Didactics of literary competence in Primary Education of the Basque and Navarrese Communities

Nerea Permach-Martín iD
Universidad del País Vasco, Spain
nerea.permach@ehu.eus

Amaia Álvarez-Uria iD
Universidad del País Vasco, Spain
amaia.au@ehu.eus

Xabier Etxaniz iD
Universidad del País Vasco, Spain
xabier.etxaniz@ehu.eus

Abstract

The following study analyses the way literary competence is developed in the Primary Education stage in schools in both the Basque Country and Navarre. In addition, the differences between centres are analysed according to the type of school, territory and education cycle. Finally, it identifies the extent to which certain personal aspects of teachers influence their teaching practice. 553 teachers from 55 schools participated in the study. From this quantitative and descriptive analysis, the general conclusion is that most schools do not follow the educational criteria and didactic proposals defined by scientific literature, as well as that there are no significant differences between territories or between the different educational centres according to their type. On the other hand, as the stage progresses, it is confirmed that literary education is losing its place in teaching practice, with worrying results in the third cycle. It also confirms the positive correlation between the dimensions of the literary competence analysed, contributing to the possibility of guiding processes.

Keywords: Literary competence; literary education; literature teaching; Primary Education; Spain.

Didáctica de la competencia literaria en Educación Primaria de las Comunidades Vasca y Navarra

Nerea Permach-Martín iD
Universidad del País Vasco, Spain
nerea.permach@ehu.eus

Amaia Álvarez-Uria iD
Universidad del País Vasco, Spain
amaia.au@ehu.eus

Xabier Etxaniz iD
Universidad del País Vasco, Spain
xabier.etxaniz@ehu.eus

Resumen

Se analiza el modo en el que se desarrolla la competencia literaria en la etapa de Educación Primaria en las escuelas tanto de la Comunidad Autónoma Vasca como de la Comunidad Foral de Navarra. Además, se analizan las diferencias entre los centros según su titularidad, territorio y ciclo formativo. Por último, se identifica hasta qué punto ciertos aspectos personales del profesorado inciden en su práctica docente. En el estudio participaron un total de 553 docentes de 55 centros educativos. De este análisis cuantitativo y descriptivo se extrae la conclusión general de que en la mayoría de los centros no se siguen los criterios y propuestas didácticas definidas por la literatura científica, así como que no existen diferencias significativas entre territorios o entre los diferentes centros educativos según su titularidad. Por otro lado, se confirma que a medida que avanza la etapa, la educación literaria va perdiendo espacio en la práctica docente, con resultados preocupantes en el tercer ciclo. Así mismo, se confirma la correlación positiva entre las dimensiones de la competencia literaria analizadas, contribuyendo a la posibilidad de orientar procesos.

Palabras clave: Competencia literaria; educación literaria; enseñanza de la literatura; Educación Primaria; España.

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Introduction

Literary competence is acquired by having direct contact with literary works, enjoying them, acquiring the ability to relate to them and evaluating them. In other words, literary competence will include students learning to read, enjoying books and, finally, being able to evaluate themselves (Cerrillo, 2007). Its acquisition is also affected by a series of factors (linguistic, psychological, social, historical and cultural). Their combination will allow for the personal growth of the competent literary reader.

The attitude of the teacher, the purpose of the reading, the time devoted to it, the activities proposed, the preparation of the space or the corpus chosen are aspects that determine the process (Aguiar & Silva, 1980; Mendoza, 2004; Colomer et al., 2005).

It is also important to know the reader's emotional attitude, interest and motivation, as well as to propose different types of reading. Understanding students as active agents in the construction of the meaning of concepts and stakeholders of their own educational process, textual practice becomes the articulator of teaching and learning (Correa et al., 2001).

In this context, it is essential to work with different texts in the classroom and to promote intertextuality, as it will help students to speed up their cognitive process. Hence the need for an appropriate and varied corpus to guarantee the necessary materials and resources for their education.

Colomer (2002) recommends four aspects for the selection of readings: literary quality, educational values, students' opinions and tastes, and their literary learning path. These criteria will determine the selection of works for the didactic proposals in the educational centres.

In this sense, libraries play a key role in the development of reading habits (Serna et al., 2017). Teachers have three types of libraries: classroom libraries, school libraries and public libraries. It would thus be interesting for teachers to make guided visits to public libraries, as it would offer the possibility of opening to a greater diversity in terms of the selection of readings for students (Arellano-Yaguas et al., 2022). Libraries are also very flexible when it comes to activity planning.

