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Original article

Methodological strategies for the comprehensive reading process of fifth grade students in Ecuador

Estrategias metodológicas para el proceso de lectura comprensiva de estudiantes de quinto grado de Ecuador

Estratégias metodológicas para o processo de leitura integral de alunos do quinto ano no Equador

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ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension is a cardinal process of Ecuadorian education, and is emphasized in all its governing documents, since the academic performance of students and their future development in life depends on its effective development. The objective of the article was to socialize about the methodological strategies for the development of the reading comprehension process in fifth grade, in the research context of the "Jorge Ortiz Dávila" educational institution. A qualitative and quantitative approach descriptive and experimental type was used. The survey was applied to a representative sample of 35 students, through which the main reading comprehension problems faced by students in their academic field were identified. As a result, key methodological strategies developed, each with a specific set of necessary actions and resources, focused on improving reading comprehension through interactive and collaborative techniques. These included: group reading, use of educational technology, personalization materials, encouragement of critical debate, formative continuous assessments. The implementation of these strategies sought not only to improve reading comprehension, but also to actively involve students in the learning process, adapting to their individual interests and skill levels. This comprehensive approach turned out to be an effective solution to the identified challenges, contributing significantly to the educational development and enrichment of students' reading comprehension skills. The methodological strategies were validated experimentally and demonstrated the relevance of the scientific result.

Keywords: methodological strategies; reading comprehension process; primary school students.

RESUMEN

La comprensión de lectura es un proceso cardinal de la educación ecuatoriana, y se recoge con énfasis en todos sus documentos rectores, en tanto de su desarrollo eficaz depende el rendimiento académico de los estudiantes y su futuro desenvolvimiento en la vida. El objetivo

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del artículo fue socializar acerca de las estrategias metodológicas para el desarrollo del proceso de la comprensión lectora en quinto grado, en el contexto investigativo de la institución educativa "Jorge Ortiz Dávila". Se empleó un enfoque cualitativo y cuantitativo de tipo descriptivo y experimental. La encuesta se aplicó a una muestra representativa de 35 estudiantes, por medio de la cual se identificaron los principales problemas de lectura comprensiva que enfrentan los estudiantes en su ámbito académico. Como resultado, se elaboraron cinco estrategias metodológicas claves, cada una con un conjunto específico de acciones y recursos necesarios, centradas en mejorar comprensión lectora a través de técnicas interactivas y colaborativas. Estas estrategias incluyeron: lectura en grupo, uso de tecnología personalización de materiales. fomento del debate crítico y evaluaciones formativas continuas. La implementación de estas estrategias buscó no solo mejorar la comprensión lectora, sino también involucrar activamente a los estudiantes en el proceso de aprendizaje, adaptándose a sus intereses individuales y niveles de habilidad. Este enfoque integral resultó ser una solución eficaz a los retos identificados, contribuyendo significativamente al desarrollo educativo y al enriquecimiento de las habilidades de comprensión lectora de los alumnos. Las estrategias metodológicas se validaron de forma experimental y demostraron la pertinencia del resultado científico.

Palabras clave: estrategias metodológicas; proceso de lectura comprensiva; estudiantes de primaria.

RESUMO

A compreensão leitora é um processo fundamental da educação equatoriana e é enfatizada em todos os seus documentos que a regem, uma vez que o desempenho acadêmico dos alunos e seu desenvolvimento futuro na vida dependem do seu desenvolvimento efetivo. O objetivo do artigo foi socializar sobre as estratégias metodológicas para o

