

IMPACT OF DEBATES IN THE CLASSROOM: STRENGTHENING TEXTUAL PRODUCTION AND TEACHER EDUCATION

IMPACTO DOS DEBATES NA SALA DE AULA: PRODUÇÃO TEXTUAL E A FORMAÇÃO DOCENTE

IMPACTO DE LOS DEBATES EN EL AULA: PRODUCCIÓN DE TEXTOS Y FORMACIÓN DOCENTE



Raymi de Fátima LINK¹
e-mail: raymilink@gmail.com



Silvia Cristina de Oliveira QUADROS²
e-mail: silvia.sicrist@gmail.com



Betânia Jacob Stange LOPES³
e-mail: lopesbjs@gmail.com

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¹ São Paulo Adventist University Center (UNASP), Engenheiro Coelho – SP – Brazil. Professional Master's Degree in Education.

² São Paulo Adventist University Center (UNASP), Engenheiro Coelho – SP – Brazil. Post-doctorate in Education. (Coordination and Teaching in the Professional Master's Degree in Education UNASP).

³ São Paulo Adventist University Center (UNASP), Engenheiro Coelho – SP – Brazil. Doctorate in Education (Teaching in the Professional Master's Degree in Education UNASP).

ABSTRACT: This article aims to investigate the effectiveness of structured debates in the classroom as a means of improving critical reflection and textual skills of students in the final years of Elementary School. The research was carried out in six private schools in the south of Santa Catarina, Brazil, with a qualitative and exploratory nature. The literature review covered authors in the field of linguistics and education on retextualization in the educational process. Data collection methods involved carrying out theoretical-practical workshops, focus groups and applying a questionnaire to teachers. The results indicated that classroom debates are an effective tool for improving text production skills. The need for continuous teacher education was also highlighted as a means of increasing the quality of writing, including active methodology to enrich the learning process and favor the understanding of multiple perspectives in textual production.

KEYWORDS: Teacher Education. Discussion. Text production. Retextualization.

RESUMO: *O presente artigo tem como objetivo investigar a eficácia dos debates estruturados em sala de aula como um meio de aprimorar a reflexão crítica e as habilidades textuais de alunos dos anos finais do Ensino Fundamental. A pesquisa foi realizada em seis escolas privadas no Sul de Santa Catarina, Brasil, com natureza qualitativa e exploratória. A revisão bibliográfica abrangeu autores no campo da linguística e da educação sobre a retextualização no processo educativo. Os métodos de coleta de dados envolveram a realização de oficinas teórico-práticas, grupos focais e aplicação de questionário a docentes. Os resultados indicaram que debates em sala de aula são uma ferramenta eficaz para a melhoria das habilidades de produção textual. Evidenciou-se, também, a necessidade de formação docente contínua como meio de elevar a qualidade da escrita, incluindo metodologia ativa para enriquecer o processo de aprendizagem e favorecer a compreensão de múltiplas perspectivas na produção textual.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Formação Docente. Debate. Produção Textual. Retextualização.*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo tiene como objetivo investigar la eficacia de los debates estructurados en el aula como medio para mejorar la reflexión crítica y las habilidades textuales de los estudiantes de los últimos años de Educación Primaria. La investigación se realizó en seis escuelas privadas del sur de Santa Catarina, Brasil, con carácter cualitativo y exploratorio. La revisión de la literatura abarcó autores del campo de la lingüística y la educación sobre la retextualización en el proceso educativo. Los métodos de recolección de datos involucraron la realización de talleres teórico-prácticos, grupos focales y la aplicación de un cuestionario a los docentes. Los resultados indicaron que los debates en el aula son una herramienta eficaz para mejorar las habilidades de producción de textos. También se destacó la necesidad de una formación continua del profesorado como medio para incrementar la calidad de la escritura, incluyendo una metodología activa para enriquecer el proceso de aprendizaje y favorecer la comprensión de múltiples perspectivas en la producción textual.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Formación de Profesores. Debate. Producción textual. Retextualización.*

Introduction

The objective of this study is to investigate how the practice of structured debates, led by teachers in the classroom, can encourage critical reflection and improve students' textual competence, seeking to increase the quality and effectiveness of textual production in the context of the information age. Therefore, it is understood that this is an era of paradoxes in which so much has never been written; but also, there has never been so little reflection on the act of writing. Amidst this textual profusion, there is an urgency for a critical look at how texts are constructed, circulated and consumed. In this context, the age of textuality can be seen not only as a race to capture information, but as a journey to construct and inhabit meaningful textual territories. Thus, in order to demonstrate the importance of practical knowledge, the debate strategy for the teaching-learning process in textual production is presented, as it is a discursive genre that, according to Bakhtin (2011), acts as a means fundamental for the implementation of social interactions. Through the debate technique, it is possible to provide reflection in the context of teacher education, which, in turn, can be a valuable resource for retextualization.

