

THE PEDAGOGY OF TEXTUAL GENRES
AND CURRICULAR SCAFFOLDING AS A DIDACTIC MEDIATION
FOR THE COMPREHENSION OF PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS

La pedagogía de géneros textuales y el andamiaje
curricular como una mediación didáctica
para la comprensión de textos filosóficos

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Abstract

To make philosophical texts more accessible to middle and high school students, they must be simplified and clarified linguistically: the terms used to teach the subject should not consist of long, complicated sentences or have complex grammatical structures that make them difficult to understand. This article presents the results of an action research project in which a teaching sequence was designed and developed based on the Sydney School's Pedagogy of Textual Genres (PGT) and the Curricular Scaffolding proposed by Bruner. The proposal was implemented in a school in the Caribbean region of Colombia with a socioeconomically vulnerable population, using Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*, a work frequently read in secondary education, as the central text. The findings show that the integration of PGT and curricular scaffolding promoted students' literal and inferential comprehension by enabling them to identify discursive genre, analyze semantic structures, and recognize lexical-grammatical resources. The experience also showed that teacher mediation and student participation were decisive factors in making philosophical reading an accessible and meaningful practice. This study confirms the potential of PGT as a strategy for democratizing access to philosophy in secondary education, overcoming the tendency toward rote memorization and opening spaces for critical reflection.

Keywords

Philosophy Teaching, Educational Sciences, Philosophical Text, Didactic Mediation, Reading, Curriculum.

Resumen

Para hacer más accesibles a los estudiantes de escuela media y secundaria los textos filosóficos, estos deben ser simplificados y aclarados lingüísticamente: los términos empleados para la enseñanza de la asignatura no deben contener oraciones largas y complicadas ni estructuras gramaticales complejas que dificulten su comprensión. En este artículo se muestran los resultados de una investigación-acción donde se diseñó y desarrolló una secuencia didáctica según la pedagogía de los géneros textuales (PGT) de la escuela de Sidney y el andamiaje curricular propuesto por Bruner. La propuesta se aplicó en un colegio de la región Caribe colombiana con población socioeconómicamente vulnerable, utilizando como texto central la *Alegoría de la caverna* de Platón, obra frecuentemente leída en educación media. Los hallazgos muestran que la integración de PGT y andamiaje curricular favoreció la comprensión literal e inferencial de los estudiantes, al permitirles identificar el género discursivo, analizar estructuras semánticas y reconocer recursos léxico-gramaticales. La experiencia evidenció, además, que la mediación docente y la participación de los estudiantes fueron factores decisivos para convertir la lectura filosófica en una práctica accesible y significativa. Este estudio confirma el potencial de la PGT como estrategia para democratizar el acceso a la filosofía en la educación media, al superar la tendencia a la memorización mecánica y abrir espacios para la reflexión crítica.

Palabras clave

Enseñanza de la filosofía, ciencias de la educación, texto filosófico, mediación didáctica, lectura, currículo.



Introduction

Philosophy has been highlighted by UNESCO (2009) as essential in the development of critical thinking, key skill for facing the challenges of our society. From this perspective, Nagel (1995) emphasizes that learning philosophy helps students become more tolerant and critical of different perspectives. Corcelles and Castelló (2013) relate this learning to elements of critical thinking such as problematization, conceptualization, and argumentation. Similarly, Echeverría (2004) points to thinking skills promoted by philosophy such as the production of good reasons, examples, and counterexamples, or the discovery of diverse worldviews (as well as contradictions between them).

In Colombia, Article 31 of the General Education Law (Law 115 of 1994) defines philosophy as an essential area in secondary education, which has led to multiple pedagogical and methodological interpretations. Over the years, the teaching of this discipline has oscillated between conceptions that emphasize its historical stages (history of ideas) and specific philosophical thinking skills, with guidelines such as those established by UNESCO (2011) and developed in Colombia in the document entitled «Pedagogical guidelines for the teaching of philosophy in secondary education» (MEN, 2010). This discussion highlights the relevance and topicality of the subject, as tensions still persist between official regulations and everyday pedagogical practices.

Despite these advances, the teaching of philosophy in Colombia presents significant challenges (Coppolecchia, 2012; Paredes & Carmoña, 2019), especially in the practical application of pedagogical guidelines that often remain ambiguous or insufficient to effectively guide teaching practice. This challenge is complicated by changes in the structure of the state exam for Colombian high school students (SABER 11 tests), where the area of philosophy was combined with Spanish in the critical reading assessment test (ICFES, 2013). This change has generated a discussion about the role of philosophy in the curriculum, questioning whether its integration has instrumentalized the discipline, reducing it to a tool for reading comprehension rather than a field of study that contributes to critical thinking and ethical reflection.