desenvolvimento do processo de compreensão leitora no quinto ano, no contexto de pesquisa da instituição de ensino "Jorge Ortiz Dávila". Foi utilizada uma abordagem qualitativa quantitativa descritiva e experimental. Α pesquisa foi aplicada а uma amostra representativa de 35 alunos, por meio da qual foram identificados os principais problemas de compreensão de leitura enfrentados pelos alunos em sua área acadêmica. Como resultado, foram desenvolvidas cinco estratégias metodológicas principais, cada uma com um conjunto específico de ações e recursos necessários, focadas em melhorar a compreensão da leitura através de técnicas interativas e colaborativas. Essas estratégias incluíram: leitura em grupo, uso de personalização tecnologia educacional, materiais, incentivo ao debate crítico e contínuas. avaliações formativas Α implementação destas estratégias procurou não só melhorar a compreensão da leitura, mas também envolver ativamente os alunos no processo de aprendizagem, adaptando-se aos interesses individuais e competências. Esta abordagem abrangente revelou-se uma solução eficaz para os desafios identificados, contribuindo significativamente para o desenvolvimento educativo e para o enriquecimento das competências de compreensão de leitura dos alunos. As estratégias metodológicas foram validadas experimentalmente е demonstraram relevância do resultado científico.

Palavras-chave: estratégias metodológicas; processo de compreensão de leitura; alunos do ensino primário.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to understand written texts constitutes a cornerstone in the educational training of any student. Therefore, the search for innovative and effective methods to develop reading comprehension is an imperative task for

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educators and curricular designers (Pamplona-Raigosa *et al.*, 2019).

According to Fuentes Fuentes and Calderin building (2017),а robust multifaceted understanding of texts is not a feat that is achieved spontaneously; It requires a deliberate and systematic approach that recognizes the multiple dimensions that the reading comprehension process entails. In this sense, it is essential to delve into a deep of nature of exploration the comprehension before being able to prescribe any methodological strategy.

Comprehensive reading involves the activation of prior knowledge, the inference of non-explicit ideas and the integration of new information with what one already has (Menacho López, 2021). Thus, reading comprehension becomes an act, both of perception and cognition, that develops progressively and is fundamental for academic success and lifelong learning. Therefore, the need for educators to have in-depth knowledge of the theories and processes underlying reading comprehension is evident, in order to be able to effectively guide students (Briones-Quiroz & Gómez-Mieles, 2022).

In this conceptual framework, methodological strategies to teach comprehensive reading must be supported by a solid theoretical base (González-Rodríguez and Londoño-Vásquez, 2019). From a constructivist perspective, for example, methodological strategies must create an environment in which students can connect texts with their own experiences and prior knowledge. This involves promoting class discussion, collaborative work and activities that invite critical reflection. On the other hand, cognitivism provides strategies such as explicit instruction in comprehension techniques, practice in identifying the structure of the text and the development of metacognitive skills, allowing students to monitor and evaluate their own comprehension process (Vásquez Vásquez and Pérez Azahuanche, 2020).

The integration of these theories into educational practice suggests that the development of the comprehensive reading process should not be a mere transmission of knowledge, but rather an interactive and reflective process. (Vásquez Vásquez and Pérez Azahuanche, 2020). Methodological strategies must, therefore, provide opportunities for students to actively engage with texts, ask questions, make connections, and reflect on the meaning of what they read (Dorado-Martínez et al., 2020). Through activities such as guided reading, concept maps, and reading journals, students develop deeper and more comprehension skills (Cuenca Caiza, 2022).

Furthermore, as Lucas Bazurto points out (2022), these strategies should be flexible and adaptive, recognizing that each student is a unique learner with their own strengths, interests, and needs. Differentiation in instruction allows methodological strategies to be adjusted to support all students, from those who may require more intensive interventions to those who are ready to explore texts more independently and critically (Armijos Uzho *et al.*, 2023).

The inclusion of educational technologies in the teaching of reading comprehension opens a range of possibilities to enrich and diversify learning experiences (Guerrero Guerrero and Salvador Saráuz, 2022). In this sense, technologies educational are not mere substitutes for traditional strategies since, as Rebolledo suggests, et al. (2020), are amplifiers of comprehensive reading that, when integrated into the curriculum, enhance the development of critical reading skills and prepare students to navigate and discern information in the digital

However, the challenge of developing students' reading comprehension is often compounded by the lack of well-designed methodological strategies. A one-sided approach that does not address the diverse needs and learning styles of students can lead to a superficial and fleeting

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understanding of the material read (Avendaño Vidal, 2020).