It is also important to plan reading sessions, as there is a risk of substituting reading for other curricular content. In this sense, we can state that there is nothing more effective for planning the development of literary competence than reading plans. They offer guidance to the teacher insofar as they determine the reading plan, the contents to be taught, the ways of developing the teaching activity and the objectives to be achieved (Santiago & Castro, 2006). The systematisation of activities will qualitatively improve reading, the teaching-learning process and literary education.

For their part, teachers, as mediators, are a key figure in the process of acquiring literary competence; in addition to fostering an enriching encounter between students and literature, they are responsible for generating learning situations that promote the understanding and interpretation of literary text. Reading is a process full of emotions and excitement, so adults must intervene with care and courage (Mata, 2008).

However, in order to fulfil what is expected of teachers, it is essential to be a good reader and to have the ability to share and transmit a taste for reading (Prado, 2004; Cerrillo, 2007). Teachers' attitudes and reading habits condition the process, so it is necessary to delve into this aspect. In fact, it is the literary training of the teacher that will largely determine the outcome.

The didactics of literary reading requires the mastery of directed strategies; teaching strategies that favour the progress of reading competence and mediation work, as well as strategies aimed at the development of reading practices (Álvarez & Pascual, 2019).

But on more than one occasion, teachers have acknowledged that they lack sufficient training to detect students' difficulties in the process of learning to read (Egaña, 2010). Identifying the academic training received on the development of students' literary competence is valuable, because it would be difficult to study in any other way the way in which they have constructed or nurtured their tastes.

This work, which follows and completes previous works (Ripoll, 2007; Alonso, 2010; Naeghel, 2013; Serna, 2015; Lluch & Sánchez-García, 2017), has as its main objective to carry out a diagnosis of the development of literary competence in primary schools. To this end, it analyses the way in which the competence is worked on in schools in the Basque Country and Navarre where Basque is the vehicular language.

In comparing the curricula, we can see that both prioritise the development of students' communicative skills and that to some extent the development of literary competence is articulated in this sense. Nevertheless, it could be said that this communicative approach, prioritising functional texts and where the discursive genre predominates, places specific activities for literary education on a secondary level to the extent that they are not explicitly included in the programmes. Consequently, the study of the literary text is understood as a resource or support for linguistic activity, without contemplating specific learning to acquire literary competence.

In both cases, the development of literary competence is included together with the development of Basque and Spanish, the two vehicular languages, and in both areas 4 hours per week are proposed for the first five years and 3.5 for the sixth year as a reference.

We can thus speak of curricula that do not specify much about how to work on the competence at primary level. However, it could be said that literary education is no longer understood as a teacher-guided process, i.e., aimed at developing the interpretative competence that will enable students to read increasingly more elaborate and difficult literary works, but will be limited to a corpus of simple texts that only seek pleasure in reading or language work.

This study is based on the premise of the need for a diagnosis as a starting point for the design, implementation, and evaluation of possible instructional and didactic changes in the curricula. To that end, the following research questions are determined, which in turn become the focus of the research:

To what extent are the criteria set by experts considered when working on literary competence at school?

Are there differences in the way literary competence is worked on in the classroom depending on the type of school according to its type, education cycle or the territory where the school is located?

To what extent do the different personal aspects of teachers influence the development of students' literary competence?

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Method

Study design

This falls within the quantitative-interpretative paradigm. It is quantitative, due to the way in which the variables are analysed; it is predictive because of the type of question, and it is not experimental because no active manipulation of the variables is carried out at any time, since the variables are observed in their natural state, without interfering in their development.

Likewise, due to the characteristics of the sample and the research problem, it is an interpretative, descriptive and correlational research. Due to the opportunity provided by the descriptions, analyses and interpretations of the data obtained, we can say that the research seeks to guide processes since, on the basis of the data analysed and the interpretations made, it draws general conclusions or constructs principles.

Initially, means have been calculated for each variable and dimension. In order to analyse possible differences, comparisons were made between the overall means of the dimensions by crossing the free variables. Finally, to guide processes, correlations have been made between the four dimensions and different personal aspects of the teachers.

Participants

The sample is made up of a total of 553 teachers; 75.6% female, 23.1% male and 1.3% identify as non-binary gender. The sample was drawn from 55 schools, which were chosen randomly, but following certain criteria:

a) Primary Education Centres.

b) Linguistic model D (with Basque as the vehicular language and an extract that includes practically all students in the public sector).

c) Type of school (public schools and schools subsidised by the autonomous community, differentiating between the two main networks: *ikastolas* [1] and religious centres).

d) Territory in which they are located (Navarre, Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, Araba).