The central problem addressed by this study is that secondary school students encounter serious limitations in understanding original philosophical texts, whose linguistic and conceptual complexity often leads teachers to replace them with simplified school textbooks. This practice, although intended to facilitate comprehension, reduces young

people's opportunities to interact with philosophical thought in its most original forms (Velásquez, 2002; Prada Londoño, 2012). Thus, the reading of philosophy is restricted to a literal level, without reaching the critical and reflective interpretation that characterizes the discipline.

To address this challenge, various pedagogical strategies have been developed that focus on students' experiences and concerns. Nava Preciado (2022) suggests that allowing students to discover the relevance of philosophical questions in their own lives can foster a philosophical attitude that enriches their understanding and appreciation of philosophical knowledge. Furthermore, in order to adapt philosophical reflection to the specific realities of Latin America, authors such as Paredes and Carmona (2019) have developed pedagogical guidelines that advocate for a decolonization of philosophical thought in the classroom. These approaches seek to move away from Eurocentric paradigms and foster critical thinking that is more relevant to students in the region, directly addressing the needs and challenges of their sociocultural contexts.

Rangel Díaz (2020) argues that the emphasis on the uncritical reproduction of philosophical ideas prevents these subjects from promoting reflection and critical thinking. Similarly, García Guzmán (2019) stresses the importance of linking philosophical knowledge to students' situated experience, to prevent teaching from being limited to mere theoretical reproduction.

A key process in philosophical teaching and reflection is the selection of texts. These are generally considered too complex for students, leading teachers to opt for school guides rather than the original disciplinary texts (Pinto *et al.*, 2011). This choice seeks to facilitate understanding, given that students often find it difficult to understand and unravel the ideas represented in these texts. Similarly, Coppolecchia (2012) and Monserrat Molas (2010) point out that philosophical communication is elusive and manifests itself in various genres, which adds a layer of complexity. Additionally, Prada Londoño (2012) argues that philosophical texts are often not aimed at students, who lack the ability to follow the reasoning necessary to fully understand these texts.

However, Velásquez (2002) suggests that the main problem in teaching philosophy does not lie in the texts themselves, but in how teachers use them without fostering a critical attitude in students. Critical reading skills are fundamental to learning philosophy. Rangel Díaz (2020) highlights the importance of reading as a tool for developing critical thinking, which is essential for discussion and the adoption of informed positions. Paredes and Carmona (2019) emphasize that fostering critical



thinking is a fundamental task of philosophy, allowing students to generate autonomous reflections. This idea is consistent with Adorno's (2020) proposal for an educational project focused on emancipation and self-determination «in all, and truly all, aspects of our lives» (p. 125).

Ramírez and Bonilla (2019) highlight that the teaching of philosophical topics depends significantly «on the teacher's interpretation of the curriculum, as well as on their degree of specialization and knowledge of the discipline» (p. 96). This process must be led by the teacher from a disciplinary standpoint that facilitates the understanding of philosophical writings in order to enrich students with the ideas contained therein. The authors emphasize the importance of treating «the teaching of philosophy as a specialized discourse that will help build intertextual networks around the discipline's own knowledge structure» (p. 106).

The effectiveness of this specialized approach is compromised when the teaching of reading is not considered transversal to all disciplines. Many mistakenly believe that the development of reading skills is limited to language and does not extend to other fields of knowledge, which has a direct impact on the learning of philosophy. Fernández Martín (2020) and Petit (2003) argue that teachers of other disciplines often neglect this crucial task, which is why they emphasize the need for teachers to develop a teaching approach that integrates both disciplinary mastery and discipline-specific reading skills.

Thus, the idea to be defended in this article is that textual genre pedagogy (TGP) and curricular scaffolding are strategies capable of overcoming the limitations of literal comprehension and enabling access to a critical reading of philosophical texts. When analyzing the pedagogical needs in the teaching of philosophy, it is essential to consider how these can be met by TPG, especially with regard to the teaching of reading.

The main objective of this study is to design and implement a teaching sequence that promotes literal and inferential comprehension of a classic philosophical text (Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*) in tenth-grade high school students. Hence the importance of articulating strategies that not only allow access to philosophical ideas but also develop autonomy and critical positions regarding the content.