Faced with this situation, fifth grade students at the "Jorge Ortiz Dávila" institution face specific barriers in the development of their comprehensive reading that reflect the urgency of addressing these methodological deficiencies. Consequently, pedagogical practices that do not adequately incorporate contemporary learning theories may fail to recognize and support the different ways in which these students process information and construct meaning from texts.

Such a mismatch between theory and practice can lead to a disconnection between the student and the reading material, hindering the development of deep and critical understanding. It is therefore imperative that the institution introspects and reforms its pedagogical approaches to ensure that the strategies implemented are not only theoretically sound, but also effective and resonant with the needs and abilities of its students.

The objective of the article is to socialize about the methodological strategies for the development of the reading comprehension process in fifth grade, in the research context of the "Jorge Ortiz Dávila" educational institution of Basic Education in Ecuador.

To carry out the research, informed consent was obtained from all participants.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study presented was based on the use of a quantitative, descriptive and experimental approach, focused on fifth grade students, to evaluate the reading comprehension process and the effectiveness of the methodological strategies implemented. This methodology was essential for collecting and analyzing numerical data through tools such as surveys and standardized tests, allowing for an objective and

accurate assessment of students' performance in reading comprehension.

The aforementioned methodology allowed us to following specific objectives: the systematize the theoretical-methodological references of reading comprehension; diagnose the current state of reading comprehension in the indicated context; develop methodological strategies for reading comprehension in fifth grade and validate them to check their feasibility. Thus, by achieving these objectives, we aim to lay the foundations for comprehensive and meaningful learning that lasts beyond the classroom.

On the other hand, the descriptive nature of the study facilitated the observation and detailed description of the phenomena related to reading practices, without manipulating the participants' environment. Meanwhile, the experimental nature of the study was due to the implementation of specific interventions in teaching strategies, allowing the results of a sample group of students to be compared without exposure to these new methodologies (pretest and posttest), although without random assignment. characteristic of pure experiments. Thus, this design allowed us to infer the effectiveness of the strategies used in the real and dynamic educational environment.

Additionally, to identify the individual reading comprehension needs of the students, short and simple questionnaires were provided to them, according to the age of the sample group. This questionnaire was composed of eight multiplechoice questions designed to identify specific areas in reading comprehension teaching methodologies, which can be improved to develop more effective methodological strategies. Therefore, the responses provided valuable information about students' perceptions and experiences regarding current reading practices.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was checked by interpreting a Cronbach's alpha equivalent to 0.847, which indicates a high level

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of reliability in the responses collected. This value suggests that the questionnaire items are consistent with each other and effectively measure the construct of interest; in this case, the reading comprehension skills presented by the students.

The sample for the experimental study was carefully selected from among the 45 fifth grade students of the "Jorge Ortiz Dávila" institution. It was decided to apply a non-random selection approach, choosing a specific group of 35 students from a particular class (morning session). This method was justified by the need to obtain a homogeneous group in terms of age, educational level and learning context, which is crucial for research of this type.

For the processing and analysis of the data collected in this study, the statistical software SPSS in version 29 was used. This program is widely recognized for its effectiveness and precision in the management of statistical data, allowing a detailed and reliable interpretation of the results, obtained. The use of SPSS, version 29, ensured exhaustive treatment of the data, obtaining facilitating the of clear substantiated conclusions about the behavior and responses of the participants in the survey and the pretest and posttest tests.

In addition, informed and voluntary participation was ensured by sending informed consents to the parents of the selected students. These consents detailed the objectives and nature of the research, thus guaranteeing transparency and ethical compliance in the students' participation in the study.

RESULTS

This section details the analysis of the surveys conducted with fifth grade students of the "Jorge Ortiz Dávila" educational institution. In this sense, the compilation and subsequent analysis of data were carried out with the objective of evaluating the perceptions and experiences of

the students regarding their reading comprehension process.

Such analysis provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the methodological strategies implemented and areas requiring significant improvements. The results obtained are presented in table 1, which allowed a clear and structured interpretation of the data collected.

