Systematic Review on Centers of Interest as a Strategy to Strengthen Assertive Communication in School Contexts between 2009 and 2025[*]

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Abstract

Objective. To conduct a systematic review to identify research on assertive communication in school settings. **Method.** Application of the PRISMA methodology to filter and analyze 18 studies published between 2009 and 2025, complemented by bibliometric analysis. **Results.** A recent increase in assertive communication research in Latin America was observed, with international visibility concentrated in multicenter studies published in Q1–Q2 journals. Students' interest in reading fosters active social behavior and improves communication skills, while emotions and motivation strengthen personal relationships and assertive classroom communication. **Conclusion.** Assertive communication is crucial for consolidating learning, as it

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facilitates knowledge feedback and interaction between students and their educational environment.

Keywords: assertive communication, reading, education, centers of interest.

Revisión sistemática sobre los centros de interés como estrategia para fortalecer la comunicación asertiva en contextos escolares entre 2009 y 2025

Resumen

Objetivo. Realizar una revisión sistemática para identificar investigaciones sobre la comunicación asertiva en entornos escolares. **Método.** Aplicación de la metodología PRISMA para filtrar y analizar 18 estudios publicados entre 2009 y 2025, complementada con un análisis bibliométrico. **Resultados.** Se observó un incremento reciente en la investigación sobre comunicación asertiva en América Latina, con mayor visibilidad internacional en estudios multicéntricos publicados en revistas Q1–Q2. El interés de los estudiantes por la lectura favorece un comportamiento social activo y mejora las habilidades comunicativas, y las emociones junto con la motivación fortalecen las relaciones personales y la comunicación asertiva dentro del aula. **Conclusión.** La comunicación asertiva es esencial para consolidar el aprendizaje, ya que facilita la retroalimentación del conocimiento y la interacción entre estudiantes y su entorno educativo.

Palabras clave: comunicación asertiva, lectura, educación, centros de interés.

Revisão sistemática sobre os centros de interesse como estratégia para fortalecer a comunicação assertiva em contextos escolares entre 2009 e 2025

Resumo

Objetivo. Realizar uma revisão sistemática para identificar pesquisas sobre comunicação assertiva em ambientes escolares. **Método.** Aplicação da metodologia PRISMA para filtrar e analisar 18 estudos publicados entre 2009 e 2025, complementada por análise bibliométrica. **Resultados.** Observou-se um aumento recente nas pesquisas sobre comunicação assertiva na América Latina, com visibilidade internacional concentrada em estudos multicêntricos publicados em revistas Q1–Q2. O interesse dos estudantes pela leitura promove comportamento social ativo e melhora as habilidades comunicativas, enquanto as emoções e a motivação fortalecem as relações pessoais e a comunicação assertiva em sala de aula. **Conclusão.** A comunicação assertiva é essencial para consolidar a aprendizagem, pois facilita o retorno do conhecimento e a interação entre os estudantes e o ambiente educativo.

Palavras-chave: Comunicação assertiva, leitura, educação, centros de interesse.

Introduction

Students' communicative competencies—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—not only enable the generation of learning through the exchange of information, but also promote the achievement of

quality education (Posada-Hernández *et al.*, 2025). Núñez (2019) highlights the need for technological, digital, attitudinal, and aptitude competencies that enable the comprehensiveness of this learning. Valdez and Pérez (2021) emphasize the importance of communicative competencies, understood as a set of skills that allow individuals to establish effective communication, thus strengthening interpersonal relationships and participation in diverse social groups.

The quality of relationships, as well as the achievement of specific goals, depends mainly on effective assertive communication. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2023), this is a skill that facilitates the transmission of information and promotes greater interaction, both between teachers and students and among the students themselves, which significantly enriches the educational process. Cornejo and Sanz (2024) argue that assertive communication is a social skill that enables people to express their ideas, desires, and emotions clearly and appropriately, without resorting to intimidation, thereby fostering a space for dialogue and mutual negotiation.

Now, why is it important to work on assertive communication? For nearly ten years, governments have prioritized socio-emotional skills and integrated them into curricula to address the challenges of the 21st century (Santos *et al.*, 2022). Among the main challenges encountered, Özel and Sümer (2024) highlight the importance of addressing the emotions of children and adolescents, who must feel valued in environments where their needs are met and teaching is dynamic, thereby guaranteeing socio-affective work that focuses on what truly interests them.

Another reality identified in the literature is that some students, especially in Latin America, refrain from participating in lectures, roundtables, forums, or other discussion spaces due to fear of rejection. Ávila *et al.* (2025) and Becerra and Vinces (2025) indicate

that, when students decide to intervene, they do so briefly and reservedly, reflecting this communicative insecurity. Along these lines, Castillo (2021) identifies the lack of trust between teachers and students, inadequate handling of teasing, and deficient feedback processes as factors that negatively impact both students' academic performance and the quality of their interpersonal relationships.

Other research related to this topic shows that motivation drives students to achieve their goals (de la Torre *et al.*, 2021; Fabiana & Vega, 2022); in this sense, the connection with emotions favors greater student participation. Bernal *et al.* (2022) incorporate another key component: respect. These authors affirm that communication should be based on the acceptance of different points of view and that, when expressing oneself, one should try not to offend the other person. On the contrary, the speaker should feel valued and secure, which reinforces assertiveness in communication.

