

# MENDIVE



Original article

## Methodological action for the use of case studies in the initial training of speech therapists

**Accionar metodológico para la utilización del estudio de casos en la formación inicial del logopeda**

**Ação metodológica para utilização de estudos de caso na formação inicial de fonoaudiólogos**

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**Received:** July 6, 2023

**Accepted:** December 8, 2024

### ABSTRACT

The case study in the training of speech therapists contributes to the development of the professional pedagogical skills necessary to direct comprehensive speech therapy care. It constitutes an essential learning resource to achieve the objectives of the professional model. This includes the exploration of communication and language, speech therapy diagnosis, the design of the speech therapy strategy and the evaluation of the evolution of the students during the speech therapy care process. In this article, the results of the methodological work carried out with the second-year teaching staff of the Bachelor's Degree in Speech design integrative tasks based on the Therapy Education are presented to use of case studies. These tasks are designed to contribute to the development of vocational teaching skills. Analytical-synthetic, historical-logical, systematization and documentary analysis research methods were used, which allowed determining methodological procedures aimed at preparing the teaching staff to meet the proposed objective. For this methodological action, the objectives of the year, the contents of the previous and current subjects, as well as the professional problems of educational practice were considered. The results showed the relevance of the proposal, reflected in the main transformations of the professional pedagogical skills during the initial training of the speech therapist.

**Keywords:** comprehensive speech therapy, skills, case study.

### RESUMEN

El estudio de casos en la formación del maestro logopeda contribuye al desarrollo de las habilidades profesionales pedagógicas necesarias para dirigir la atención logopédica

integral. Constituye un recurso de aprendizaje imprescindible para alcanzar los objetivos del modelo profesional. Este incluye la exploración de la comunicación y el lenguaje, el diagnóstico logopédico, el diseño de la estrategia logopédica y la evaluación de la evolución de los educandos durante el proceso de atención logopédica. En el presente artículo, se exponen los resultados del trabajo metodológico realizado con el colectivo pedagógico de segundo año de la carrera Licenciatura en Educación Logopedia para diseñar tareas integradoras basadas en el uso del estudio de casos. Estas tareas están orientadas a contribuir al desarrollo de habilidades profesionales pedagógicas. Se emplearon los métodos de investigación analítico-sintético, histórico-lógico, sistematización y análisis documental, los cuales permitieron determinar procedimientos metodológicos dirigidos a la preparación del claustro para cumplir con el objetivo propuesto. Para este accionar metodológico, se consideraron los objetivos del año, los contenidos de las asignaturas precedentes y actuales, así como los problemas profesionales de la práctica educativa. Los resultados evidenciaron la pertinencia de la propuesta, reflejada en las principales transformaciones de las habilidades profesionales pedagógicas durante la formación inicial del logopeda.

**Palabras clave:** atención logopédica integral; habilidades; estudio de caso.

## RESUMO

O estudo de casos na formação do professor fonoaudiólogo contribui para o desenvolvimento das competências pedagógicas profissionais necessárias ao direcionamento do atendimento fonoaudiológico integral. Constitui um recurso de aprendizagem essencial para atingir os objetivos do modelo profissional. Isso inclui a exploração da comunicação e da linguagem, o diagnóstico fonoaudiológico, o desenho da estratégia fonoaudiológica e a avaliação da evolução dos alunos durante o processo de atendimento

fonoaudiológico. Neste artigo são apresentados os resultados do trabalho metodológico realizado com a turma pedagógica do segundo ano do curso de Bacharelado em Fonoaudiologia para a elaboração de tarefas integradoras a partir da utilização de estudos de caso. Estas tarefas visam contribuir para o desenvolvimento de competências pedagógicas profissionais. Foram utilizados métodos de pesquisa analítico-sintético, histórico-lógico, de sistematização e de análise documental, que permitiram determinar procedimentos metodológicos destinados a preparar o claustro para atender ao objetivo proposto. Para esta ação metodológica foram considerados os objetivos do ano, os conteúdos das disciplinas anteriores e atuais, bem como os problemas profissionais da prática educativa. Os resultados mostraram a relevância da proposta, refletida nas principais transformações das competências pedagógicas profissionais durante a formação inicial do fonoaudiólogo.