Table 1- Survey application results

| Ougstion | Yes | | Sometimes | | | No | |
|---|-----|------|-----------|------|---|------|--|
| Question | | % | F | % | F | % | |
| 1. Do you find it fun to read in class? | 12 | 34.3 | 15 | 42.9 | 8 | 22.8 | |
| 2. When you read on your computer or tablet for school, do you understand what you read? | 14 | 40 | 13 | 37.1 | 8 | 22.9 | |
| 3. Do you think that the reading activities and games we do help you better understand what you read? | 18 | 51.4 | 10 | 28.6 | 7 | 20 | |
| 4. When you don't understand something you read, do you feel comfortable asking your teacher for help? | 11 | 31.4 | 15 | 42.9 | 9 | 25.7 | |
| 5. Do you think that the explanations you receive in class help you understand the texts?? | 16 | 45.7 | 12 | 34.3 | 7 | 20 | |
| 6. After reading a story or information, do you find it easy to remember and talk about what you learned? | 10 | 28.6 | 16 | 45.7 | 9 | 25.7 | |
| 7. Does group work help you understand and enjoy reading? | | 37.1 | 14 | 40 | 8 | 22.9 | |
| 8. When we use games or activities on the computer or tablet, do you feel like you learn more than when you just read a book or a piece of paper? | 17 | 48.6 | 11 | 31.4 | 7 | 20 | |

From the previous table it is observed that 34.3% of the students found reading in class fun, while 42.9% enjoyed it sporadically. This

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distribution, totaling approximately just over 77%, suggests that, although there is initial interest, reading in the classroom fails to consistently capture the attention of the majority of students.

Furthermore, only 40% of those surveyed always understand the texts read on digital devices, and 37.1% do so occasionally, with both cases accumulating 77.1%. These results point to significant challenges in digital reading comprehension, which has become an essential component in the current educational era.

Meanwhile, 51.4% of students perceive that educational activities and games facilitate their reading comprehension, although 28.6% experience it only sometimes. These data, totaling around 80%, reflect a variable effectiveness of the methodologies applied for a segment of the student population.

On the other hand, only 31.4% of students always feel comfortable asking for help when they do not understand a text, and 42.9% do so sometimes. Such findings reveal a limitation of students related to communication and proactivity to seek support in reading comprehension.

Furthermore, approximately 45.7% of the participants in the study always find the explanations in class useful, but 34.3% only highlight this sometimes, which may be an indicator that current pedagogical strategies are not completely effective for the entire student body.

On the other hand, only 28.6% of students show ease in remembering and discussing what they have read, and 45.7% sometimes manage to do so. All of this, accumulating approximately 74.3%, indicates obstacles in the retention of information and in the students' ability to discuss the content read.

37.1% of students always find group work beneficial for reading comprehension, while 40% perceive it occasionally. These results indicate

that collaborative learning is not uniformly effective for all students.

In this sense, 48.6% of students stated that they learn more effectively through digital activities, compared to traditional methods; although 31.4% of them only experience it on certain occasions, an issue that reflects, with an accumulation close to 80%, a diversity in the preferences and effectiveness of digital learning methods compared to conventional ones.

The above results reveal significant challenges in reading comprehension and in the effectiveness of current methodological strategies. Although most students show interest in reading and related activities, there is considerable variability in the effectiveness of digital and traditional methods. This suggests the need to personalize and diversify pedagogical approaches.

Meanwhile, reluctance to seek help and difficulties in understanding and retaining read material are key concerns that need to be addressed. These elements are crucial for the development of methodological strategies that improve reading comprehension and promote a more inclusive and effective learning experience.

The importance of adapting teaching techniques to the individual needs of students is also highlighted throughout the study. The diversity in responses indicates that there is no single approach that works for everyone, although it should be noted that the effective integration of digital technologies, along with traditional reading and discussion methods, can be key to improving reading comprehension.

Thus, clear strengthening it is that communication in the classroom encouraging students to seek help are essential aspects to overcome the barriers in reading comprehension, so that the findings presented provide a solid basis for designing more effective methodological strategies in teaching, of the reading.

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Design of methodological strategies

After identifying the reading comprehension problems in the fifth grade students of the "Jorge Ortiz Dávila" institution, 2023-2024, specific methodological strategies were developed to address and improve the identified difficulties.