Ullauri *et al.* (2024) emphasize that the spaces for developing an individual's social skills are directly related to their social skills. To the extent that their family context reflects problems and a lack of dialogue, the student will act as a mirror, transferring the same behavior they observe at home to the educational institution, thereby affecting their social relationships positively or negatively, depending on their place of residence. Özel & Sümer (2024) refer to these as positive interpersonal relationships, considering the relationships between teachers, parents, and peers to be key to consolidating the educational process.

Considering all this, it is clear that by researching the importance of assertive communication and the relevance of promoting it within institutions, we can achieve not only an academic reflection that allows us to raise awareness among teachers and students about the need to listen and put ourselves in the shoes of others, but also to generate respectful relationships with others that foster truly assertive

communication, based on tolerance (Carrión *et al.*, 2024; Pahmiah *et al.*, 2024). Only in this way is it possible to connect with students' emotions.

Valdez and Pérez (2021) established that to consolidate communicative skills it is necessary not to work in isolation, but rather in an integral way, relying on reading comprehension, oral expression, and text production; to this end, the authors recommend the use of digital tools that boost students' motivation, and at this point, emotions once again take center stage. For their part, Bravo *et al.* (2024) developed a study where they emphasized the trust and respect that students must feel to express their points of view, which is possible through specific strategies that help improve communication within the educational community and especially among students, which coincides with the research by Santos *et al.* (2022) highlights the relevance of using virtual classrooms as a means of communication between teachers and students, revealing positive results in studies carried out in Latin America, a fact that can be transferred in schools to the creation of centers of interest, a little-studied topic, but of great relevance to enhance communication skills.

Based on the above, this work aims to demonstrate the importance of reading centers as privileged environments for cultivating reading habits, fostering respectful dialogue, and strengthening socio-emotional competencies. Assertive communication is a key pedagogical tool for consolidating learning and improving interaction between students and teachers. This study provides a deeper understanding of the empirical foundations and practical recommendations that guide schools, families, and researchers in creating more inclusive, motivating, and collaborative educational environments. In other words, this research not only systematizes the state of the art but also opens avenues for action, enabling reading centers to become catalysts for harmonious school coexistence and meaningful learning. This work is divided into three principal axes:

(1) the detailed characterization of the centers of interest, their characteristics in categories of analysis, advantages, and limitations, (2) the evaluation of their transversal impact in other curricular areas, and (3) the analysis of the effect that assertive communication has on school coexistence and academic performance.

Materials and methods

This study, developed to understand the importance of assertive communication in classrooms, follows a descriptive qualitative research approach, supported by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses) technique, which has become a reliable methodology for developing systematic reviews in research. Barquero (2022) proposes that systematic reviews constitute a scientific research strategy aimed at collecting and analyzing, in an objective and structured manner, the results of empirical studies related to a specific problem. These items encompass general aspects, including the title, abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, and availability of data, codes, and other materials necessary for the systematic review. Furthermore, in the methodological section, the PRISMA guidelines establish key elements such as eligibility criteria, information sources consulted, search strategy, study selection, and data extraction procedures, as well as the assessment of the risk of bias in individual studies and the analysis of publication bias or the certainty of the evidence, among other relevant aspects. Each of these elements is described in detail in the Page *et al.* (2021) work.

According to Page *et al.* (2021), the PRISMA guideline plays an important role in systematic reviews by enabling authors to clearly and transparently explain the study's purpose, the actions taken, and the results obtained. Furthermore, they note that these types of reviews generate valuable knowledge for various stakeholders, including patients, healthcare professionals, researchers, and public

policymakers (Abbasi *et al.*, 2023; Mohamed *et al.*, 2020; Rodríguez, 2023; Fernández-Sánchez *et al.*, 2020). Along these lines, the authors explain that the updated version of the PRISMA statement, published in 2020, supersedes the 2009 version and provides a revised guideline that reflects methodological advances in the identification, selection, evaluation, and synthesis of studies, thereby favoring its use within the research process. Therefore, the PRISMA guideline has applications in a wide range of fields, including the social sciences, medicine, agriculture, and research on the impact of technology in various contexts (Ghanbaripour *et al.*, 2024; Fletcher *et al.*, 2022; Zhao *et al.*, 2023; Valle & Gil, 2022).

Figure 1 presents the PRISMA methodology employed in this study. During the identification phase, 219 records were retrieved from the Scopus database using the keywords assertive communication, reading, centers of interest, and education, combined with the Boolean operator AND. Of these, 124 documents were excluded because they did not meet the initial criteria, which included publications before 2009, languages other than English or Spanish, and duplicates. In the screening phase, 95 records were evaluated, of which 19 were discarded because they contained non-relevant keywords, such as "University," "Mathematics," or "Epidemiology." Consequently, 76 studies remained for title and abstract review. During the eligibility phase, 16 studies were excluded after reviewing their titles, abstracts, and conclusions. An additional 42 studies were excluded after full-text review for not meeting methodological or contextual requirements. Finally, in the inclusion phase, 18 studies satisfied all criteria and were incorporated into the systematic analysis.

Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram of the study selection process on assertive communication, reading, centers of interest, and education
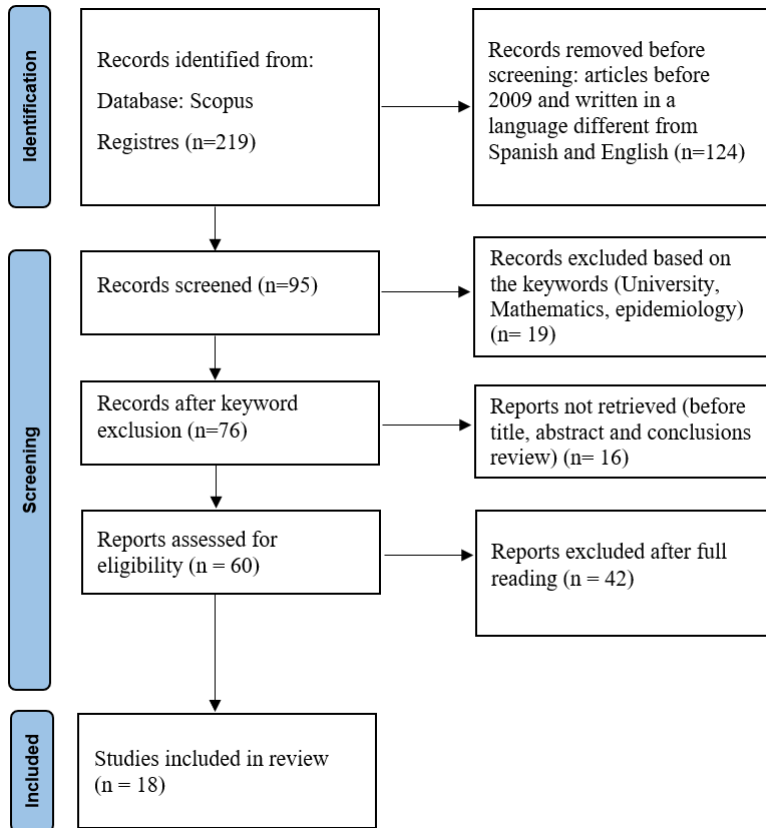
Statistical analysis

Statistical analysis was conducted using data collected manually and human-generated, based on the results obtained through the PRISMA methodology. To this end, a table was constructed to group key variables and answer the research questions. The variables considered include journal title, quartile, year of publication, keywords, total number of citations, participating institutions, and country. The information was then organized into frequency tables, statistical graphs, and inferential analysis. Frequency tables were developed for variables such as educational institutions, countries, and authors,

allowing us to identify the most representative patterns in terms of the total number of citations. To construct them, the variables were ordered in descending order according to their number of citations. Based on these data, statistical graphs were generated to illustrate behaviors and trends.

Results and discussion

Basic bibliometric analysis

Table 1 presents the bibliometric analysis of the selected articles, conducted using the PRISMA methodology. It contains ten columns distributed as follows: Number of articles (column 1), authors (column 2), year of publication (column 3), total number of citations collected in Google Scholar (column 4), number of institutions involved in the document (column 5), journal quartile according to Scimago (column 6), and h-index (column 7). It is important to clarify that 'N/A' in column 9 indicates 'Not Applicable,' as the journal has not been classified in a quartile ranking. The following observations can be extracted from Table 1. Of the 18 works published between 2009 and 2025, the majority correspond to more recent production, with 78% published since 2020 and eight records corresponding to 2024–2025. This distribution suggests that research on coexistence, social skills, and assertive communication in school contexts has intensified over the last five years, perhaps driven by the reconfiguration of educational practices after the pandemic and the need to serve increasingly diverse populations. Regarding editorial quality, only a third of the papers (six of 18) were published in quartile-indexed journals: two in Q1, one in Q2, one in Q3, and two in Q4. The presence of Q1 in articles addressing cooperative climates and motivational orientations reveals that international analyses and social psychology approaches enjoy better visibility channels. In contrast, most Latin American contributions are published in non-quartile-indexed journals, which

makes them more accessible to local audiences but limits their global reach and the prestige associated with indexing metrics.

The impact, as measured by citations, is highly heterogeneous. Two documents exceed 100 external references, a systematic study on assertive communication (181) and a seminal work on prosocial motivation (134), while eight articles have not yet registered citations. This contrast reflects both the accumulated age (pieces from 2021 and earlier have had more time to be cited) and the breadth of their topics: systematic reviews and extensive comparative studies tend to attract more attention than local interventions or scale validations. Institutional collaboration appears to be limited, on average, with 11 of the 18 papers developed by a single research center. Studies involving two or three institutions tend to be published in high-impact journals or report cross-national samples, confirming the added value of networks. This finding also suggests opportunities to strengthen interuniversity partnerships, especially in Latin America, where the issues addressed are common and could benefit from comparative evidence. Most of the documents are based on coexistence, responsibility, or social skills. On the other hand, approaches are identified that range from psychometric validation (e.g., the Adolescent Assertiveness Scale) to reading literacy and school management. This breadth demonstrates that "school coexistence" is understood as a multidimensional phenomenon that requires simultaneous psychosocial, pedagogical, and organizational approaches. Finally, the disparity in the authors' H-indexes (from 7 to 144) illustrates the convergence of researchers at different career stages. The authors with more experience tend to lead multicenter projects and publish in peer-reviewed journals, while emerging authors contribute exploratory studies at a local level.

Table 1. Bibliometric summary of the documents collected using the PRISMA methodology.