**Palavras-chave:** atenção fonoaudiológica integral; habilidades; estudo de caso.

## INTRODUCTION

In the professional model of the Bachelor's Degree in Speech Therapy Education, the object of work is defined as the process of comprehensive speech therapy care for children, adolescents and young people in educational institutions, the family and the community. This model specifies the work of the speech therapist in their contexts of action. This requires a solid initial training based on the integration of academic, labor, research and extension components through the link between the university and the popular entities where students carry out their work practices. This integration seeks to enhance the gradual development of specific skills in each academic year, ensuring that the graduate successfully faces his professional performance.

The contributions of authors such as Fornaris and Huepp (2022) and Coello et al. (2022) confirm the transformations in the training of speech therapist teachers, taking into account various theoretical and organizational concepts. These transformations aim to train professionals with a high level of performance, capable of responding to social demands through the mastery of knowledge, skills and values.

The case study, recognized in the scientific literature as an active learning strategy, research method and methodological tool, is used in various professions, including speech therapy. In addition, didactic approaches have been proposed to use it as a method, methodology and evaluation resource, highlighting its capacity to stimulate learning and develop professional skills in higher education contexts.

The research developed by the authors shows that the training of Graduate in Speech Therapy Education requires the case study both as a pedagogical tool to develop professional skills and to use it in professional practice and research for improve the practices.

In the normative and methodological documents of the course, case studies are recognized as an essential resource for directing comprehensive speech therapy care. This content is addressed in subjects of disciplines such as Investigative Work Training, General Pedagogical Training and Speech Therapy. The development of skills is carried out during the investigative work practices carried out by the students, under an integrated methodological approach that responds to annual objectives.

As part of the project "Attention to diversity with an inclusive perspective", developed at the University of Ciego de Ávila, deficiencies were identified in the design of integrative tasks based on case studies. These tasks, aimed at addressing the diversity of students with communication and language disorders, seek to

contribute to the development of professional pedagogical skills.

The present work aims to present the results of the methodological work carried out with the pedagogical collective of the second year of the Degree in Educational Pedagogy to design integrative tasks that promote the development of professional competences pedagogical.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the research, the teaching staff of the second-year Bachelor's Degree in Speech Therapy Education, corresponding to the 2022 academic year, was determined as the population, which was made up of 11 teachers. Of these, six have PhD in Pedagogical Sciences, five have master's degrees, and nine hold main teaching categories.

The historical-logical method was used to understand the theoretical, methodological and practical background related to the different ways of using case studies and their contribution to the development of professional skills.

Documentary analysis, as an empirical method, allowed us to identify the ways in which case studies are used in the initial training of speech therapists. In addition, the systematization of experiences was assumed as a methodology, given the value of the experiences accumulated in the Faculty of Pedagogical Sciences of the University of Ciego de Ávila during the research process. The analysis and critical interpretation of the teaching-learning process, as well as the methodological work at the degree level and in the academic year, allowed us to extract both theoretical and practical lessons, which lead to a better command of the theoretical and methodological foundations, with the aim of improving the initial training of the graduate in Speech Therapy Education.

The systematization of educational practice was assumed as a research methodology, understood as an ordered and systemic record of experiences, which allows for critical, participatory and intentional analysis. This methodology discovers, explains and interprets the logic of the educational process and the causes of its development, favoring the construction of a system of theoretical-practical knowledge in educational practice, which can be contrasted with existing theory, and which can be shared with other people. This knowledge can be expressed in models, systems, strategies, methodologies or other types of scientific results, and used to contribute to the improvement of the process in question (Ramos et al., 2016).

During the systematization process, experiences were duly recorded, information sources used and procedures to be followed were established. These aspects facilitated in-depth analysis, critical interpretation and the formulation of necessary conclusions.

The objective of the systematization was to determine the methodological path to be followed by second-year teaching groups for the design of integrative tasks, based on the use of case studies, which contribute to the development of professional pedagogical skills in the initial training of speech therapist teachers.

## RESULTS

The result focused on the proposal of methodological procedures, based on the use of case studies, for the development of professional pedagogical skills. In the bibliographical study carried out, various proposals aimed at the use of case studies and the development of professional skills in different specialties were analyzed, but no evidence was found of the use of case studies specifically aimed at the development of these skills.