Approximately in both autonomies communities, the education system is made up of 50% public schools and 50% schools subsidised by the autonomous community. Therefore, to adjust to reality and guarantee a valid diagnosis, 53.2% of the data collected came from public schools, 31.10% from religious centres and 16.64% from *ikastolas.*

Instrument

An *ad hoc* questionnaire was created for data collection. The questionnaire is divided into 5 blocks with a total of 56 items. The first two blocks collect general data on both the centre and the participant, and the following four blocks correspond to the four dimensions that measure teaching practice with a total of 35 items in which the unit is constant, with the same associative value and a 5-point interval (five-level Likert scale): 1: never; 2: occasionally; 3: sometimes; 4: often; 5: always): Psycho-pedagogical elements, reading selection, types of reading and assessment.

To verify the validity of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha statistical test was applied, and a value of $\alpha =.801$ as a whole. Given that Barrios and Cosculluela (2013) place the appropriate

reliability of an instrument between the values α =.70 and .95, the value achieved shows the high reliability and validity in the measurement of the dimensions created to measure the way of working with literary competence in the schools analysed.

Procedure

To prepare the questionnaire, a thorough literature review was conducted, as well as contributions from different works by experts in the field of didactics of literature (Sánchez et al., 2018; Serna et al., 2017; Colomer et al., 2005; Romero & Lavigne, 2005; Mendoza, 2004; Bofarull, 2001).

Once the questionnaire was prepared, the centres were selected and their addresses were contacted. The research was presented in the cloisters to ensure participation. It is therefore worth noting that the questionnaire was not only completed by teachers interested in the subject, but by all teachers in the participating schools. Once the data had been collected, the necessary statistical tests were carried out to obtain the results and draw conclusions.

Data analysis

The analysis of the data obtained was conducted using SPSS software version 26. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and analytical statistics (hypothesis testing) were applied. In other words, the verification of hypotheses and definitions was sought through statistical sampling and univariate and bivariate analyses. Since the sample did not show a normal distribution (Kolmogorov Smirnov normality test, $p < .05$), the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine the existence of significant differences. Finally, Spearman's correlation was applied to determine the level of interrelation between the grouped variables. In all cases mentioned, the level of statistical significance used was .05.

Results

In the light of the data analysis, several results emerge. Firstly, the total results for each dimension are detailed, regardless of the type of school or territory where they are located; secondly, the significant differences according to territory, education cycle, size and type of school; finally, the positive and significant correlations between the grouped variables and the free variables.

Total results for the four dimensions
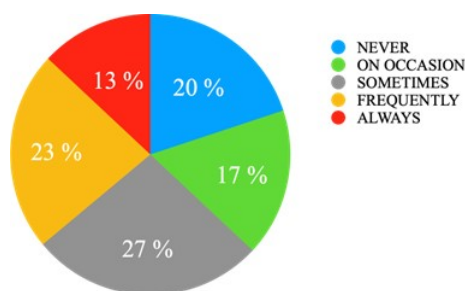
a) Psycho-pedagogical elements

We are talking about components (space, time, environment, motivation, etc.) that foster the communicative interaction that takes place between teaching staff and students and facilitates the learning process.

78% of the participants affirmed that their school has a reading plan and at least 79.39% that reading sessions are integrated into the annual programme. In terms of time spent reading, 13.74% spent half an hour a week reading, 40.14% spent one hour a week, 21.16% spent one and a half hours, 13.38% spent about two hours a week, and 11.57% spent more than two hours a week.

In addition, 88.25% say that they have a classroom library and 77.76% say that they have a library in the school. However, as for the use of the library for reading sessions, it is of concern that most of the data is accumulated in the lowest options, as 27.67% never use the classroom library for reading sessions, 21.16% sometimes do so, and 38.7% sometimes do so, amounting to 87.53% of the data. Similarly, 60.23% never use this library for reading sessions, and 15.55% do so on occasion, again with the majority of responses in the lower options.

Figure 1 shows the total results of the rest of the variables that make up the dimension related to the space, environment or specific strategies used to work on the competence. In this case, it is of concern that 20% of teachers never take these elements into account and only 13% always do so. It is the option which sometimes accumulates the highest amount of data (27%), although only slightly more than the next option (often 23%).

Figure 1.   Psycho-pedagogical elements

Therefore, considering the dispersion of the data and their percentages, we can state that schools do not have common criteria regarding the psycho-pedagogical elements that experts define and propose to consider when working on literary competence at school.

b) Criteria for the selection of readings

This dimension measures variables such as how many texts, who chooses them or what criteria are used to select the texts to be read in the classroom. As for the number of books students should read per year, the majority (66.11%) suggest reading between 0-6 books per year, while 0.56% read between 0-3 books and 32.55% read between 4-6 books.

Figure 2 shows the results for the remaining variables. Again, with 35% of responses, sometimes is the option with the highest number of data, followed by 29% who do it frequently.