Thus, the role of debate as a teaching-learning strategy is intrinsically linked to retextualization, which can be understood as the conversion of one type of text into another. Retextualization transcends the simple transmission of information, as it requires the ability to adapt, reinterpret and reconstruct texts effectively, taking into account teacher education. The integration of debate as a pedagogical strategy further expands this capacity, stimulating critical thinking and argumentation skills, making the retextualization process an essential tool in the development of writing skills, textual understanding and construction of constructive dialogues by pre-service teachers.

Understanding the debate technique allows educators to continue the retextualization process more effectively, as this technique encourages critical analysis of different perspectives and arguments, a skill that proves to be fundamental in the retextualization of content, allowing students to reformulate and adapt texts in a more informed and precise way. Furthermore, debate also facilitates critical engagement with multiple perspectives, which is essential for developing argumentative writing skills. According to Marcuschi (2008, p. 162, our translation), “language is not just a communication system nor a simple symbolic system for expressing ideas. But much more a way of life and a form of action.”

In this scenario, defined both by informational excess and the relevance of textuality in various formats, the education of educators requires constant updating to meet the dynamics of

the current learning environment. According to Marcuschi (2008), textualization and retextualization function as critical links between available information and the transformation into applicable knowledge. Given this, the following question arises: How can the teaching-learning strategy, based on debate, contribute to greater reflection on the practice and quality of textual production based on teacher education in the information age?

Based on this questioning, the objective was to investigate the role of debate as a teaching-learning strategy in promoting retextualization skills in teacher education and, specifically: to analyze how the practice of debate contributes to the development of transposition skills discursive in educational contexts as a means of engaging students in critical and reflective oral communication processes; examine the effectiveness of debate as a pedagogical tool for promoting contextual awareness in the retextualization of texts during the teacher education process and evaluate the impact of using debate on the acquisition of retextualization skills by teachers in education.

Of the objectives outlined, the concept of retextualization and its influence on the teaching-learning process will be explored in more depth, highlighting the debate as an enriching pedagogical approach. Next, the following items will be presented: methodology; the importance of retextualization in textual production; teacher education for the use of the debate strategy in the teaching-learning of textual production; PENTA method (Sánchez; Gómez, 2006) as a proposal for debate; analysis and discussion of results.

The importance of retextualization in textual production

In the context of language, retextualization emerges in which words are shaped in order to build and reconstruct the text, being the tools and mortar that shape new narratives and new meanings. In this sense, the theme of retextualization between different textual genres is glimpsed, from debate to dissertation; from debate to opinion article, being defined as the conversion of one type of text into another. According to Marcuschi (2010), textualization and retextualization represent two essential aspects in the production and consumption of texts, especially in a contemporary period marked by the proliferation of information and the growth of communicative platforms. Even though this is Marcuschi's (2010) definition, it is worth noting that this concept of retextualization is not consensual in linguistic theories, varying according to the interpretations of different authors.

The retextualization process consists of generating new text from an original text; in this case, the transition takes place from oral debate to written production. Thus, when a student retextualizes a text, especially from a debate to a written production, he or she can incorporate or make reference to other textual forms, be they opinion articles, news, speeches, among others. In this context, teacher education is necessary, in which the singularity of the contours manifests itself at the intersection of the development of pedagogical skills, the acquisition of knowledge and the ability to adapt to constantly evolving educational environments. In Nóvoa's approach (1992, p. 13, our translation), "education is not constructed through accumulation (of courses, knowledge or techniques), but rather through work of critical reflexivity on practices and permanent (re)construction of a personal identity."