PGT has been noted for its implementation in various educational contexts and areas of knowledge. The «reading to learn» (LPA) methodology, based on PGT, has proven effective in teaching science and languages, strengthening literacy and oral communication skills (Herazo *et al.*, 2021). These findings support the relevance of exploring its application in the field of philosophy, an area that has been little researched in Colombia.

The structure of the article is as follows: first, the pedagogical and linguistic foundations of PGT and curricular scaffolding are presented; second, the action research methodology used is described; third, the results obtained with the implementation of the teaching sequence are presented; and finally, the conclusions and projections of this experience for the teaching of philosophy and teacher training are discussed.

Fundamentals of PGT and curricular scaffolding

Reading philosophical texts presents particular challenges for middle and high school students due to the frequent use of abstract language, complex argumentative structures, and high conceptual density. These characteristics often make it difficult for students to identify the central ideas and establish logical relationships in the discourse. As some studies point out, these difficulties are not only due to the intrinsically complex nature of the texts, but also to the absence of pedagogical strategies that support their approach. Thus, without adequate didactic mediation, comprehension is reduced to the literal, preventing critical interaction with the content, which confirms Alarcón's (2024) warning that philosophy runs the risk of remaining pure theory if it is not articulated with pedagogical practices that continue it in the educational task.

PGT: between language, culture, and learning

This pedagogy has its origins in systemic functional linguistics (SFL), developed by Halliday and later enriched by Martin, Hasan, and Matthiessen (Unsworth, 2000). This approach, with applications in semiotics, grammar, and discourse analysis, has proven particularly useful in educational settings, as it facilitates understanding of how language structures and transmits knowledge. As Acevedo *et al.* (2023), point out, the potential of SFL lies in its ability to link textual production with the sociocultural contexts in which it is generated.

Within this framework, PGT is conceived as an educational approach to the development of reading and writing, recognizing that textual genres are social practices that organize communication and learning. Martin (1992) defines them as «social activities with a schematic structure, directed toward specific goals» (p. 505), and in 1997 he emphasizes their sequential nature, as they reflect social processes within a culture. Rose and Martin (2012) and Moss (2016) agree that knowledge does not circulate in isolation, but through language and situated interactions.



Beyond this linguistic dimension, PGT should be understood as a cultural approach. Along these lines, Esparza Urzúa (2024) draws on Cassirer and Natorp to show that all educational practice is inseparable from culture and that symbols (language, myth, art, science) are pedagogical mediations that shape experience. This reinforces the relevance of PGT in the case of philosophy, given that philosophical texts are not mere vehicles of information, but symbolic forms that require guided learning to be understood in all their complexity.

PGT is implemented through a teaching and learning cycle structured in three phases: *deconstruction*, in which a model text is analyzed to understand its purpose, structure, and linguistic resources; *joint construction*, in which teachers and students produce a new text of the same genre in a guided manner; and *independent construction*, in which students apply what they have learned and produce texts autonomously (Martin and Rose, 2005; Fernández & Moyano, 2021).

This cycle has proven effective in multiple contexts because it allows for gradual scaffolding that takes students from literal comprehension to inferential and critical levels. Benítez *et al.* (2021) highlight its potential to strengthen disciplinary literacy, while García Parejo and Blanco (2020) link it directly to academic writing.

Adaptations: the PBL methodology

The PGT teaching-learning process has also been adapted to various educational contexts, notably the LPA methodology (Rose, 2004; Rose & Acevedo, 2006). This methodology reinforces scaffolding in reading and writing through a cycle of classroom interaction based on: preparation, response, evaluation, and elaboration. It includes three key stages: *preparation for reading*, in which the text is contextualized and its structures are identified; *detailed reading*, which promotes comprehension at the literal, inferential, and critical levels; and *preparation for independent writing and rewriting*, in which students produce new texts by applying the models they have worked on.

Benítez *et al.* (2021) and Rose and Acevedo (2006) show that this process enhances autonomy in academic writing, consolidating skills that transcend the discipline of language. From this perspective, PGT is not limited to teaching text formats, but rather encourages a «dialogue» between the reader and the document being read, as emphasized by Sánchez Chévez (2014). Here, the student is not reduced to decoding, but rather

interacts with the text through advanced cognitive processes that enable critical thinking.