No.	Authors	Year of publication	Number of citations	Number of institutions	Quartile	h-index
1	Santurio, J. I. M.	2025	0	1	Q2	7
2	Özel, D., & Sümer, Z.	2024	0	1	N/A	N/A
3	Wang, F., King, R. B., & Zeng, L. M.	2024	10	2	Q1	113
4	Paucar, A. C., Llacsa Puma, L. J., & Meleán Romero, R. A	2024	12	2	N/A	N/A
5	Desmarais, K., Euh, H., Scharmer, A., & Snyder, M.	2024	2	3	Q1	134
6	Hoyos, Y.	2024	0	1	N/A	N/A
7	Lima, S. L. P. D., Simeão, S. D. S. S., Silva, W. A. D., & Galdino, M. K. C.	2024	0	2	Q4	26
8	Milenović, Ž. M., S Lapat, G., & S Jeremić, B.	2024	0	3	N/A	N/A
9	Barrera, P., Espinoza, P., & Chamorro, N.	2023	2	1	N/A	N/A
10	Davila, D., Barba, C., & Nieto, K.	2022	4	1	N/A	N/A
11	Puspitawati, P. D., Yudana, I. M., Agung, A. A. G., & Sari, N. M. S. M.	2022	2	1	N/A	N/A
12	Vélez, R. M. V., Martínez, O. S., & Chávez, O. B.	2021	8	1	N/A	N/A
13	Cueva, M. R. C., Hernández, Y. L. D., & Regalado, Ó. L.	2021	181	1	N/A	N/A
14	Dogan, B., & Kaya-Tosun, D.	2020	26	2	Q3	10
15	Vieira, N. S. D. C., Prette, Z. A. P. D., Oliveira, A. M., Ribeiro, D. F., Silva, S. F., Raimundo, E. M., ... & Guerra, L. B.	2020	7	3	Q4	26
16	Parmaksiz, I.	2019	36	1	N/A	39
17	Peiró, S.	2014	9	1	Q1	144
18	Ross, C. S.	2009	17	1	N/A	N/A

Figure 2 presents the distribution of scientific production by country, along with the metrics for the total number of citations and publications in Q1 journals. Of the 56 articles counted, Ecuador (13) and Brazil (12) account for around 45% of the production, followed by Peru (6) and Turkey (5); in regional terms, Latin America concentrates 33 publications (≈59%), Asia contributes 12 (21%), and Europe–North
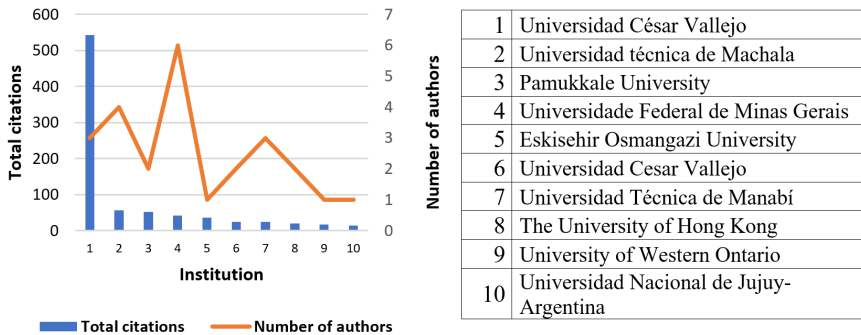
America 11 (20%). On the other hand, Figure 2b shows a disparity between editorial quality and visibility: Peru concentrates around 600 citations without contributing Q1 articles, followed by Ecuador and Turkey, which also accumulate moderate impact without presence in high-quartile journals; in contrast, China and the United States lead in Q1 publications (three each) but still register few citations, suggesting that recent works are still in the dissemination phase. Brazil has an intermediate profile, with approximately 70 citations and no Q1 Publications. At the same time, several countries (Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Kosovo, Portugal, and Serbia) lack both Q1s and citations.

Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between the total number of citations and the number of authors per institution. The results show that Universidad César Vallejo accounts for the majority of citations, exceeding 500. In contrast, the other institutions do not surpass 100, reflecting a high concentration of scientific impact in a single academic center. Moreover, the number of authors does not always correspond directly to citation levels: institutions with greater researcher participation, such as Universidad Técnica de Machala or Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, exhibit comparatively lower citation impact. The presence of universities from Latin America, Europe, and Asia demonstrates international interest in the topic, albeit with a clear predominance of institutions from Latin America. This pattern highlights the need to enhance inter-institutional and global collaboration to achieve greater diversification and broader impact in this field of study.