For Marcuschi (2010), orality and writing are distinct forms of language, each with its own particularities, preferred contexts and specific rules. Although writing can be seen as a manifestation of orality, the two are not entirely interchangeable. Each form of expression has unique characteristics and norms and is not limited to being a mere reproduction of the other, since the concept of retextualization, interpreted as the transition from oral expression to written form, is aligned with the ideas of Marcuschi (2010, p. 47, our translation). The author argues that "just as speech does not have negative intrinsic properties, writing also does not have privileged intrinsic properties." In this way, "the passage from speech to writing is not the passage from chaos to order, but it is the passage from one order to another order" (2010, p. 47, our translation).

Teacher education for the use of the 'debate' strategy in the teaching-learning of textual production

The continuing education of educators needs to be perceived as an uninterrupted and flexible cycle of career development and qualification, involving both meticulous examination and reflection and performance in the classroom. It is not just about learning new teaching techniques or updating yourself with new technologies, but it involves deep reflection and questioning one's own practice in the classroom. This includes evaluating approaches that work or not, as well as being open to adopting new ideas or methods, often through a collaborative effort with other professionals in the field. The idea is that this type of education leads not only to the improvement of the teacher's skills, but also to the evolution of education itself as a whole. Gadotti (2011) emphasizes that continuing teacher education goes beyond the mere learning of new techniques or updates in pedagogical and technological methodologies. The author also

argues that this education must involve a deeper process, as it includes reflection, research, practical action, discovery, organization, and theoretical foundation, in addition to constant review. Essentially, true continuing education begins with a critical analysis of teaching practice, suggesting that the professional development of educators should be a holistic and reflective process.

It is within the scope of teacher education that debate emerges as a teaching-learning strategy for the communicative act in the classroom; thus, debate is established as a tool that empowers individuals' communicative skills. Through reflective and critical discussions, educators can develop a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by retextualization, making them better prepared to assist students in such processes of textualization and retextualization.

According to Dolz, Schneuwly and Pietro (2004), debate puts essential skills in communication into play and, in personal development, covers several areas; from a linguistic point of view, it includes techniques for resuming and responding to other people's speech, as well as elements of refutation. In the cognitive aspect, critical ability is central; socially, it is essential to develop the ability to listen and respect others. Individually, the ability to position oneself, to define a personal stance and the construction of one's own identity stands out.

This interactive communication format allows information, ideas, and perspectives to be constantly reformulated, adapted, and reconfigured to meet the demands of the discursive context. In this sense, Dolz, Schneuwly and Pietro (2004) argue that the objective of teaching should include reflection on several aspects, such as the orientation and effectiveness of arguments in texts, the ability to make concessions, the appropriate choice of words, the opening and closing of interactions, the ability to listen to others, as well as to reformulate the speech, responsibility in enunciation. Furthermore, they include the use of argumentative resources, such as examples and quotations.

It is in this vein that, from the practical environment, retextualization occurs, allowing students to manipulate and transform texts with awareness and competence. As observed by Bordenave and Pereira (2015), teaching tactics help to build student knowledge through individual interpretations. Such strategies enable students to interact and share their understanding, in addition to enabling them to analyze various information and apply it in their respective life contexts.

Debate, as a teaching-learning strategy, encourages the exchange of ideas between students, allowing different perspectives on the same issue to be presented by them. According

to Bakhtin (2011), words are intrinsically loaded with meanings that reflect ideologies and personal experiences. How people interpret and respond to these words is tied to how they align or resonate with each individual's own beliefs and experiences. This strategy is used with the purpose of developing and improving students' argumentative ability, while at the same time enabling the assessment of their mastery of a specific topic. During the exchange of opinions and arguments, the teacher acts as a mediator.

The competence of argumentation “challenges teachers and educators to plan educational environments that, in fact, enable the development of argumentative skills - without which critical individuals cannot be formed” (Leitão, 2011, p. 16, our translation). And this proposition points out that work with argumentation must be planned and not improvised.

Therefore, it is essential that the educator is willing to engage in this process, so that meanings are constructed for the development of argumentative skills. Furthermore, it is essential that the teacher not only masters the concepts related to the field of activity, but also becomes familiar with the reasoning and ways of arguing. This way, the teacher will be better prepared to promote the development of students' argumentative skills in order to enrich the learning process. For Leitão (2011), negotiation between divergent opinions, which arise in teaching-learning situations, not only produces argumentation, but also establishes a learning mechanism that encourages - although does not ensure - the transition to new understandings on the debated subject.