Curricular scaffolding: from theory to educational practice

The notion of scaffolding has its roots in Vygotsky's (1987) theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), according to which learning occurs optimally when students are faced with tasks that, although initially beyond their capabilities, can be solved with support. Bruner (1983, cited in Walqui, 2006) developed this idea by conceptualizing scaffolding as progressive accompaniment that gradually transfers responsibility to the learner.

In this study, scaffolding is understood in curricular terms, articulating three levels: macro, meso, and micro. The *macro level* corresponds to the general guidelines (PEI, study plans, curriculum grids) that define the structure and sequence of learning (Posner, 2005; Rosado Mendinueta, 2020). On the other hand, the *meso level* focuses on the specification of objectives, resources, and methodologies that respond to the institutional context (Fernández, 2020). Finally, the *micro level* is materialized in classroom plans, teaching units, and assessments, where direct work with students is defined (Rosado Mendinueta, 2020).

The usefulness of this ecological view lies in recognizing—as Barraza Niebles (2023) points out, based on Bronfenbrenner (1977)—that learning does not depend on a single factor, but on interrelated systems. Applied to the teaching of philosophy, this approach implies that reading comprehension should be considered a cross-cutting theme that is not exclusive to the language area.

Within this framework, the competencies specific to philosophy—critical, creative, and dialogical (MEN, 2010)—are strengthened when the curriculum is organized as a scaffolding. This is related to what Agüero (2022) proposes: accepting a norm means accepting a linguistic and institutional game, which shows that philosophical learning does not occur outside institutions, but within them. Therefore, curricular scaffolding in philosophy not only structures content, but also constitutes the student as a member of a community of thought.

Connection between PGT and curricular scaffolding

The convergence between PGT and curricular scaffolding lies in the fact that both strategies recognize that learning philosophy involves more than memorizing concepts: it involves participating in discursive and institutional practices. As Alarcón (2024) argues, philosophy is a conti-



uation of education by other means and requires didactic mediations that allow students to tackle complex texts without stripping them of their conceptual density. Similarly, Esparza Urzúa (2024) shows that education can only be understood from its cultural and symbolic insertion, and Agüero (2022) emphasizes that it is institutionalized language that enables the constitution of the philosophical community.

Methodology

This study is an action research project, understood as a participatory and reflective process in which teachers and researchers collaborate to transform educational practice while generating knowledge (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). This approach was chosen in response to the need to articulate theory and practice in the context of philosophy teaching, so that understanding of the texts and pedagogical transformations emerge from the situated experience. As Alarcón (2024) argues, theory should not be an external framework but a horizon that is realized in the very act of teaching and learning.

The methodological design adopted a cyclical character, consisting of phases of diagnosis, planning, action, observation, and reflection (Burns, 2010; Díaz Bazo, 2017). This scheme allowed for continuous adjustment of the pedagogical proposal according to the progress and difficulties observed in the classroom, ensuring permanent feedback between the teaching objectives and the real conditions of philosophical learning. Thus, the iteration between planning and action was not a mechanical procedure, but rather a reflective strategy that enabled the progressive refinement of teaching strategies.

The research was conducted in a co-educational, private, publicly subsidized educational institution located in the southeastern part of Barranquilla (Atlántico, Colombia). Twenty-two tenth-grade students and a teacher-researcher in charge of the Philosophy course participated, who led the design and implementation of the pedagogical proposal in constant dialogue with the research team. Informed consent was obtained from administrators, teachers, and students, ensuring confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms and voluntary participation, in accordance with the ethical guidelines for educational research (Cohen *et al.*, 2018).

The focus of the research process was the textual analysis of Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*, approached through LSF (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). This approach allowed us to examine the comprehensibility of

the text from its lexical-grammatical structure and semantic potential, which was key to designing mediation strategies that would facilitate students' access to philosophical thinking. The selection of this text was based on its philosophical centrality and the possibility of showing how a text of high conceptual density can be approached through PGT and curricular scaffolding.

Information was collected through a coordinated set of qualitative strategies aimed at triangulating evidence and strengthening the validity of the findings. Participant and non-participant observation allowed the dynamics of the classes and discursive interaction to be recorded in real time (Lüdke & André, 1986). Complementarily, autoethnographic techniques and retrospective analysis of audiovisual recordings were used to deepen the understanding of the processes of teacher mediation and collective construction of meaning (Ellis *et al.*, 2011). Likewise, the analysis of the texts produced by the students provided information on the development of their interpretive and argumentative skills (Bowen, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Finally, the teacher-researcher's field diary served as a reflective device that allowed for the documentation of tensions, adjustments, and learnings that arose during the intervention (Schön, 1992; Badia & Becerril, 2016).