The research that was developed took as a starting point the specific skills to be achieved in the academic years of the degree, such as: characterizing the educational process, the family and the community of preschool, primary and special education; diagnosing typical problems of speech therapy that develop in different educational contexts; modeling and directing activities of the comprehensive speech therapy process.

The validation of the E study plan, in the 2022 academic year, made it possible to perfect the development of these skills, based on the recognition of speech therapy examination as the method par excellence for speech therapy diagnosis. From this point of view, this method is considered to be one of the most necessary in the case study, since it plays a decisive role in the development of the pedagogical professional ability to diagnose. In this context, it is noted that there is a need to develop these skills further on the basis of case studies.

In the initial training of speech therapists, case studies are used from the first year, through protocols of simulated real-life situations that are presented to students to identify anatomical-physiological and psychopedagogical regularities, as well as to design educational activities or strategies. From the second year onwards, students carry out case studies in the educational institutions where they carry out their work practice, with students who have communication and language disorders.

The theoretical study and practical experiences demand a methodological preparation of the teaching staff, aimed at perfecting the design of integrative tasks based on the use of case studies, in order to contribute to the development of professional pedagogical skills in the initial training of graduates in Speech Therapy Education. To this end, the following methodological procedures are proposed: characterization of the context, historical reconstruction of the lived process, analysis of the theoretical foundations of the case study,

proposal of workshops and implementation of the workshops.

- Context characterization
  - The second-year teachers' group of the 2022 course, with Study Plan E, from the Degree in Speech Therapy Education was selected. The course coordinator, the head of the Speech Therapy discipline and the principal teacher of the year were all involved.
- Historical reconstruction of the process experienced
  - As a prerequisite to this stage, a broad bibliographic review was carried out which made it possible to determine, from a theoretical perspective, that the study of cases in the training of professionals, also known in the literature as the case method or case analysis, is recognized as an effective strategy for students to acquire diverse learning and develop different skills, thanks to the role they have in solving the cases.
- Analysis of the theoretical foundations of the case study

There are also proposals for its use as a research method or methodology, a work strategy for knowledge management, as a pedagogical resource and as a form of assessment in the training of professionals. The approach to the topic from its analysis as content in professional training is significant, although this proposal was not found in the training of graduates in Speech Therapy Education.

The results of the study were systematized according to four essential aspects, based on the approaches that the authors consulted point out as a trend: origins and importance for science; terms, definitions and characteristics; methodological proposals for their use in different professions; and particularities of the

case study as content in the training of professionals. The results are presented respecting the terms used by the authors consulted; however, the analysis itself leads the authors to assume positions on the terminology to be used.

Case study as a method encourages discovery learning, which encourages students to formulate questions and their own answers, as well as to deduce principles from practical examples or experiences. This type of learning requires active participation by the student when deciding what, how and when something should be studied, instead of waiting for the teacher to "dictate" the content, which allows them to "discover" the principles or concepts to be studied.

From the above, it follows that case studies, as a method, can be highly formative, but requires didactic preparation and mastery of the specialty by the teacher. Likewise, its usefulness as a learning resource in the training of professionals is considered, since it allows the student to approach the conditions of real life, the processing of objective information and decision-making under conditions of uncertainty, developing knowledge, skills and values that prepare them for the solution of professional problems that they will have to face in their future performance.

Taking into account the above-mentioned elements, it can be stated that the case study constitutes an appropriate option to develop the professional pedagogical skills established for the initial training of the graduate in Speech Therapy Education: characterize, diagnose, model and direct comprehensive speech therapy care in educational institutions.

### **Workshop proposal**

The theoretical study was compared with the experience accumulated by the researchers and allowed them to design three methodological workshops, from which as many work sessions

as necessary could be held, according to the needs of each group of teachers.

### *Methodological workshop 1*

Objective: To determine the professional pedagogical skills of each academic year through case studies and the content of the different subjects, to be integrated from the methodological work of the pedagogical group.

Guidelines for the development of the workshop:

This workshop is held at the beginning of the school year, as one of the points of the teaching staff meeting for the year. It requires the participation and prior preparation of all teachers and must be led by the main teacher of the year or an experienced teacher.

### *Methodological workshop 2*

Objective: To design real or simulated situations in classes, study practice, student research work, work-research practice, evaluations and other forms of organization of the teaching-learning process.