Figure 2. Geographic distribution (a) and impact metrics of scientific production on the centers of interest in strengthening assertive communication.
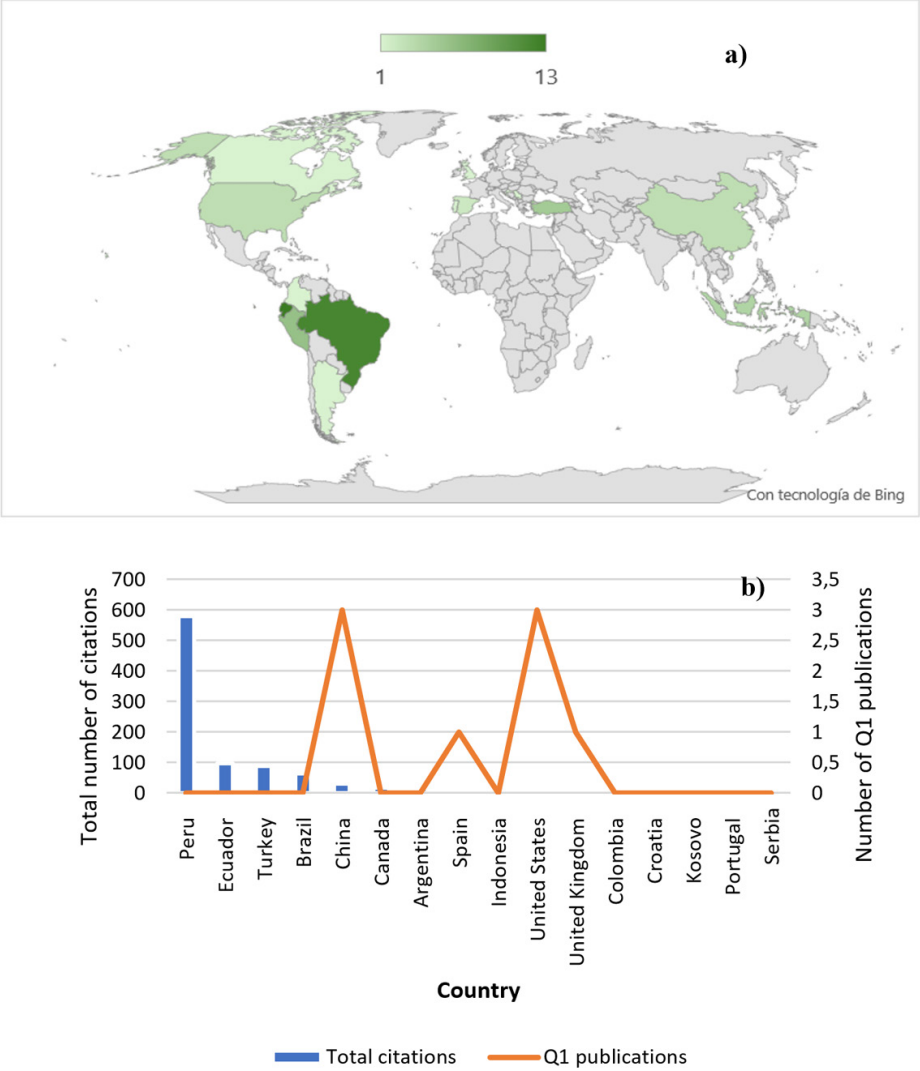
Figure 3. Productivity and impact of the ten most cited institutions on the centers of interest in strengthening assertive communication.

1	Universidad César Vallejo
2	Universidad técnica de Machala
3	Pamukkale University
4	Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais
5	Eskisehir Osmangazi University
6	Universidad Cesar Vallejo
7	Universidad Técnica de Manabí
8	The University of Hong Kong
9	University of Western Ontario
10	Universidad Nacional de Jujuy-Argentina

PRISMA analysis results.

In the assertive communication topic, it is found that student motivation is a fundamental element to improving social relationships that help build assertive communication (Cueva *et al.*, 2021); Vieira *et al.* (2020) focus on the importance of regulating a child's emotions to enhance their social skills and achieve the assertive communication so necessary in schools. Similarly, Lima *et al.* (2024) advocate for assertiveness in adolescents to strengthen social skills, a point also emphasized by Milenović *et al.* (2024). Barrera *et al.* (2023) add to the assertion that assertive communication is beneficial in strengthening mutual respect, while Joyal-Desmarais *et al.* (2024) indicated that assertive communication minimizes antisocial behavior. Although all authors address different strategies, Santurio (2025) highlights the need to develop planning, execution, and self-assessment strategies to improve students' communication skills; while Vélez *et al.* (2021) established, through the correlation of various variables, that assertive communication is essential to improve the quality of the educational process. For their part, Dávila *et al.* (2022) emphasized the need for intervention in educational design to enhance assertive communication. Table 2 shows ten categories of analysis and their

observations. First, there are the categories focused on the Initiative and Self-Management of Learning, Personalized and Motivating Learning, Commitment and Willingness to Learn, and Emotional and Social Management, which will be analyzed from the general category Personal and Motivational Dimension of Learning, which focuses on the development of the student as an autonomous, motivated, and emotionally balanced subject.

In this new general category, the authors discuss self-management and time organization to help students develop study and organizational habits. This is analyzed within the categories of Initiative and Self-Management of Learning, as well as Commitment and Disposition to Learning. Puspitawati *et al.* (2022) establish the need for students to organize their time and the space where they are going to study; however, to this, Barrera *et al.* (2023) added the importance of autonomy, coinciding with what was stated by Cueva *et al.* (2021) and Paucar *et al.* (2024). Vélez *et al.* (2021) enunciate it as self-efficacy in learning to learn through methodological strategies, leading to satisfaction. Santurio (2025) speaks of the need to plan these study spaces, which is very useful.

Positions that lead to thinking about centers of interest as a solution strategy are also based on the positions of Dávila *et al.* (2022), Dogan and Kaya-Tosun (2020) and Joyal-Desmarais *et al.* (2024) who express the need to promote strategies from home and school, attending to the interests and preferences of students, that is, not only in reading circles, but in their own personal spaces; this development of knowledge and socialization in reading spaces, in turn, helps to reduce antisocial behaviors and improve coexistence. Ross (2009) and Milenović *et al.* (2024) highlight the child's intrinsic motivation and their commitment to reading, while Barrera *et al.* (2023) and Vélez *et al.* (2021) focuses on talking about improvements in the participation of this in communicative processes, coinciding with Özel and Sümer (2024) who state that through assertive communication the

development of skills for peace and active participation is promoted, which favors self-management of learning.