Figure 2.   Selecting the readings
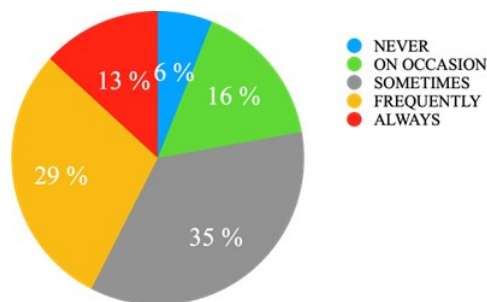
Nevertheless, despite the better results in this dimension, it cannot be said that the criteria proposed by the experts are used across the board.

c) Types of reading

Figure 3 shows the total results for this dimension. We note that 42% of teachers sometimes suggest the types of reading recommended by experts, although 34% do so frequently.

**Figure 3.   Types of reading**
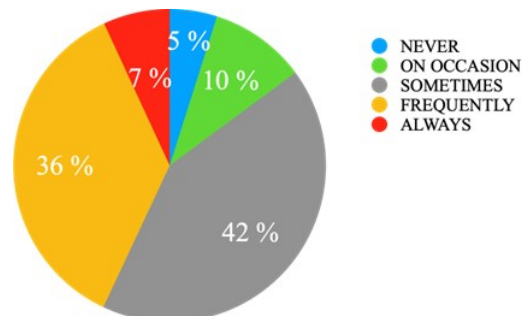
Although at first glance the results of the graph could be interpreted as not too worrying, it should be taken into account that, if we add up the data obtained in the first three options, these being the ones that give the dimension the lowest score, they form a majority, precisely 57% of the data. So, once again, it is difficult to assess this result positively.

d) Evaluation

The last dimension measures how teachers assess the development of literary competence, i.e., the development of competent readers, which, as Colomer (1991; 1996) and Mendoza (2010) point out, is the basic aim of literary education.

Therefore, in figure 4 we see again that the largest amount of data is again clustered in the sometimes option. 39% of teachers sometimes assess students according to the criteria proposed by the experts, followed by 34% who do so frequently.

Figure 4.   Evaluation
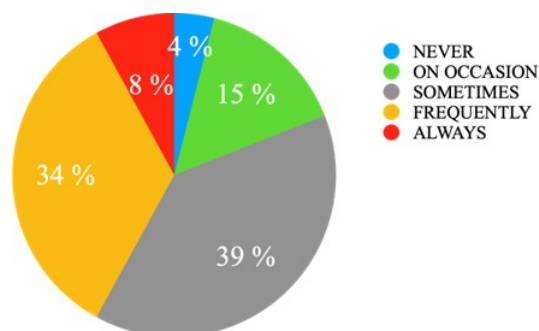
Once again, it can thus be concluded that teachers do not widely assess literary competence as recommended in the scientific literature.

Differences between types of school, location and education cycle.

a) Differences between types of schools

The Kruskal-Wallis test is used to assess possible differences. The test results reveal no statistically significant differences between the groups in terms of the psycho-pedagogical elements, reading selection and type of reading, as the p-values obtained are above the established significance level ($p < 0.05$). However, when analysing the variable evaluation in the three groups public schools, religious schools and *ikastolas*, the test results indicate statistically significant differences (M(SD)16.34 (3.21) vs. 17.15 (3.24) vs. 15.75 (3.28); $H(x^2)= 11.65$; $p = .003$).

In order to evaluate the differences, the Mann-Whitney U-test is performed, and the results reveal statistically significant differences between the three types of centres ($p < 0.05$). Specifically, significant differences are found when comparing religious schools with public schools ($U = 14222.5$, $p = .044$), religious schools with *ikastolas* ($U = 5950$, $p = .001$), as well as when comparing public schools with religious schools ($U = 22015.50$, $p = .039$).

Religious schools show higher performance in four of the six subscales compared to *ikastolas* and in two of them compared to public schools. As far as the assessment of machine reading is concerned, 40% of religious schools do it often, compared to 45% of *ikastolas* or 40% of public schools which do it sometimes. In relation to text analysis, 45% of religious schools do it often, in contrast to 44% of public schools and 41% of *ikastolas*, who do it sometimes. Similarly, religious schools often (37%) evaluate whether students distinguish the main ideas, compared to 41% of *ikastolas* who do so sometimes. Finally, in the identification of the author's message, the religious centres evaluate it often (46%) compared with 38% of the *ikastolas* who do so sometimes.

b) Differences between territories

In the analysis by territory, in three of the four dimensions, namely, reading selection, type of reading, and evaluation, no significant differences are found. Only in the dimension of psycho-pedagogical elements a p-value of less than 0.05 is found ($H(x^2) = 15.28$, $p = .002$). Specifically, significant differences are found between Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia (M (SD) 28.56 (3.40) vs. 27.43 (3.42); $U = 13217.5$, $p = .001$), as well as between Gipuzkoa and Navarre (M (SD) 27.30 (3.4); $U = 9424$, $p = .002$).