The data collected served as the basis for the design and implementation of a teaching sequence based on PGT and the principles of curricular scaffolding (Rose & Martin, 2012; Benítez *et al.*, 2021; Rosado Mendinueta, 2020). This sequence integrated macro-curricular decisions, such as the selection of the philosophical text and its learning objectives; meso-curricular decisions, related to the organization of activities and formative assessments; and micro-curricular decisions, focused on classroom planning and mediation tools. The process was carried out in twelve virtual sessions using Zoom and Google Meet, which allowed for flexible and collaborative interaction among participants.

The implementation followed a progressive learning sequence inspired by the principles of PGT. In the first stage, textual deconstruction was carried out, during which students analyzed, with the teacher's guidance, the structure of the philosophical text, its discursive genre, the predominant argumentative features, and the lexical-grammatical resources used by the author. This exercise allowed them to identify the internal organization of the discourse and recognize the linguistic mechanisms that construct its philosophical meaning, which facilitated their approach to a text of high conceptual density such as *Allegory of the Cave*.

Subsequently, joint construction was developed, a phase in which learning was consolidated through interaction between teacher and stu-



dents. Through critical reading activities, underlining key terms, note-taking, guided discussion, and collaborative rewriting, participants collectively reconstructed the meaning of the text. At this stage, the teacher played a fundamental role as a mediator of the process, guiding reflection on language and promoting the co-construction of philosophical knowledge in an environment of dialogue.

Finally, the sequence culminated in independent construction, aimed at assessing the degree of appropriation achieved by the students. At this point, participants developed their own interpretations and written productions, autonomously applying the discursive strategies worked on in the previous phases. This conclusion allowed for the transfer of learning to be evident, as students were able not only to understand the philosophical ideas addressed, but also to express them with greater clarity and coherence in their own texts.

This sequence allowed for the articulation of the curricular scaffolding—which ensures coherence between the macro, meso, and micro levels—with the PGT—which offers the linguistic tools necessary to address philosophical thinking from the communicative experience of the classroom—(Esparza Urzúa, 2024; Agüero, 2022).

Finally, the evaluation of the process focused on assessing the overall understanding achieved by the students and the effectiveness of the teaching strategies implemented. This exercise in reflective analysis made it possible to identify progress, limitations, and projections for improvement for future iterations of the research cycle (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005), thus consolidating a practice of teaching research that learns from itself and renews itself in the process.

Results

The research identified pedagogical strategies articulated at the macro, meso, and micro levels of curricular scaffolding, designed to facilitate philosophical inquiry and reflection among tenth-grade students. The most relevant findings of the research process are presented below, organized according to the phases of scaffolding and the strategies implemented.

Macro-level scaffolding strategies

Macro-curricular scaffolding was based on the task of supporting students in their understanding of philosophical texts from the philosophy curriculum. For this purpose, Plato's *Allegory of the Cave* was selected as



the central text, given its metaphorical richness and conceptual complexity. This choice was not merely instrumental: it sought to reinforce the value of philosophy in everyday life, in line with the idea that philosophical education should transform existence and not be reduced to formal content (Alarcón, 2024).

PGT was used to improve applied reading comprehension through a didactic sequence. In line with Rose and Martin (2012), frequent revisions were made to the curriculum to align the texts with the learning objectives. This exercise also made it possible to redefine the teaching of philosophy, as proposed by Blanco (2007), by rethinking traditional methodologies through the PGT.

An excerpt from the area plan shows how standards, achievements, competencies, methodologies, and assessments were organized in a manner consistent with the macro-curricular scaffolding:

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Table 1
Academic program for the Philosophy course
at San Alberto Magno School (first term, 2021)

Standard	Understand through examples that philosophy is a common and necessary activity that is learned basically by putting it into practice
Competency	Interpretative, argumentative, proactive.
Achievement	Recognizes the importance of philosophy and the thinking behind early philosophical studies.
Evidence of learning	Contributes positively to the group's knowledge building and group environment. Identifies the problematic principles raised by philosophy. Establishes the importance of studying philosophy. Analyzes the causes that led the Greeks to philosophize. Generates and does not refrain from participating in classroom debates. Contextualizes situations between history and philosophy.
Methodology	Asks students to define the concept of philosophy. Concept strategy. Comprehensive reading of texts. Dialogued explanations. Mapping activities.
Assessment	Active participation in class. Workshop development. Text comprehension. Multiple-choice tests.