Wang *et al*. (2024) study the development of skills such as responsibility and persistence, these being the driving force to promote the learning process, while Parmaksız (2019) focuses more on voluntary choice, that is, the commitment and preferences of students to make their own choices. Hoyos (2024) highlights the skills of conflict resolution, active participation and social learning, and for their part, Lima *et al*. (2024) established that the study encourages adolescents to reflect on their own responses and behaviors, which favors self-regulation and decision-making, that is, they are skills that increase learning.

Continuing with the motivational component, the categories of Personalized and Motivating Learning and Emotional and Social Management are added. In contrast, it is found that for Puspitawati *et al*. (2022) motivation and interest are key factors for learning, Özel & Sümer (2024) include the psychosocial needs of children who have been vulnerable in some way. Added to this is Hoyos (2024) who raises the need to develop meaningful learning environments where there is respect for diversity, while Vélez *et al*. (2021) also suggests the need to be empathetic.

Regarding reading, Dogan & Kaya-Tosun (2020) explain the importance of selecting books based on student interests, as this increases student motivation and engagement. Barrera *et al*. (2023), Cueva *et al*. (2021), and Peiró (2014) provide a key element for this research: the need to develop motivating activities to foster children's emotional development. In response, Paucar *et al*. (2024) reveal how reading can be a key element for children's emotional and social development, using engaging strategies. Milenović *et al*. (2024) highlights the use of games, while Lima *et al*. (2024) points to the development of focus groups to increase understanding and

motivation. On the other hand, Vieira *et al.* (2020) points out that activities must be adapted to the emotional development of children, with meaningful content that motivates them to reflect and express themselves.

As teachers, Dávila *et al.* (2022) points out the importance of designing strategies so that the student can initially adapt to individual needs and subsequently to the emotions of others, which include insecurity and fear, in this way it is easier to overcome those affectations and weaknesses that are part of the learning process. Santurio (2025) also establishes the option of letting students choose the activities they want to develop, giving them autonomy and allowing an increase in their intrinsic motivation.

Thus, when we talk about the Personal and Motivational Dimension of Learning, we establish the student's commitments to achieving knowledge consolidation—that is, the skills or competencies they must develop. This alone is not sufficient. Initially, students must possess internal motivational elements that drive them to want to learn, and especially to want to enjoy learning. This goes hand in hand with teaching strategies and becomes extrinsic motivational elements, which must be marked by the teacher's commitment and responsibility to foster student preferences, which in turn implies the personalization of teaching.

Table 2. Personal and motivational dimensions of learning identified in the studies reviewed using the prism methodology.

Author	Initiative and Self-Management of Learning	Personalized and motivating learning	Commitment and willingness to learn	Emotional and Social Management
Santurio (2025)	The article focuses on a self-regulated learning intervention, encouraging students to plan, execute, and evaluate their tasks independently.	Each student chooses and plans their activities, and improvements in internal motivation are evident, reflecting a motivating and adaptive approach.	An increase in participation, personal responsibility, and task execution is observed, which demonstrates greater commitment.	Emotional control, self-regulation, and personal responsibility are mentioned, although the social dimension is less improved.
Özel & Sümer (2024)	Although not explicitly mentioned, the development of peace skills and active participation are encouraged, which fosters self-managed learning.	The program was tailored with culturally relevant activities for refugee students, considering their specific needs and contexts.	**Not applicable**	The program recognizes the psychosocial needs of refugee children, addressing peace education as a means of emotional and social regulation.
Wang *et al.* **(2024)**	The development of skills such as persistence and responsibility suggests autonomy in learning	**Not applicable**	It is related to skills such as persistence, self-control and energy, which reflect an active disposition.	Variables such as emotional control, empathy, cooperation, optimism, etc. are directly analyzed.
Paucar *et al.* **(2024)**	There is talk of promoting habits based on student autonomy.	The importance of personal love for reading and its connection to motivation is highlighted.	Emphasis is placed on the role of the student and their environment in fostering the reading habit.	It mentions how reading contributes to emotional and social development.
Joyal-Desmarais *et al.* **(2024)**	Expresses that certain personal skills, such as responsibility and self-regulation, influence the reduction of antisocial behaviors	**Not applicable**	It is indirectly related when talking about the influence of personal and social variables on prosocial behavior.	This is one of the central themes of the article. It addresses emotional variables such as empathy, emotional regulation, and self-esteem.
Hoyos (2024)	Implicit in the development of skills and competencies such as conflict resolution, active participation and social learning.	It addresses comprehensive development and the recognition of diversity as the basis for meaningful learning environments.	It stands out as a component of the harmonious environment of school coexistence.	Clearly developed, especially in relation to conflict resolution and respect for diversity.