In Bizkaia, 38.7% often read at the study table, while in Gipuzkoa, 42% sometimes do so in the classroom library. In Bizkaia and Navarre, 49.5% and 47% respectively never go to public libraries, while in Gipuzkoa 43% do so some of the time. Finally, it is worth highlighting the difference in the time devoted to reading, with 58.7% in Gipuzkoa devoting between an hour and an hour and a half to it, while in Navarre and Bizkaia 70.8% and 62% respectively devote between half an hour and an hour to it.

c) Differences between the education cycles of the primary education stage

In terms of the three cycles that make up Primary Education (1st, 2nd and 3rd) consecutively), significant differences are observed in three dimensions, as p-values below the established significance level are obtained ($p < .001$):

- psycho-pedagogical elements (*M*(*SD*) *27.96*(*3.46*)); (*H*(x^2)=18.35, p = .000);
- reading selection (*M*(*SD*) *42.03* (*4.75*)); *H*(x^2)=33.21, p = .000);
- type of reading (*M*(*SD*) *33.71* (*3.63*)); *H*(x^2)=18.42, p = .000).

As for the psycho-pedagogical elements, it is between the first and the third cycle (*U* = 14222.5, *p* = .000), as well as between the second and the third cycle (*U* = 11615, *p* = .001), where we find the differences, with no significant difference between the first and the second cycle.

One of the most significant results is that in the first cycle, 58.9% spend between one and a half and more than two hours a week on literary reading, while in the third cycle, 69.4% spend between half an hour and one hour a week.

Moreover, in the lower cycles, they use the classroom library more frequently for their reading sessions (35% do so sometimes), while in the third cycle 42% never do so.

Nevertheless, in none of the cases can it be said that they regularly go to public libraries, but it is worth noting that, while 41% and 52% of the first and third cycle never go to public libraries, 40.1% of the second cycle do so on occasion.

In terms of the selection of readings, there are differences between the three cycles. Specifically between the first and second cycle (*U* = 14059, *p* = .000), between the first and third cycle (*U* = 12350, *p* = .000), as well as between the second and third cycle (*U* = 12500, *p* = .001).

In the majority of cases and in all three cycles, it is the students themselves, without teacher supervision, who choose the texts to be worked on in the classroom: 62% in the first cycle, 64% in the second cycle and 54% in the third cycle. These high figures are worrying because we are talking about teaching practices in the classroom and not about free reading as an extracurricular activity.

Nevertheless, on the few occasions when it is the teacher who chooses the text, 31% in the first cycle always consider the difficulty of the text, and 50% in the second cycle and 46% in the third cycle do so frequently.

Finally, as for the type of reading proposed in the classroom, statistically significant differences were found between the first cycle and the third cycle (*U* = 13801, *p* = .000), as well as between the second and third cycle (*U* = 12770, *p* = .03). However, no significant difference is observed between the first and second cycle.

In the case of the variable prior knowledge of students' reading level, the results show that in the first cycle, 37% of teachers often have prior knowledge of it, although 35% always know it. In the second cycle 34% also know about it frequently, but 27% of them know about it only sometimes. In the third cycle, 32% know about it frequently and 28% only know about it sometimes.

In terms of individual reading, there are differences between the first and second cycle, with most data in both cases accumulating in the sometimes option (51%; 52%). However, in the third cycle, the majority do so in the option frequently (47%).

It is in shared reading that the greatest differences appear, since in the first and second cycle (85%; 79%) they propose to do shared reading sometimes, and in the third cycle 76% only do it sometimes.

Finally, it is worth noting the data for recreational reading, since the percentages obtain significantly lower values as the cycles progress. Thus, in the first cycle, 60% of teachers

frequently propose playful reading in the classroom, 52% do so in the second cycle and 44% do so in the third cycle. The same applies to reading aloud by teachers. While 61% of teachers in the first cycle and 47% in the second cycle do it frequently, 53% of teachers in the third cycle do it sometimes.

Results of the correlational analysis between the variables

Correlation analysis has made it possible to quantify the intensity of the relationships between the variables grouped into dimensions that make up literary competence and to define patterns of similar behaviour among the participants in order to contribute to the possibility of orienting processes.

Table 1 shows the Spearman correlations between the grouped variables and as can be seen, all variables correlate positively.