Strategy 1. Enrichment of the reading experience through play and interactivity

This strategy is key to turning reading into an exciting adventure, encouraging deep and lasting interest in students.

Objective: transform reading into an exciting and absorbing activity for all students.

Actions:

- Integrate educational games using word games and literary puzzles to engage students in understanding the text, in a fun way.
- Apply augmented reality technology by implementing apps that turn stories into interactive visual experiences, such as "AR Reads," which brings characters to life.
- Organize reading contests by establishing friendly reading competitions with incentives such as symbolic prizes or recognition (reinforcers).
- Perform dramatizations of reading texts, for which students can be encouraged to act out scenes from the books, which helps deeper understanding through roleplay.
- Class Discussions: Encourage open discussion about books read to develop critical thinking and expression skills.

Responsible: Language and Literature teachers.

Participants: fifth grade students.

Resources needed: books, augmented reality technology, prizes, physical space for dramatizations.

Strategy 2. Optimizing reading comprehension in digital media

In a digital age, it is essential to enhance reading comprehension on electronic devices, which is an essential skill for future academic and professional success.

Objective: substantially increase students' ability to understand texts in digital formats.

Actions:

- Implement interactive tutorials through the use of platforms such as "Edu- Read Digital", to teach effective digital reading techniques.
- Online comprehension exercises, carrying out comprehension activities with digital texts, such as articles and electronic books.
- Implement a personalized feedback process, providing specific and constructive feedback to students about their digital comprehension skills.
- Provide digital questionnaires using tools such as "Quizlet", for evaluations and comprehension reinforcements.
- Online discussion forums, through the creation of virtual spaces for collaborative analysis of read texts.
- Encourage the generation of classroom blogs in which students publish their reflections and analyzes in a group blog.

Responsible: Computer and Language teachers.

Participants: fifth grade students.

Necessary resources: tablets or computers, Internet access, digital educational platforms.

Strategy 3. Strengthening confidence and communication in reading comprehension

This strategy aims to establish an environment of security and support. It is essential to foster confidence and continuous improvement in students' reading comprehension.

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Objective: promote an environment where students feel comfortable and supported to express and resolve their doubts in reading comprehension.

Actions:

- Create a peer tutoring system or program, where upper grade students assist fifth grade students in reading and comprehension sessions.
- Implement an anonymous question box where students can leave questions anonymously, which will then be addressed in class.
- Organize personalized mentoring, as well as individual or small group sessions, with teachers, to address specific difficulties.
- Encourage the development of guided debates in class through structured discussions about the texts, ensuring that everyone actively participates.
- Carry out group dynamics and activities to strengthen confidence among students.
- Plan and conduct parent-teacher meetings, inviting parents to participate in information sessions on how to support reading at home.

Responsible: teachers, tutors of higher grades and school psychologists.

Participants: fifth grade students and their families.

Necessary resources: spaces for meetings, materials for activities, tutoring system.

Strategy 4. Integration of reading with the arts

This strategy integrates reading with visual and performing arts, providing a dynamic and engaging way for students to interact and better understand texts.

Objective: promote reading comprehension through creativity and artistic expression.

Actions:

- Represent scenes from books through the creation of dioramas, encouraging the interpretation and visual reconstruction of the narratives.
- Organize drawing contests of literary characters, stimulating the imagination and understanding of the characters and their contexts.
- Create comics based on the books read, promoting the synthesis and reinterpretation of the stories.
- Develop dramatizations or musical pieces based on the texts, integrating reading, music and theater.
- Set up literary art exhibitions at school to display artistic works related to reading.
- Conduct creative writing workshops, encouraging students to write their own stories inspired by their readings.

Responsible: Arts and Language teachers.

Participants: fifth grade students.

Resources needed: art materials, exhibition space, tools for creating comics and dioramas.

Strategy 5. Reading and discussion clubs

Book clubs foster an environment of collaborative learning and deep reflection on the texts read.

Objective: Improve reading comprehension and discussion skills.

Actions:

- Establish weekly book clubs, where students meet to discuss selected books.
- Assign rotating roles (such as moderator, narrator, critic), in each session, to actively involve all students.