Guidelines for the development of the workshop:

Based on the selection of skills and content determined in workshop 1, which must be integrated into the cases, as many work sessions as necessary will be developed. In addition, work will be done with the teachers of the subjects that are integrated.

### *Methodological workshop 3*

Objective: To design integrative tasks for the use of case studies based on the professional pedagogical skill to be developed during the year.

Guidelines for the development of the workshop:

To achieve this goal, the necessary workshops must be held in order to integrate various contents from different subjects in one case, and to ensure the preparation of students for solving problems in professional practice, in which they apply the integrated knowledge independently, with conscious involvement and creativity. These activities will be designed as the period progresses, taking into account the knowledge that students must acquire from each subject, so that their design takes into account the skills to be developed according to the academic year.

### **Implementation of the workshops**

The designed workshops were implemented in the second-year teaching staff of the Bachelor's Degree in Speech Therapy Education. The teachers of the year, the heads of department, the heads of disciplines, the coordinator of the course and the researchers participated. The latter were in charge of recording the experiences obtained. The way in which the academic, research, work and extension components should be fulfilled was taken into account, based on the skill to be achieved in the year. The results showed the fulfillment of the proposed objectives. The particularities of each workshop are described below.

Workshop 1 was held in April 2022, as part of the second-year teaching staff meeting. Previously, the analysis of the normative and methodological documents of the course and the year was directed to specify the professional problems, skills, objectives of the year and the identification of the potential of the contents, in order to contribute to the development of professional skills through the use of case studies.

The head teacher of the year led the workshop. The teachers' prior analysis of the professional model, the teaching process plan and the discipline programs allowed the identification of the subjects, professional problems and content

that could be integrated and diagnosed as the skill to be developed in the year.

The determined subjects that could be integrated for the design of integrative tasks, based on the use of case studies for the development of professional pedagogical skills, were: Fundamentals of Speech Therapy, Human Anatomy and Physiology III, Diagnosis, Psychopathology and Psychotherapy and Labor Practice III.

The professional issues to be taken into account were:

- The diagnosis and characterization of children, adolescents and young people with communication and language disorders, as well as the group, family and community environment in which they develop.
- Effective educational communication and the use of alternative forms of communication in the various contexts of work of the teacher specialized in Speech Therapy.
- The systematic evaluation of work and results; the projection of solutions and ongoing improvement, as well as the need for educational research, the application of scientific and technological advances and professional self-improvement.
- The direction of the comprehensive speech therapy care process, with a humanistic, preventive, differentiated, corrective, compensatory and developmental approach, to provide solutions to the development needs of students with communication and language disorders. This should promote increasingly inclusive practices, in order to achieve the highest degree of equity and social justice.

## Possible contents to be integrated

### Knowledge:

- Fundamentals of the teaching-learning process for the care of students with special educational needs, its corrective-compensatory and developmental nature.
- Content and structure of speech therapy examination.
- Selection of didactic components for the design of educational and speech therapy activities.
- Characteristics of speech therapy classes, individual and differentiated attention in the class.
- Psychopedagogical characterization, speech therapy examination, diagnosis, most frequent psychopathological alterations of psychic processes in childhood and adolescence, and educational care strategy.

### Skills:

- Characterize communication and language, the educational process, the family and the community of preschool, primary and special education.
- Diagnose typical problems in comprehensive speech therapy for children, adolescents and young people, their group, family and community environment.
- Design, with assistance, activities for speech therapy from a preventive, corrective-compensatory and developmental perspective.
- Justify the design of activities based on speech therapy and psychopedagogical diagnosis.

### Values:

- Responsibility, hard work and discipline.
- Critical and self-critical spirit.
- Solidarity and humanism, from the degree of sensitivity to the particularities

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of the development of students with special educational needs.

- Preventive and optimistic approach to attention to individual differences, and as an ideological and political conviction to argue pedagogical practices in the context of Cuban society.

It was possible to identify that these subjects have potential to evaluate curricular strategies such as:

- Mother tongue, the use of information technologies, the application of legal knowledge, mainly in the use of regulatory documents.
- Rational and harmonious use of economic resources.
- Environmental protection for sustainable development.
- Pedagogical professional guidance.

An important moment of the debate was the determination of the ways in which the academic, research, labor and extension components should be fulfilled, taking into account the skill of the year.