Table 1.   Correlations between dimensions

Dimensions		Selecting the readings	Type of reading	Evaluation
Psycho-pedagogical elements	*r*	.364[**]	.329[**]	.132[**]
	Next (bilateral)	.000	.000	.000
Selecting the readings	*r*		.501[**]	.289[**]
	Next (bilateral)		.000	.000
Type of reading	*r*			.381[**]
	Next (bilateral)			.000
	N	553	553	553

[**] The correlation is significant at 0.01 level

In order to identify and infer to what extent and in what way personal aspects affect teaching practice, firstly, the importance that teachers attach to working on literary competence in Primary Education is analysed. It can be seen that most of the participants rate it positively, with 46.86% of the teachers giving it a score of 4 out of 5, followed by 30% who opt for the maximum score. When correlational tests are conducted between these results and the variables, as shown in table 2, they lose significance in practically all cases except in one case, when the scores are lower (1 and 2). And even in the case of the lowest score they cease to correlate, which means that, on the one hand, those who do not attach greater importance to it do not work in the same way.

Table 2.   Correlations between the lowest scores and dimensions

Rating 1-5			Selecting the readings	Type of reading	Evaluation
1 and 2	Psycho-pedagogical elements	*r*	.358	.468[**]	.206
		Next (bilateral)	.236	.018	.324
	Selecting the readings	*r*		.327	.073
		Next (bilateral)		.221	.172
	Type of reading	*r*			.250
		Next (bilateral)			.229

Rating 1-5		Selecting the readings	Type of reading	Evaluation
	N	553	553	553

** The correlation is significant at 001 level.

These results are in addition to those of other studies (Munita, 2013) that show different conceptions and perspectives of action on literary reading according to reading habits and beliefs, confirming that both have an impact on teaching practice. As far as teachers' literary reading habits are concerned, 39.24% of teachers say they read sometimes, 38.88% frequently and 13.10% always do so. When crossing this variable, as in the previous case, the results show that some dimensions cease to correlate and even lose significance, as can be seen in table 3. These results in turn coincide with recent studies (Díaz-Díaz et al.,2022) and affirm that the number of books read as a sample of teachers' reading habits influences didactic strategies, so that a good literary reader facilitates the teaching and learning process of students.

Table 3.   Correlations between the lowest reading habits and dimensions

Reading habits			Selecting the readings	Type of reading	Evaluation
Never	Psycho-pedagogical elements	*r*	.493	.441	.857**
		Next (bilateral)	.321	.381	.029
	Selecting the readings	*r*		-.261	.372
		Next (bilateral)		.618	.468
	Type of reading	*r*			.772
		Next (bilateral)			.072
Sometimes	Psycho-pedagogical elements	*r*	.326*	.369*	.294
		Next (bilateral)	.033	.015	.056
	Selecting the readings	*r*		.287	.132
		Next (bilateral)		.062	.399
	Type of reading	*r*			.437**
		Next (bilateral)			.003
		N	553	553	553

* The correlation is significant at 0.05 level.

** The correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

In terms of teacher training, 60.58% said that they had not received any extra training, compared to 39.42% who had. Table 4 shows that, in this case, although the variables continue to correlate with each other, all of them decrease in intensity, which confirms that teachers lack sufficient training to work on reading (Egaña, 2010) and that this has a negative impact on the teaching and learning process.

Table 4.   Correlations between extra training and the dimensions

Education			Selecting the readings	Type of reading	Evaluation
YES	Psycho-pedagogical elements	*r*	.388**	.334**	.201**

Education			Selecting the readings	Type of reading	Evaluation
		Next (bilateral)	.000	.000	.003
	Selecting the readings	r		.557**	.335**
		Next (bilateral)		.000	.000
	Types of reading	r			.334**
		Next (bilateral)			.000
NO	Psycho-pedagogical elements	r	.333**	.325**	.091
		Next (bilateral)	.000	.000	.098
	Selecting the readings	r		.468**	.266**
		Next (bilateral)		.000	.000
	Types of reading	r			.414**
		Next (bilateral)			.000
		N	553	553	553

** The correlation is significant at 0.01 level

Finally, we analyse whether the school has a reading plan, and to what extent this helps teaching practice, as pointed out in a series of studies (Santiago & Castro, 2006). Although correlations are maintained in both cases, they decrease in intensity in the case of schools without a reading plan, and the correlation between psycho-pedagogical elements and assessment loses significance, as can be seen in table 5.

Table 5. Correlations between the reading plan and the dimensions

Reading plan	Variables		Selecting the readings	Type of reading	Evaluation
YES	Psycho-pedagogical elements	r	.361**	.357**	.147**
		Next (bilateral)	.000	.000	.002
	Selecting the readings	r		.498**	.279**
		Next (bilateral)		.000	.000
	Types of reading	r			.372**
		Next (bilateral)			.000
NO	Psycho-pedagogical elements	r	.360**	.206*	.041
		Next (bilateral)	.000	.023	.656
	Selecting the readings	r		.472**	.293**
		Next (bilateral)		.000	.001
	Types of reading	r			.383**
		Next (bilateral)			.000
		N	553	553	553

* The correlation is significant at 005 level.