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- Develop critical and analytical skills through guided discussions about themes and characters from the books.
- Invite local authors or literature experts to enrich discussions and offer diverse perspectives.
- Create a blog or bulletin board where students can share book reviews and recommendations.

Responsible: school librarian and language teachers.

Participants: fifth grade students.

Resources needed: books, meeting space, internet access for the blog or bulletin board.

Application of pretest and posttest tests

After the formulation of the methodological strategies to develop the comprehensive reading process of fifth grade students of the "Jorge Ortiz Dávila" institution, a t-Student hypothesis test of samples related to the information obtained from the results of the pretest was carried out. and the posttest. Thus, the following were proposed as null and alternative statistical hypotheses:

- H_0 : $\mu_1 = \mu_2$ (the overall average score of the reading comprehension grades obtained by fifth grade students in the pretest is the same as that in the posttest).
- H_1 : $\mu_1 \neq \mu_2$ (the overall average score of the reading comprehension grades obtained by fifth grade students in the pretest is different from that in the posttest).

Initially, table 2 shows the average scores for the pretest ($\bar{x} = 7.86$; $\tilde{o} = 0.41$) and posttest ($\bar{x} = 8.97$; $\tilde{o} = 0.69$) tests applied.

Table 2- Paired samples statistics

| | x | N | ď | <i>x</i> standard error |
|--------------|---------------|----|------|-------------------------|
| Pretest | 7.86 | 35 | 0.41 | 0.12 |
| Pair Posttes | t 8.97 | 35 | 0.69 | 0.07 |

Consequently, a variation in the scores between the tests is evident, with an increase of +1.11, as illustrated in table 3, which was also used to evaluate the statistical significance of the difference in the results obtained in the post-test tests. and pretest. It is thus deduced that the difference is statistically significant, given that the p value (two-sided probability) obtained in the Student's t test is lower than the theoretical threshold of 0.05 (t = 9.41; p = 0.00).

Table 3- Paired samples test

| T test x o standard | | x ⁻ standard | 95% confide interva differe | t | | Sig. (bilateral) | | |
|---------------------|------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|----|------|
| | | | | Lower | Superior | | | |
| Posttest Pretest | 1.11 | 0.70 | 0.12 | 0.87 | 1.35 | 9.41 | 34 | 0.00 |

According to this result, it is pertinent to reject the null hypothesis H0, thus stating that the general average score of the grades obtained by fifth grade students in the post-test is different from that of the pre-test, and demonstrates that the use of interactive books to Improving students' reading comprehension, through the application of methodological strategies, is timely.

DISCUSSION

The research on methodological strategies to improve reading comprehension in fifth grade students revealed significant findings. First, the implementation of strategies such as collaborative reading and the use of interactive technologies showed a notable increase in reading comprehension scores. This result is

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consistent with what was reported by Rebolledo et al. (2020), who found similar improvements in reading comprehension through the use of interactive methodologies. However, unlike their study, this research approach integrated a collaborative reading component, suggesting expanded effectiveness of this combination of techniques.

Second, tailoring reading materials to specific student interests resulted in greater engagement and participation in reading activities. Previous studies, such as that of Briones-Quiroz and Gómez-Mieles (2022), also emphasize the importance of personalizing reading materials, although they focus mainly on narrative texts. In this regard, this study expands this approach by incorporating a variety of textual genres, including informative and poetic, which reflects a greater diversity in students' interests.

On the other hand, the incorporation of group discussions after the reading sessions promoted greater retention and understanding of the material read, aligning with the observations from Cuenca Caiza (2022). However, unlike their approach, which was limited to small group this study included discussions, plenary discussions, allowing for richer and more diverse interaction among students. This combined approach appears to be most effective in fostering understanding and critical analysis of texts.

In general, it is concluded that diversified and personalized methodological strategies are of great importance in the development of reading comprehension in fifth grade students. Thus, the combination of interactive technologies, personalization of reading material, group discussions and continuous formative assessments stand out as a comprehensive and effective approach. Furthermore, these findings contribute significantly to the existing literature, perspectives offering new on effective methodologies in teaching reading comprehension.

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