#### *Labor component:*

Based on case studies, argue for the selection and application of methods, procedures, educational technology and other methodological resources that allow for diagnosis, in accordance with the potential and needs of students; as well as design, with help, activities for speech therapy.

#### *Research component:*

Identify typical problems of regular and special institutions through case studies, use procedures and techniques that allow the diagnosis of the current situation and its initiation into scientific activity with the use of information and communications technologies.

#### *Extension component:*

Identify students in the socio-community project with communication and language disorders, through a case study, which allows for the diagnosis of the current situation and its monitoring during their training.

The analysis carried out by the teachers allowed the design of integrative tasks for the different types of classes, the improvement of the work practice guides, the analysis and updating of the problem bank in educational institutions, as well as the realization of an integrative exam between the subjects of the period.

During the implementation of the workshops, work sessions were held aimed at designing integrative tasks for the use of case studies in classes, work practice and community-based project work, taking into account the link between the theoretical content of the subjects and the experiences of work practice, based on the development of the professional pedagogical skill of the year.

Real or simulated case study situations, systematic assessments, practical class guides and integrative seminars for the different subjects, work practice guides and community work actions were designed. From these, students had to identify their potential and needs, as well as diagnose psychopathological disorders and communication and language disorders.

The integrative tasks created in the workshops served as an example for the design of other tasks, developed by each teacher, both for classes and for assessments at different times during the period, as part of their preparation for the subject. Systematic and partial assessments were also included, in which the progressive increase in the level of complexity was taken into account, promoting greater independence and creativity of the students in solving the tasks.

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Subsequently, workshops were held to analyze the results obtained in the implementation of proposals, both evaluative and non-evaluative, in the year group. This was matched to the evaluative cuts of the period, according to the faculty schedule: the first cut in the middle of the period, the second cut before the final examinations and the third cut after the final examinations. This process allowed for feedback and required an additional workshop to those planned for the improvement of the work.

In accordance with the final exam, integrative tasks were previously developed in lectures, practical classes, seminars, workshops, study practices and work experience. It is worth highlighting the integrative nature of the systematic and partial evaluations carried out in these organizational forms.

As preliminary actions, in addition to updating the group's diagnosis, the aim was to study the requirements established in the normative documents, taking into account the type of examination and the use of case studies as an evaluation.

At the workshop, it was decided to carry out three integrative evaluations at the end of the period to verify the effectiveness of using the case study as a learning resource:

1. Final exam: the two subjects that have a final exam were integrated, according to the teaching process plan. In the first period: Human Anatomy and Physiology III and Diagnosis, Psychopathology and Psychotherapy. In the second period: Learning and Intellectual Development Difficulties, Communicative Level of Speech and Didactics of the Spanish Language I.
2. Closing assessment of subjects that do not have a final exam: a case study of a student with a primary or secondary communication and language disorder.
3. Preparation and defense of the Investigative Work Practice report:

carried out at the end of each period, integrating all subjects.

It was also agreed to carry out, in an integrated manner, award exams for the subjects Fundamentals of Speech Therapy with Diagnosis and Psychopathology and Psychotherapy.

The orders for the integrative tasks were intended to be more synthetic, so that they did not amount to a summation of tasks, questions or exercises. The grading key was established with a single grade for all subjects, although it is recognized that it can also be taken separately. In all cases, guides were developed to guide the students.

In parallel to the methodological workshops developed in the selected year's teaching team, ten classes were observed: one demonstration class at career level, with the participation of teachers from the year's team; three open classes, one in each discipline; and six class checks in different subjects. Of these, seven were practical classes and three seminars, using case studies as a learning resource. The career leaders also followed up on the research work practice and the community-based social project, which allowed for the transfer of learning to other situations and professional contexts to be verified.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the deficiencies detected in the preliminary exploration, in the students of the Bachelor's Degree in Speech Therapy Education, the use of case studies as content of the main integrative discipline of Investigative Labor Training is evident. However, this article aims to take advantage of the potential that this method offers as a learning resource for the development of professional pedagogical skills.

With the implementation of the workshops, it was found that teachers were better prepared from a methodological point of view. The requirements ensured a better organization of the process for the integration of contents and more rigors in the evaluation for the fulfillment of the predictive, regulatory and training functions. This resulted in students performing more consciously and prominently in the assessments.