Therefore, debate was chosen as an efficient pedagogical technique, as it allows interlocutors, including teachers and students, to confront different points of view. However, before the debate takes place, it is essential that students obtain relevant information about the topic that will be discussed. It is up to the teacher to mediate the discussion in a clear and objective way. With this, it is understood that the role of orality is in the development of linguistic and communicative skills, being an essential component of the language learning and teaching process.

The debate strategy must be led by the teacher in an integral way, guiding the group to carry out the activity. According to Gusdorf (1987, p. 143, our translation), it is necessary to “experience each class as a hypothesis to be tested. In the debate between teacher and student, each one is exposed to the other and no one can say how the adventure will end.” To support arguments, it is essential that students carefully read the proposed topic. An important sign that the student has truly incorporated knowledge in a reflective way is realizing your ability to

explain the content in your own words, interweaving it with your prior knowledge about the subject under discussion.

Debate is argumentation with the aim of changing the other's point of view and, in this practice, it is important that students develop their imagination. To this end, it is recommended that the teacher propose intellectual challenges, such as comparisons, and that students learn to respect diversity of opinions. In this sense, the debate provides the opportunity to analyze different situations with a critical eye, a characteristic that is currently expected to be found in students. For Lopes *et al.* (2019) highlight the importance of critical thinking in the learning process and propose two stages in the assimilation of content: in the first stage, students internalize the fundamental ideas, concepts and theories related to the content studied and, in the second stage, they move on to practice, which is understood as an application process, in which the acquired knowledge is effectively used in situations relevant to students, a process made possible by debate.

PENTA method as a proposal for debate

The PENTA method, as explained by Sánchez and Gómez (2006), is a technique that aims to promote autonomy and problem-solving skills in a group environment. The method is divided into five steps: defining the problem (P), developing alternatives (E), negotiating pros and cons (N), decision making (T) and acting with evaluation (A).

When preparing a classroom debate, the teacher must first clarify the concept of the method used, as well as clearly define the central theme of the debate. To enrich students' arguments, a variety of sources of information are essential so that they can form well-founded arguments. Students are then divided into groups of three to five members, with each group defending or contesting a proposed solution to the problem under discussion and additional groups can be formed to evaluate the quality of the arguments presented. The rules of the debate, including speaking time and the order of group participation, must be established in advance to ensure a structured and organized discussion. Regarding the layout of the room, the groups are positioned on opposite sides, while the teacher is placed in the center, acting as a mediator of the debate.

Thus, the PENTA method not only helps with problem solving, but also fosters skills such as teamwork and critical thinking. The room must be organized for the debate so that everyone can see all the members.

The moment of debate

During the debate, the teacher acts as a mediator, introducing the topic and context. In this way, it begins with arguments from the group in favor of the proposed solution, alternating with the opposing group. Each group plans the order of speakers to ensure clarity in the presentation of ideas. After all speeches, there is space for refutations. The evaluation group takes notes on the relevant arguments. However, interruptions are avoided to maintain the fluidity of the debate. The final decision is made through a class vote.

The debate evaluation process must be formative and carried out continuously by the teacher, covering all stages that make up the activity, from proposing the problem to group organization and structuring arguments based on researched sources. To this end, it is recommended that the teacher and students develop an evaluation protocol that guides the analysis criteria and allows evaluators - including the students themselves - to evaluate the debaters fairly and objectively.

Based on this theoretical proposition, continued education was carried out for teachers participating in the research, as described in the following topic on methodology.

Methodology

This research was designed to address questions about the role of debate as a method of teaching and developing retextualization skills, taking into account the importance of orality, as highlighted by the National Common Curricular Base – BNCC (Brazil, 2018). The main focus was to explore how structured debates, led by educators in the classroom, can promote critical thinking and improve students' writing and speaking skills.

The methodology of this research focused on a qualitative approach, using the integrative review technique for theoretical study, which provided a multidimensional analysis of the educational context, as suggested by Silveira and Córdova (2009) and Ferri (2001).

The research method was structured into five phases: problem definition, selection of relevant literature, quality assessment of studies, organization of data into categories and synthesis of conclusions. According to Ermel *et al.* (2022), this integrative review methodology is broadly comprehensive, allowing the inclusion of a variety of studies in order to seek a complete understanding of the topic investigated.