Author	Initiative and Self-Management of Learning	Personalized and motivating learning	Commitment and willingness to learn	Emotional and Social Management
Lima *et al.* (2024)	The study encourages adolescents to reflect on their own responses and behaviors, which promotes self-regulation and decision-making.	An illustrated scale adapted to the language and context of youth was designed to increase understanding and motivation.	The adolescents actively participated in focus groups, demonstrating a willingness to reflect and learn about their behavior.	Assertiveness is linked to emotional control, stress reduction, and healthy decision-making.
Milenović *et al.* (2024)	Autonomy in play, decision-making, and self-regulation are mentioned as part of personal development in children.	Learning is promoted through play, according to the individual needs and interests of children.	Children actively participate in kindergarten activities, which reflects a willingness to learn.	Cooperation, self-control, and assertiveness, which are key to emotional and social regulation, are analyzed.
Barrera *et al.* (2023)	The development of autonomy through communication and learning from childhood is mentioned.	There is talk of motivating activities such as games for communicative learning.	The active participation of the child in his communicative process is highlighted.	They talk about the importance of socio-emotional development through communication
Dávila *et al.* (2022)	This is evident in the promotion of strategies to develop skills from home and in the school environment.	It mentions how the design can be adapted to individual needs.	It addresses the motivation to improve social and communication skills.	Emotions such as insecurity and fear of rejection are discussed.
Puspitawati *et al.* (2022)	There is talk about the need for students to organize their study time and space while learning at home.	Student motivation and interest are mentioned as key factors in learning.	The article emphasizes interest and satisfaction as indicators of student engagement.	**Not applicable**
Vélez *et al.* (2021)	Self-efficacy and learning to learn are mentioned as a result of methodological strategies.	Personalization of learning is promoted through active and empathetic strategies.	The need for motivation, confidence and willingness in teachers and students is highlighted.	Socio-emotional skills such as empathy and emotional control are discussed.
Cueva *et al.* (2021)	It is linked to comprehensive training and educational autonomy.	It refers to motivation and autonomy, but not directly to personalized learning.	Emphasis is placed on the active role of the student and the teacher	Assertiveness is considered a key emotional/social skill.
Dogan & Kaya-Tosun (2020)	In literature circles, students independently choose books and roles, assuming responsibilities within their groups.	Books are selected based on student interests, which increases motivation and active participation.	The collaborative and active design of literature circles fosters enthusiasm for participation and learning.	The study focuses on improving social and adaptive skills through respectful and empathetic interactions.

Author	Initiative and Self-Management of Learning	Personalized and motivating learning	Commitment and willingness to learn	Emotional and Social Management
Vieira *et al.* **(2020)**	The development of skills such as self-control and emotional self-regulation, which are essential for managing one's own learning, is promoted.	The activities are tailored to children's emotional development, with meaningful content that motivates them to reflect and express themselves.	Active participation in the sessions demonstrates commitment; children learn to manage their emotions to improve their academic performance.	This is the main objective: to improve emotional regulation and social skills (empathy, self-control, assertiveness).
Parmaksız (2019)	Students who choose their career voluntarily show greater adjustment, which reflects self-management in their educational process.	**Not applicable**	Academic adjustment and voluntary career choice imply personal commitment to learning.	The study measures emotional, social, and personal adjustment, all of which are strongly related to assertiveness.
Peiró (2014)	**Not applicable**	**No Not applicable**	Partially (motivation and attitude of teachers and students are mentioned)	Yes (emotional and social aspects of the school climate)
Ross (2009)	It analyzes how people choose to read for pleasure and how this motivates their continued learning.	The text highlights reading learning based on personal interests as a source of motivation.	We talk about intrinsic motivation to read and commitment to voluntary reading.	It addresses the topic of how emotions and social environments (such as book clubs) influence reading interests.

Centers of interest: pedagogical characterization and transversal impact on learning

After the literature review, the results are presented in alignment with the axes established in the introduction of this document and are described as follows.

The first axis concerns the detailed characterization of centers of interest, including their categories, advantages, and limitations. The analysis of the 18 reviewed studies revealed that centers of interest constitute pedagogical spaces where motivation, reading, and socialization converge as key components of active learning. Through the identified categories—initiative and self-management of learning, personalized and motivating learning, commitment and willingness to learn, and emotional and social management—it became evident

that these centers foster student autonomy, responsibility in the educational process, and the development of communication skills. These categories not only reflect how students take ownership of knowledge but also how teachers design more participatory and contextualized strategies.

Nevertheless, the results also highlighted certain limitations in the conceptualization and application of centers of interest. Only five studies explicitly addressed this approach, and in most cases, it was employed in a complementary or implicit manner, which prevented a comprehensive characterization of its pedagogical scope. Even so, the studies agree that these spaces support meaningful learning, increase motivation, and strengthen communication among classroom participants. The lack of uniformity in their implementation represents both a challenge and an opportunity to consolidate their theoretical and practical framework in future research.

Second axis: evaluation of the cross-curricular impact of centers of interest. The results show that the impact of centers of interest extends beyond the area of reading and encompasses other dimensions of school learning. Several studies demonstrate that cooperative work and guided reading, as strategies within these centers, contribute to strengthening competencies in areas such as social sciences, mathematics, and ethical education by fostering problem-solving through dialogue and collaboration. The cross-curricular nature of centers of interest lies in their ability to integrate cognitive and emotional dimensions, promoting comprehensive learning that extends beyond academic content to encompass the formation of values and attitudes.

Specifically, the studies by Paucar *et al.* (2024), Vélez *et al.* (2021), and Santurio (2025) highlight that reflective reading and autonomy in knowledge management strengthen self-regulation, responsibility, and decision-making skills that are transferable to any curricular

area. These findings demonstrate that centers of interest foster an interdisciplinary approach to teaching that connects individual experiences with collective learning. However, a key limitation identified is the limited availability of curricular models that formally incorporate this methodology, which hinders its systematic application within educational programs. Therefore, it is recommended that research be expanded to include interdisciplinary experiences that empirically assess the cross-curricular benefits of centers of interest across diverse areas of knowledge (Cervetti *et al.*, 2012; Zhou *et al.*, 2024).

