

In this way, a strategy that has been effective in investigative training according to 80 % of teachers is the generation of a collective and open space that seeks to strengthen the capacity for argumentation, supported by rigorous, informed reflection and structured of individual research experience. This points to the importance of objectivity and distance from the object of study to access new knowledge with the claim of truth (Rivas, 2011).

In this way, the first step to transform reading habits, according to 87 % of students, is taken by selecting a topic that motivates them to carry out an investigative procedure, depending on their interests. This provides the development of two clear actions, the first the search in learning and two to make relevant progress in the defined social realities (Salazar, 2000).

That is, the first step consists of individually recognizing the stimuli and efforts that motivate the exercise of reading (González & Vega, 2010), bearing in mind that it is not easy, due to the existence of conditions such as non-habit in 95 %, the level of education of parents in 45 % and the lack of demand in academic spaces in 30 %. The foregoing strengthens the imaginary of relating reading as an activity linked more by training compliance than by the relevance it has in the procedure (Guerrero, 2007).

Therefore, aspects that predispose students in the approach to reading have been consolidated, where 75 % indicate that they have not been to a library, 85 % does not have knowledge in database search and 87 % say they do not read scientific content, these are aspects that increase the little desire to appropriate the investigative procedure. In fact, one of the great barriers when training begins is the resistance of the majority of students to the development of the act of reading, with which, the very essence of the act of reading is lost and there is a risk of failing to do efforts to encourage it (Salazar, 2000).

Thus, the great challenge of social sciences that train in research is to provide new tools or instruments that enhance skills and practices of reflection, understanding and analysis of social realities (Gatti, 2005). This arises from a friendly and simple exercise that recognizes the need to design tools that can facilitate the mental processing of information, the exercise of understanding and abstraction of content (Bonilla & Rodríguez, 2005).

In this sense, this allows the development of a pedagogical proposal that promotes critical reading and the recognition of students in modifying the commitment time (Teberosky, 2007), the importance of it and the recognition of the difficulties that arise in the exercise to read (Reyes, 2013), working exercises for reflection and understanding of social realities (Amestoy de Sánchez, 2002).

Consequently, one of the first works in the investigative procedure is the promotion of critical reading, calling for the social sciences to enhance the exercises from the perspective of interpretation and knowledge production (González & Vega, 2010). This suggests that institutions today lack reflection, understanding, transformation and innovation through research in different local contexts (Carlino, 2005).

In this sense, the reflection of social reality starts from a theoretical review that requires instrumental knowledge (Nistal, 2008), where the action is configured in real contexts from reading (Iturrizaga, 2012). In this way, habits are a broad concept derived from the disciplinary field in the social sciences that allow to account for different constructions to see reality and intervene in it, they constitute new views on various phenomena (Ramírez, 2009).

Therefore, the exercise of reading according to 97 % of the students, having completed the training process, relate it to the fact that it provides the organization of ideas, helps to establish sequences of texts, and in the development of synthesis capacity. In this way, social sciences should generate instruments such as reviews or reading cards that make it possible to demonstrate the student's assessment of a text, identify causal relationships and capture the meaning of the author's arguments (González et al., 2004).

It is here, where reading takes hold as interactive processing, where students are active subjects who use information related to their topic of interest, construct meanings from their conceptual schemes and their knowledge of reality in contrast to data that provide the texts, for the elaboration of meanings.

## Discussion

Thus, an investigation can be considered valid depending on the degree of accuracy of the description of the study subjects, on the kindness and achievement of the answer to the research question, on the adjustment of tools and techniques used in the investigative procedure, as well as the ability to corroborate the conclusions with evidence (González, 2002). In other words, the reading exercise allows reaching a state of understanding of reality necessary to overcome the difficulties that arise in the researcher's work (Taylor & Bogdan, 1987).



In others, researchers can criticize, evaluate or judge what has been read in relation to the content or the author, by means of questions, making it possible to judge whether or not they agree with the messages, or relate what they read to other readings or to other situations (Pachón, 1998). So, when they start the research procedure, many think that reading is understanding what the author says and repeating it without variations, thereby losing the very essence of the act of reading and running the risk of failing in efforts to encourage it (Salazar, 2000).

In this way, the consensus that must develop between the reading habit and the students' imaginations is characterized by being a process where the reader is the protagonist, in a process that develops in a suspended communication model, in the one that intervenes the reader, text and author triad (Solé, 2000). Thus, research practices need a pedagogical orientation so that the research procedure is easily accessible for students and they can transfer without difficulty from one academic space to another and from one need to another (González & Vega, 2010).

This affirms that students are part of the academic community by virtue of the appropriation of their forms of reasoning and discursive practices (Carlino, 2005), where it is important to point out the subject-object relationship, in which the object it takes on significance when the subject is interested in it (Araujo, 2007). This develops a conception in the understanding of a world within determined contexts, where the changing and mutable character of reality and the diversity of the social open the possibility of the emergence of the new (Mucchielli, 2001).

Finally, the scientific research method raises processes of reasoning and questioning, which begins with the abstraction of a new fact, little known, insufficiently explained in a given context, which raises a need to be confirmed and observed through reading. Consequently, this approach which the student has in front of the units or categories of analysis are supported and argued in this reflective exercise that recognizes research as a process of knowledge production whose basis is reading (Sánchez & Lahitte, 2013).

## Conclusions

Consequently, the first thesis in the investigative procedure is based on the need that the researcher has to define a topic of interest that facilitates movement and constant reflection on reality, thus finding motivation to face the different challenges that research requires. That is why the development of changes in different habits must be recognized, initially in the habit of reading.

Therefore, the little or no habit of reading initially develops processes of frustration and impotence in the investigative procedure, identifying a problem, which has a solution based on the individual will of the student to strengthen that habit and that with the approach of

strategies in social sciences, the necessary environment can be developed for the student to form the necessary competencies for the understanding of social realities.

In this way, reading allows the student to adjust to the investigative procedures, since it is the element that stimulates and expands the understanding of reality, allowing the generation of favorable dispositions towards the recognition of the object of study. Thus, the great challenge of social sciences is to generate new tools or instruments that enhance skills and practices of reflection, understanding and analysis of realities.

Finally, students find a greater demand in the comprehension and production of texts through reviews and/or files, since they promote the articulation of reading and writing processes that favor the research procedure. This guides the researcher in the search for information through databases, support in virtual platforms and visits to libraries.

Consequently, the social sciences must formulate research routes that cross the curriculum, seeking in turn to guide and enhance the work of students in research procedures. In this way, it gives students in the framework of social sciences confidence in the appropriate and pertinent knowledge to carry out in an informed way the formative research, being a central element of the professionalization that specifies the purposes of in the construction of knowledge.

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