** The correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

Conclusions

In response to the first research question, the results show that schools with language model D in both the Basque Country and Navarre do not follow the criteria or apply in a generalised way the teaching proposals defined by the experts for the development and acquisition of literary competence. This would be a possible sign of the gap between theorisation and application in this field.

In all dimensions, the option with the highest number of responses is "sometimes", which allows us to conclude that literary competence is not worked on in a systematic or planned way at Primary School level. This study adds to that of Alonso (2008), conducted in Secondary Education, which reflects a worrying picture for the whole of compulsory education. Furthermore, it should be noted that not enough time is devoted to literary education, despite the fact that literature is not an easy object to learn, as it has to be lived, since literature is perceived and assimilated (Mendoza, 2010) and this requires time and dedication.

Given the wide dispersion in the responses, it can be concluded that not only are the recommendations of the experts not generally considered, but that there are no common criteria for working on literary competence, which could be interpreted as meaning that each teacher understands the development and way of working on literary competence in a different way. As a result, we are faced with teaching practices that are differentiated and far removed from theory. Therefore, we conclude that, although there is a large scientific literature on how to develop literary competence in the school environment, it seems that this knowledge does not reach the classroom or is not given enough importance to work on it explicitly.

It is the psycho-pedagogical dimension that shows the greatest dispersion of responses. In fact, we are referring to elements and strategies that help to motivate students, such as working on previous experiences, going to libraries, using them for reading activities and proposals, or creating an environment conducive to reading. These are all elements that different studies (Bofarull, 2001; Colomer, 2009; Serna 2015) show to be necessary in the school context..

In response to the second research question, regarding the type of school, we can confirm that there are hardly any differences between the types of schools when it comes to working on literary competence. It is only in evaluation that religious schools partially perform better, although only in some sub-variables.

As far as differences between territories are concerned, it is only in the case of psycho-pedagogical elements that we find some differences, although not between all the territories; specifically, between Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia, and between Gipuzkoa and Navarre. The differentiation of Gipuzkoa from the surrounding provinces could be related to a greater knowledge and use of Basque, the vehicular language in the linguistic model studied (model D). Thus, despite the fact that we are talking about two different Autonomous Communities and two different curricula, no differences can be observed in three of the four dimensions and in general terms it can be concluded that in both Communities the competence is worked on in a similar way.

On the other hand, at the stage in which our research is located, there is a great difference between the reading level of students, given that this is the stage where they learn to read. The analyses carried out confirm that there are differences in the development of literary competence between the three educational cycles that make up Primary Education. Thus, in the first and second cycle, work is similar and it is in the third cycle where the most significant differences appear, specifically in three of the four dimensions: "psychopedagogical elements", "reading selection" and "type of reading". Based on the data obtained, we can confirm that as the cycles

progress, the scores in the three dimensions decrease, which allows us to conclude that as the stage progresses, i.e., once they have acquired mechanical reading and the main elements for decoding, the development of literary competence becomes less important, which ratifies the results of other studies that speak of the instrumental use of literary reading (Caride et al., 2018).s

In response to the third question, the analyses carried out demonstrate the need to work on the four dimensions of literary competence defined in this study as a whole, and how personal aspects such as perceptions, beliefs or reading habits have a clear impact on practice.

Similarly, from the field of literary education, more and more voices are pointing to the need to pay greater attention to literary teacher training, and the results of this work confirm this, despite the fact that, today, teacher training in general is still one of the main challenges of education (Azpeitia et al., 2013).

Finally, and as a general conclusion, this study shows empirically that the teaching of literature is not coordinated, and that teaching practice is not planned, which leads us to think that working on literary competence is not among the priorities of the teaching staff, but, in turn, not at the curricular level either.

Therefore, we are faced with challenges such as taking steps towards the systematisation of literary reading in the school context, promoting the creation of reading plans and intensifying the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies that help to improve the teaching of literature in the primary stage, which leads us to review the curricula of Language and Literature and the training of teachers.

Together with this, it is worth highlighting the deficit detected in the third cycle and emphasising the need to reinforce it, since, despite the worrying results for the stage as a whole, it is in this last cycle where it is clearly identified that literary reading in the classroom is practically anecdotal. We could speak of a parenthesis in the literary education of pupils which clearly has consequences such as those reflected in the evaluations of the education systems themselves, as well as in international ones (PISA, 2018) with conclusions that warn that reading comprehension is insufficient in a significant part of the pupils enrolled in model D (School Council of the Basque Country, 2022).