Following the macro-curricular stage, we move on to the second stage of scaffolding, known as the meso-curricular stage.

Meso-level scaffolding

At the mesocurricular level, the teaching sequence was implemented in 12 sessions between February and May 2021. The text was approached through an analysis of its discursive characteristics, which allowed it to be classified within the narrative genre with a dialogical structure.

The composition of the text reveals a use of conversational language intertwined with the narration of events, which unfolds through successive interventions between the characters. This dialogical feature, characteristic of Platonic works, highlights the intention to combine philosophical exposition with the dramatization of thought, allowing the reader to actively participate in reconstructing the meaning of the allegory (Plato, 1992). This dialogue between teacher and disciple also constitutes a fundamental didactic resource: the progressive transition from sensible to intelligible knowledge through the exchange of questions and answers.

The narrative analysis of *the Allegory of the Cave* was carried out according to the phases of orientation, complication, evaluation, and resolution (Rose & Martin, 2012). Each stage allowed students to progressively recognize the context, the dilemmas of the freed prisoner, the philosophical reflections, and the final resolution centered on the «idea of the good.»

A detailed reading of this dialogue allowed us to identify key linguistic resources: metaphors, abstract vocabulary, imperative and transitive verbs, all of which generate profound philosophical meanings. This exercise confirms what Esparza Urzúa (2024) points out: that philosophical understanding requires interpreting the symbolic forms that mediate knowledge, in this case, narrative and dialogical textual genres.

The sessions were meticulously planned, progressing from basic comprehension to critical analysis. This structure, in line with Fernández (2020), allowed for reflective and flexible teaching, tailored to the emerging needs of the group. The integration of LSF provided a solid foundation for strengthening writing and, of course, critical reading.

Likewise, the teacher's adaptability to the characteristics of the group was a decisive factor, confirming the importance of methodological flexibility both for improving comprehension and enriching teaching practice (Lerner, 2007).

Scaffolding strategies at the micro level

At the micro level, classroom objectives, materials, and activities were carefully organized. The sequence included the activation of prior knowledge, the contextualization of the text, detailed reading, the identification of keywords, and collaborative rewriting.

Difficulties in accessing the internet and technological tools were anticipated, which required methodological adjustments to ensure the equitable participation of all students. This level illustrates what Agüero (2022) proposes: that philosophy and education are embodied in specific institutional practices, where language and interaction constitute the subject.

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Interaction patterns

Analysis of the classes revealed the presence of initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) interaction patterns and their extended variants IRE-E. A significant example occurred when, after viewing an excerpt from the film *The Matrix*, the teacher posed open-ended questions to guide reflection on the notion of reality. First, he asked the students about the first question Neo asks Morpheus after waking up, to which one student replied that he was asking if what he saw was real. The teacher continued the dialogue by asking them to identify Morpheus' response, and another student recalled that he replied with a reflection: «What is real? Could you define what is real? If you talk about what you can see, smell, or feel, those are simply impulses interpreted by the brain.» From this exchange, the teacher took the discussion to a more personal level, asking the students what they themselves understood by reality. One of them summarized his view by saying, «What I can see or touch.»

This type of interaction reflects the traditional sequence of classroom participation—the teacher initiates, the students respond, and finally the teacher evaluates—but at the same time it opens up space for extending responses toward deeper reflections. The questions not only verified understanding, but also functioned as micro scaffolding that allowed students to connect their own conceptions with Plato's text and construct shared meanings. As Benítez *et al.* (2021) argue, carefully structured interactions increase participation and strengthen both cognitive and emotional connections to philosophical content.

Detailed and inferential reading

During detailed reading, students identified complex vocabulary, synonyms, and metaphorical expressions. To facilitate this process, the teacher used closed-ended questions that guided comprehension step by step. For example, when addressing the paragraph that begins the orientation stage, he asked what was bound by chains in the text. One student responded accurately: «the children's legs and necks.» The teacher then explained that the expression «so that» introduced a consequence and asked the students to identify it. Another student pointed out that the consequence was «to stay there and look only in front of them.» Finally, when asked for a synonym for the word «around,» one student correctly linked it to «surroundings» or «environment.»

These exchanges show how teacher mediation allowed students to recognize not only the explicit ideas in the text, but also the semantic value of the expressions, expanding their vocabulary and strengthening their literal comprehension. Guided dialogue, therefore, functioned as effective scaffolding that led to clear and accurate responses, demonstrating the students' ability to highlight and use key words in their philosophical reading.