To carry out this research, six Elementary School Textual Production teachers from schools in a private educational network in the Southern Administrative Region of Santa

Catarina were interviewed, named in the research as D1, D2, D3, D4, D5 and D6, in order to preserve the identity of each one, as explained in the Free and Informed Consent Form (TCLE). The group was thus constituted: five women and one man, aged between 20 and 59 years; graduates in Literature, five have specialization in the educational area and one is a doctoral student in Literature. Professional experience varies from one to thirty years among the participants, meaning there are beginners and experienced teachers in the group.

With these participants, continued education was carried out based on theoretical-practical workshops and a planning workshop, an approach that combines theory with practice, providing teachers with concrete opportunities for learning and applying the knowledge acquired. This path went beyond the classroom space, even though this is the central environment of teaching work.

To collect data regarding teacher education in teaching textual production, diversified methods were adopted. Initially, a questionnaire was applied to validate pedagogical practices. This instrument allowed a qualitative assessment of the methodologies adopted by teachers. In parallel, a field diary was kept, which functioned as a detailed record of daily observations, with the intervention of action research for the development of practices in the classroom, referring to observation and analysis throughout the two months. Gonçalves (2013) states that action research is structured into phases of planning, action, observation (evaluation) and reflection (theorization). These components proved to be essential for the elaboration of the debate as a teaching and assessment approach, through continuous in-person and/or online education for Portuguese language teachers.

In addition, a focus group was held with the participating teachers. This space for dialogue enabled an in-depth discussion about the shared experiences and individual perceptions of teachers regarding teaching-learning strategies and formative assessment. Such a collaborative approach allowed for a richer and more complex understanding of the educational processes in question.

Analysis and discussion of results

The results of this research are presented here based on the speeches presented by the teachers interviewed and analyzed in the light of education and language theorists.

This analysis is based on the assumption that the dialogical interaction of the teachers' statements, when situating what they feel and what they think about the theoretical-practical

workshops, are contributions to the answers given in the questionnaire, in the focus group, as well as in the observations in the field journal.

Continuing education is a learning process that aims to update and improve professional knowledge and skills in a given area. This type of education offers the opportunity for direct interaction between participants and facilitators in order to enable the sharing of experiences and exchange of ideas. That said, it is in continuing education that discussions and immersive practices take place, which allow for a more personalized approach adapted to the needs of the participants.

Faced with rethinking the importance of teacher education in basic education, as well as a path of continuity, since there are teachers who are starting their journey in education and others who, even though they have been there for years, cannot help but update themselves.

The teacher (D2) also adds that “in education I learned a lot, the contribution was gigantic, as it was my first year as a teacher and my first experience with a regular school, that is, regular with a grade with my father and everything else”. She adds: “I am very grateful for the opportunity to exchange with the group of teachers, especially because the day-to-day experience is very different from the theory.”

It can be seen, in these statements, as Gadotti (2011) says, that the continuing education provided to teachers must be seen as a process that encompasses reflection, research, action, discovery, organization, justification, review, and theoretical construction. Therefore, it should not be limited to merely learning new techniques, updating pedagogical approaches or familiarizing yourself with the latest technological innovations.

Teacher D3 states that “the workshops developed during the education provided clarifications that will help with the innovations that will be developed in classes and in assessment activities”. In addition to the workshops providing dialogue, getting to know each other's problems, they can see that it is possible to seek a solution, as mentioned by teacher D6: “So, I see this exchange as essential, because you see other schools, other schools, right, from the same association they are going through some difficulties that, many times, we go through and overcome”. The teacher (D1) emphasizes that: “every exchange of information and experience enriches our teaching. And we adapt, right? The entire meeting, the exchange of experience, the ways of carrying out the activities”. The teacher (D5) adds that: “the workshops developed during the education provided clarifications that will help with the innovations that will be developed in classes and in assessment activities.”

Participants were asked about the approach to the topic in the workshops, and teacher D1 expressed his opinion about the importance of creating more meaningful class possibilities for students, using active methodologies. In addition, D2 stated that the theory and practice of the workshop offered countless possibilities to expand and make my teaching activity more meaningful. In this way, it was understood that the workshops were dynamic.

From the perspective of the teacher-researcher, there was appreciation from teachers regarding the topic of theoretical-practical workshops, as well as the various evaluation instruments used. In this way, it was understood that reflection requires a dialogical relationship with others, which can be observed during the workshops.