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Notes

[1] Primary and secondary schools in the Basque Country, Navarre and the French Basque Country where pupils are taught either entirely or predominantly in Basque.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

BLOCK 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

School data

1. School's name

2. Territory

Álava   Gipuzkoa   Bizkaia   Navarre

3. School type

public   ikastola   religious

4. School's size

small (single line)   medium (2 or 3 lines)   large (4 or more)

5. Education cycle

first cycle   second cycle   third cycle

Personal data

6. Gender

female   male   non-binary

7. Age

23-30   31-40   41-50   51-60   61 and more

8. Please evaluate from one to five the training in the teaching of literature received at university.

1   2   3   4   5

9. Have you received additional training to work on literary competence with students after graduation?

Yes   No

10. Please rate from one to five the importance you give to the teaching of literature at primary school level.

1   2   3   4   5

11. Do you read literature?

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

12. How many books do you read per year?

| 1-3 | 4-6 | 7-9 | 10-12 | 13 ≥ |

BLOCK 2. PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL ELEMENTS

13. Do you have a reading plan at school?

Yes   No

14. Are the reading sessions integrated into the annual programme?

Yes   No

15. How many hours a week do you spend reading?

Half an hour   One hour   One and a half hours   Two hours   More than two hours

16. Do you have a classroom library or reading corner?

Yes   No

17. Reading sessions take place in the classroom library or in the reading corner.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

18. Reading sessions take place at the usual study tables.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

19. Reading sessions are held in the school library.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

20. How many times a month do you go to the school library?

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

21. Do you go to public libraries?

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

22. In the reading sessions, efforts are made to create a pleasant atmosphere (ensuring silence, considering the lighting so that the students feel comfortable...)

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

23. In order to motivate, you ask students about their reading tastes.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

24. You use strategies to encourage reading (comment on your positive experiences, bring news or events to the classroom, ask if they liked what they have read...)

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

25. Rate from one to five the effort your school makes to promote literary reading.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

BLOCK 3. GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR READING SELECTION

26. How many books should students read during the school year?

| 0-3 | 4-6 | 7-9 | 10-12 | 13 or more |

27. The students choose the readings.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

28. The teacher chooses the readings to be done in the classroom.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

29. The proposed readings are usually related to the subject being worked on at the time, i.e., they play a didactic role.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

30. At school we have a reading list and we select from it.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

31. The reading proposal comes from different projects (author's visit to the classroom, collaboration with an association of Children's and Young Adult Literature...)

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

32. A particular reading is chosen because the subject matter is interesting, i.e., for its pedagogical function.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

33. Children's and Young Adult Literature prevails in the selection.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

34. They are chosen based on literary genre.

never   on occasion   sometimes   frequently   always

35. They are chosen according to the tastes of the students.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

36. They are chosen for the illustrations they contain.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

37. The selection considers the age for which they are recommended.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

38. They are selected according to their degree of difficulty (linguistic, literary richness, etc.)

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

39. Any other criteria? (optional)

BLOCK 4: PURPOSE AND TYPE OF PROPOSED READING

40. Do you know the reading level that students achieved in previous years in order to build on it?

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

41. The purpose of the reading is established and communicated to the students in advance, telling them what, how and for what purpose they are going to read.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

42. In the reading sessions, do students read what the chose for themselves?

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

43. In the reading sessions, students read individually and in silence.

never	on occasion	sometimes	frequently	always

44. It is read in pairs or in groups (shared reading).

never	on occasion	sometimes	frequently	always

45. Selective reading (to look for specific information) is proposed.

never	on occasion	sometimes	frequently	always

46. A comprehensive reading is proposed (the aim is to work on reading comprehension, so explanations are given about literary figures, language, etc.).

never	on occasion	sometimes	frequently	always

47. Critical reading is proposed. A discussion takes place at the end of the reading.

never	on occasion	sometimes	frequently	always

48. We propose a playful reading (the aim is to have fun, to feel pleasure in reading).

never	on occasion	sometimes	frequently	always

49. Do you usually read aloud to students?

never	on occasion	sometimes	frequently	always

50. Any other reading proposal? (optional)

BLOCK 5. EVALUATION

51. Machine reading is an asset.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

52. The students' ability to differentiate the theme, the structure, the characters, etc. is assessed...

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

53. Students are assessed on whether they are able to distinguish main ideas from secondary ideas in the text.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

54. Students are assessed on whether they identify the author's message.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

55. Students are assessed on whether they are able to critically evaluate the reading or whether they are able to relate it to reality.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |

56. It assesses whether students are able to identify the symbolic world proposed by Children's and Young Adult Literature.

| never | on occasion | sometimes | frequently | always |