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Literal and inferential rewriting

During the detailed reading activities, students captured their literal understanding in written productions. Rather than simply repeating phrases from the text, they underlined key words, looked up synonyms, and developed definitions. For example, one student identified «derredor» as a synonym for «alrededor» and explained how expressions such as «de modo que» indicated cause-and-effect relationships in the narrative. Another student reinforced their understanding by linking new terms to examples of everyday use.

This evidence shows that the work was not limited to decoding, but that students were able to establish semantic connections, strengthen their vocabulary, and articulate clear responses. The process demonstrates the effectiveness of scaffolding in guiding students toward accurate literal reading, an essential first step in reaching inferential and critical levels.

A key moment in the process was the inferential rewriting of fragments of *Allegory of the Cave*. In one of the student productions, the passage in which Plato describes the return of the freed prisoner to the cave was reworked using more accessible and direct language. Where the original text spoke of the prisoner's «dazzlement» upon returning to darkness, the student rewrote it as «momentary blindness from going from light to

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darkness.» He also replaced complex expressions with more accessible equivalents without losing the philosophical meaning of the argument.

This reworking demonstrates a deeper mastery: the students not only identified key words, but also managed to reorganize the ideas and give them a new expressive twist. The exercise of paraphrasing and substitution reveals the transition to inferential understanding, in which content is not mechanically reproduced, but critically and creatively reinterpreted.

Philosophical inferences

In the final stage of the process, students wrote philosophical inferences based on their reading of *Allegory of the Cave*. Their writings showed how they managed to connect Platonic metaphors with broader meanings about education and knowledge. For example, several interpreted «the chains» as representing the senses and the ignorance they produce, alluding to an existence limited by immediate perceptions. One student explained that the release from the chains symbolized the beginning of education, a path that is difficult and forced at first, but necessary in order to advance toward true knowledge.

Another analysis highlighted the prisoner's «dazzlement» as a metaphor for the transition from ignorance to truth: first, the pain of facing an unknown light, and then the difficulty of returning to darkness after having contemplated clarity. In their words, moving from darkness to light was equivalent to ascending from ignorance to the contemplation of the Idea of Good, while descending from light to darkness symbolized the effort of teaching others who remain in the cave.

These inferences reveal how the students were able to link symbols in the text to complex philosophical notions such as ascending dialectic, sensible knowledge, and the idea of the good. The clarity of their writing, the appropriate use of terms such as «education,» «ignorance,» and «true knowledge,» and the coherence of their arguments demonstrate that they reached a level of reflection beyond literal comprehension.

Discussion

The findings of this research confirm that the integration of PGT and curricular scaffolding is an effective strategy for overcoming the limitations that students often encounter when approaching philosophical texts. The teaching sequence implemented demonstrated that, through progressive scaffolding—from the macro to the micro—students developed both li-

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teral and inferential reading skills, achieving a deeper level of understanding of Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*.

At the macro curricular level, the update of the philosophy area plan showed the need to constantly review the guidelines to ensure their relevance and pertinence. This result is in line with Blanco (2007), who notes that PGT can serve as a tool for reinterpreting traditional methodologies. It also confirms what Alarcón (2024) argues: philosophy becomes a continuation of the educational task only when it is linked to institutional structures that legitimize it and give it pedagogical meaning. At this same level, as suggested by Posner (2005), judicious curriculum planning allows content to be adapted to the particular needs of each student population, ensuring that learning is linked to context.

At the meso level, the organization of the 12 sessions highlighted the importance of carefully planning each stage. Fernández (2020) points out that clarity of objectives and teaching resources not only strengthens teaching but also fosters a reflective and critical attitude. Similarly, Rose and Martin (2012) and Benítez *et al.* (2021) have shown that sequencing the phases of deconstruction, joint construction, and independent construction facilitates the progressive appropriation of textual genres. In this study, this structure was fundamental in guiding students from a literal understanding to levels of analysis and inference.

The analysis of the text in terms of narrative and dialogic genre confirmed the relevance of LSF as a theoretical framework. This perspective, as Sánchez Chévez (2014) emphasizes, allows reading to be understood not as mere decoding, but as a «dialogue» between the student and the text. Hence, the identification of metaphors, abstract vocabulary, and semantic resources in the cave has become an opportunity for students to exercise philosophical interpretation. Esparza Urzúa (2024) helps us understand this finding by reminding us that symbolic forms—language, myth, art, science—mediate all cultural and pedagogical experience, making it essential to address them in the teaching of philosophy.