In this sense, the importance of active and participatory education is evident, in which, in this education context, teachers are encouraged to explore, question, experiment and collaborate. By involving different forms of expression and interaction, this environment provides an enriching and stimulating experience, in order to contribute to the integral development of participants. In this way, the workshops stimulated learning by promoting resources, instruments and knowledge that led to interaction between the subject and the object of study in focus.

Regarding the debate strategy, the following statement by the teachers noted the importance of using debate as a strategy for building arguments:

The debate, as the method motivated students to organize the arguments that are requested (D1).

In the writing discipline, the debate developed in the third semester showed students how efficient argumentation can direct the listener/reader's opinion (D2).

One strategy that was used and was very fruitful was debate. For them to be able to create plausible arguments, there needed to be knowledge on the subject (D3).

The use of debate as a tool for constructing the dissertation-argumentative text (D5).

I believe the debate to be the most beneficial in every way, as they had to, according to the point of view that was defended, listen to and understand different opinions (D6).

The teachers' statements reflect a consensus on the value of debate as an effective pedagogical strategy, although they emphasize different aspects and potential benefits of this method. Initially, it is evident in all the speeches of teachers D1, D2, D3 and D6, the perception that debate is a powerful tool for developing argumentative skills. Teachers D1, D2, D3 and D6 highlight the effectiveness of debate in improving students' ability to organize and present

convincing arguments. This is an essential skill that students can apply not only in the academic setting, but also in many real-life situations.

However, each teacher also focused on different aspects of this process. Professor D2, for example, draws attention to the debate's ability to influence the listener's or reader's opinion, a factor that other teachers do not explicitly address. This aspect can be particularly relevant in subjects such as writing, where, as mentioned by teacher D5, debate can be an effective tool for constructing dissertation-argumentative texts.

Professor D3 highlights the importance of prior knowledge about the subject being debated to create plausible arguments. This perspective highlights the importance of pre-debate research preparation, an aspect that the other professors did not mention.

Finally, teacher D6 emphasizes the value of debate in promoting understanding of different opinions. He highlights the fact that debate requires students not only to be able to argue effectively, but also to listen and consider different perspectives.

Thus, although everyone agrees that debate is a useful teaching strategy, each teacher focuses on a different aspect, highlighting the versatility and wide range of skills that debate can help develop in students. Debating is not just about winning an argument, but about exploring different perspectives, building a deeper understanding of a topic in order to learn how to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively. Of the most used teaching-learning strategies, according to the teachers, the debate encouraged critical discussion and the formation of well-founded arguments.

Final remarks

The reflections presented here were based on the relevance of textual production and debate as a teaching-learning strategy for teacher education and how the practice of structured debates in the classroom stimulates critical reflection and improves students' textual competence, contributing to the elevation the quality and effectiveness of textual production.

This analysis reiterated the growing importance of textuality in the contemporary era, since there is a predominance of texts from different genres and platforms. In a period where information is vast and easily disseminated, the ability to not only produce, but also critically analyze and improve the practice of writing becomes essential. This scenario requires teacher education that is constantly updated to meet the dynamics of the current learning environment.

Debate emerged as an essential strategy in the teaching-learning process, acting as an incentive for the development of critical thinking and argumentative skills. Given that debate allows students to explore different perspectives, build deeper understandings of the topics discussed and improve their ability to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively.

Retextualization, defined as the conversion of one type of text into another, has proven to be a central skill in the current educational scenario. This skill goes beyond the simple transmission of information, as it requires the ability to adapt, reinterpret and reconstruct texts in a more participatory way. Thus, the integration of debate as a pedagogical strategy expands the capacity for retextualization and stimulates critical thinking and argumentation skills.

In this vein, the education of educators emerged in a dynamic process regarding the need for a pedagogical approach that fosters reflective and critical skills, preparing educators to face the challenges and demands of communication in the information age. This continued education was reflective and adaptive, ensuring that educators were prepared to share what they learned and evaluate textual production in a more critical and constructive way.

Thus, this study highlights the importance of a pedagogical approach that values textuality, critical reflection, and argumentative skills in the context of teacher education. In this way, the practice of debate, integrated into a teaching-learning strategy, proved to be fundamental for developing students' textual competence and ability to retextualize. In a world where information is abundant and communication is complex, the ability to analyze, interpret and produce texts in a critical and reflective way becomes not only an educational skill, but also an essential skill for life in society.

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