To corroborate the results achieved by the students and the correct expression of what they learned from the case study, a total of eight integrative tasks were implemented during the course. Of these, six were systematic, two partial control papers, one final examination and the Investigative Labor Practice reports

The records made showed the use of various types of tasks that integrated cognitive, affective, procedural and attitudinal. These favored increased independence, conscious involvement, metacognition, creativity, and individual and group growth during the activities developed through case studies. In addition, the levels of measurement were verifiable and consistent with the objectives, stage of training and requirements of the occupational context.

They are also used as a final evaluation of the subject and in course and diploma works, as a research methodology. In this regard, Resolution No. 47-2022 Regulations of Teaching and Methodological Work in its article 317.1 establishes the defense of case studies as one of the types of final evaluation in the subjects, which are distinguished by being more personalized and centered on the student, and which contribute to enhancing their responsible participation in the learning process (MES, 2022).

The case study is the subject of study in several disciplines, which conceptualize it as a strategy, method, methodology or teaching technique, pedagogical or learning resource. The contributions made from their position by the

authors: Guirado (2011), Llanes and Massot (2014), Yin (2018), Argandoña *et al.* (2019), Soto and Escribano (2019), Nieto and Ruiz (2020), Suárez *et al.* (2022), among others, coincide as to the origins, importance for the sciences and the recognition by the authors of the diversity of ways of using the case study in different professions, including Speech Therapy.

The analysis carried out on definitions, characteristics, requirements and conditions of case studies and the coincidence with the contributions of different researchers, in particular, Guirado (2011), confirmed the criterion that case studies constitute didactic resources that, while facilitating the teaching-learning process, are also mediators in it, by providing concrete data to reflect, analyze and discuss in a group the possible solutions for a given problem.

In Higher Education, case studies can be used in various ways: as a teaching task, research method, learning method, strategy or resource, and form of assessment. Llanes and Massot (2014) consider that its use as an assessment allows verifying in practice the mastery of the knowledge acquired during their training. In addition, they suggest that its use encourages motivation in students, the research of cases that respond to their professional profile and develops creativity for the dissemination of the results.

Argandoña *et al.* (2019) on the complexity of using case studies as a teaching strategy are considered correct, since it requires greater autonomy on the part of the student and methodological knowledge on the part of the teacher. In this research, both elements are assumed as essential requirements for the improvement of the design of integrative tasks based on the use of case studies, which contribute to the development of professional pedagogical skills.

As part of the process, a closing workshop was held with the aim of reflecting on the results

obtained. In this workshop, the teachers shared their impressions about the impact on educational practice and the main achievements of using the case study at different moments of the pedagogical process. They agreed that the systematization developed allowed them to reflect on their educational practice, compare their experiences with theory and return to an improved practice. In addition, they considered the case study not as an end, but as a means to improve the training of graduates in Speech Therapy Education, designing learning tasks closer to the problems of the contexts of professional performance.

The essential role of the Investigative Work Practice in achieving integration in the solution of professional problems and the transfer of learning to new contexts was also highlighted. This process also promoted independence, conscious involvement, metacognition, creativity, and individual and group professional growth of students.

The results obtained during this stage allowed the researchers to confirm the relevance of the initial foundations, to refine the methodological treatment to be followed in the year groups and to conceive the case study as a learning resource. This included its relationship with the professional problems, objectives and skills of each year, as well as the validation of the methodological workshops designed for the work of the group of teachers.

The methodological work carried out in the second year of the Degree in Speech-Language Education was materialized through the following methodological procedures: characterization of the context, historical reconstruction of the lived process, analysis of the theoretical basis for the case study, workshop proposal and its implementation

The experiences gained in the methodological work showed that the case study should be designed taking into account the objectives of the year, the objectives and content of each

subject, the content of preceding and subsequent subjects, and the professional problems of educational practice. This approach contributes to the development of professional pedagogical skills.

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**Conflict of interests:**

The authors declare not to have any interest conflicts.

**Authors' contribution:**

The authors participated in the design and writing of the article, in the search and analysis of the information contained in the consulted bibliography.

**Cite as**

Balboa García, A., Parés Ojeda, R. M., Berrío Sánchez, S. M., Zubeldía Rodríguez, M. T. (2024). Methodological action for the use of case studies in the initial training of speech therapists. *Mendive. Journal on Education*, 22(4), e3579.

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