At the micro level, interactions between teachers and students revealed patterns of IRE and its extended variants. These functioned as forms of micro scaffolding that offered students equitable opportunities to construct meaning. This result is consistent with the findings of Benítez *et al.* (2021), who argue that carefully guided interactions increase participation and engagement. Likewise, the teacher's flexibility in adapting questions and activities coincides with what Lerner (2007) describes as adaptive capacity, which is essential for responding to the changing needs of the classroom. In line with Agüero (2022), it can be said that such

interactions are not neutral: they are part of institutional practices that constitute students as members of a philosophical community.

The detailed reading and rewriting phase proved to be key space for the transition from literal to inferential comprehension. Students were able to reorganize passages of the text, replace expressions, and give them new language, while maintaining the original philosophical meaning. These results coincide with Ladrón de Guevara (2017), who highlights that PGT promotes progression towards deep reading, and with Espinosa Muñoz and Lázaro Canoles (2019), who emphasize the value of rewriting in critical comprehension. Along these lines, students developed self-regulation and metacognition processes by becoming more aware of their reading strategies and how to adjust them according to the demands of the text.

The development of philosophical inferences showed how students were able to link Platonic metaphors with abstract notions such as ascending dialectic, sensible knowledge, and the idea of good. This ability corroborates what Fuzer *et al.* (2017) propose: understanding the narrative organization of a text allows for a more effective approach to its philosophical dilemmas. At the same time, it confirms what the MEN (2010) identifies as specific competencies in philosophy: critical, creative, and dialogical.

Beyond the specific findings, this study reveals limitations that must be considered. The implementation was restricted to a single academic period and a single philosophical text, which makes it difficult to generalize the results to other genres, areas, or populations. In addition, the analysis focused on short-term impact, without evaluating the sustainability of the skills developed over time. These aspects are in line with the need, as Bruner (1986) points out, to direct education toward the development of lasting and transferable skills.

Finally, the importance of institutional support for teachers should be emphasized. The effectiveness of PGT depends largely on the training and resources available to those who implement it. In this sense, there is a confirmed need for educational institutions to provide ongoing support and guidance to teachers, thereby strengthening the possibility that these pedagogical strategies will be consolidated and extended to other fields of knowledge.

Taken together, the results and their discussion with the specialized literature show that the articulation between PGT and curricular scaffolding not only facilitates the literal understanding of philosophical texts, but also paves the way for critical interpretation and autonomous reflection. In this way, the teaching of philosophy moves away from the



uncritical reproduction of content (Rangel Díaz, 2020) and moves closer to the formation of subjects capable of linking philosophical thought with their own situated experience (García Guzmán, 2019).

Conclusions

The application of the teaching strategy based on PGT and curricular scaffolding showed that these perspectives offer effective tools for strengthening reading comprehension of complex philosophical texts. In particular, students were able to move from literal comprehension to inferential interpretation, showing a greater ability to identify specialized vocabulary, establish meaningful relationships, and rework philosophical discourse in their own words.

A decisive factor in this process was the active participation of students, facilitated by teacher mediation. Guided interaction in the classroom was consolidated as a space for collective construction of meaning that made philosophy accessible without sacrificing its conceptual density. The experience also showed that it is possible to transcend rote memorization to achieve critical and reflective understanding, in which texts are linked to the students' own frames of reference and life experiences.

The study also revealed certain limitations. Implementation was restricted to a single academic period and a single philosophical text, so the results cannot be broadly generalized nor do they guarantee the sustainability of the skills achieved over time. These aspects pave the way for further research to evaluate the permanence of learning, application in other textual genres and disciplines, and impact in different educational contexts.

Finally, there is a need to expand and diversify research on PGT and curricular scaffolding. Future lines of research include: evaluating the sustainability of reading skills developed in the long term; applying these strategies to other texts and areas of knowledge; integrating digital tools that enhance textual analysis; and strengthening teacher training to ensure a solid and contextualized implementation of these pedagogies.

In summary, the results show that the articulation between PGT and curricular scaffolding not only enriches teaching and philosophical approach, but also constitutes a promising path to democratize access to the comprehension of complex texts and to foster critical thinking and constant reflection in secondary education.

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Andrés Forero Gómez	Research, methodology, writing (original draft), writing (revision and editing).

Declaration on the use of artificial intelligence
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