Third axis: analysis of the effect of assertive communication on school coexistence and academic performance. The comparative analysis of the reviewed studies confirmed that assertive communication has a direct influence on school coexistence by fostering relationships based on empathy, respect, and active listening. The results show that students who develop assertive communication skills demonstrate a greater capacity to resolve conflicts peacefully, work collaboratively, and express their opinions with confidence—factors that positively impact classroom dynamics. Furthermore, the reviewed literature consistently indicates that assertive communication is a crucial component for strengthening trust between teachers and students, thereby enhancing the school climate and group cohesion (Lima *et al.*, 2024).

Regarding academic performance, the findings indicate that students with higher levels of assertive communication and active participation in areas of interest exhibit a greater willingness to learn, increased commitment, and higher self-confidence in their study processes. The literature emphasizes that motivation and emotional development derived from effective communication translate into more lasting and meaningful learning. Thus, it is demonstrated that strengthening assertive communication not only enhances school coexistence but also impacts the quality of learning and students' holistic development, consolidating it as a transversal component that integrates cognitive, emotional, and social growth within the

school environment (Avşar *et al.*, 2017; Wang & Degol, 2016; Omura *et al.*, 2019).

Challenges and further work

One of the challenges identified is the need to generate diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives that enhance the usefulness of reading centers of interest across different subject areas, rather than limiting their application to the field of language. It is well established that reading is a transversal competency that underpins all areas of knowledge and that educational outcomes are directly related to students' reading comprehension levels. Consequently, future research is recommended to explore the impact of centers of interest in subjects such as natural sciences, mathematics, and social sciences, assessing their capacity to promote meaningful learning and the development of higher-order cognitive skills.

From this study, two priority lines of inquiry emerge. The first relates to the design and validation of pedagogical models based on centers of interest, conceived as tools to improve academic performance and strengthen student autonomy. Such models should be empirically evaluated through mixed-method approaches or case studies that allow for observation of their actual impact in diverse educational contexts. The second line focuses on the influence of assertive communication on school coexistence, which extends beyond respectful dialogue to encompass emotional regulation, empathy, and teacher mediation as key determinants of the school climate.

Future research should also delve deeper into the relationship between emotional processes and academic performance, as highlighted by Özel & Sümer (2024) and Calua *et al.* (2021), who emphasize the importance of teacher mediation and socio-emotional support in enhancing teaching and learning processes.

Comparative studies between rural and urban institutions are likewise recommended, incorporating variables such as sociocultural context, reading strategies, and levels of student participation. Finally, it is proposed to include specific assessment instruments to measure the degree of assertive communication development and its relationship with motivation and reading comprehension, to consolidate a theoretical and methodological framework to guide future pedagogical interventions.

Literature Limitations

One of the limitations identified was the simultaneous examination of the three categories of analysis—assertive communication, centers of interest, and reading—since most of the studies focus on only one or two of these dimensions. Therefore, this review is of particular value as it provides an integrative perspective that broadens the understanding of the phenomenon. Likewise, some of the studies reviewed do not provide a detailed breakdown of the relationships among the categories, focusing instead on advantages or disadvantages, while overlooking the realities faced by teachers and students regarding assertive communication in group reading processes.

Finally, by restricting the search to the Scopus database, it is acknowledged that relevant literature indexed in regional repositories such as Redalyc, SciELO, or Dialnet may have been excluded. Nevertheless, the analysis offers a consistent and updated perspective on the role of centers of interest and assertive communication in students' holistic education, establishing a significant starting point for future comparative and applied research.

Conclusions

Assertive communication is a highly valuable tool in schools. Although it is not formally recognized as an academic component (except within the area of language arts) it plays a crucial role in consolidating learning. This systematic review analyzed 18 studies, which confirmed the interrelationship between assertive communication, students' contexts, interpersonal relationships, and reading comprehension. From an early age, students observe habits in their surrounding environment and tend to replicate them at school, where they coexist with a larger number of peers. These habits, whether positive or negative, become the foundation of school coexistence and, consequently, of interpersonal relationships, which are shaped by the classroom climate and the way students communicate. The communicative and expressive dimension integrates elements that foster communication, such as dialogue, empathy, and collaborative work, strengthening the process toward assertive communication and thereby contributing to conflict resolution in the classroom.

From the relational and contextual dimension, the need to improve the classroom climate emerges, underscoring the importance of assertive communication. Through it, students are encouraged to enhance their interactions and develop social and emotional skills that promote coexistence and mutual respect. Developing strategies that emphasize dialogue and collaborative work between teachers and students becomes a key factor in creating harmonious learning environments where understanding and active listening prevail. Similarly, when schools implement strategies aimed at strengthening the personal and motivational dimension of learning, they highlight the value of promoting reading centers of interest, understood as spaces where learning is personalized and aligned with students' preferences and motivations. These spaces enable students to internalize what inspires them and to

express it through activities grounded in reading comprehension and respectful dialogue, thereby revealing the true significance of centers of interest as settings for holistic education.

Several recommendations for educational practice emerge from the results. First, it is proposed to incorporate teacher training programs that focus on strengthening communicative and socio-emotional competencies, enabling educators to provide more effective mediation and foster interpersonal relationships based on respect and empathy. Second, schools are encouraged to design and institutionalize reading centers of interest as permanent curricular strategies, fostering dialogic reading, respectful argumentation, and active student participation. Furthermore, it is essential to integrate assertive communication as a transversal axis across all areas of knowledge through interdisciplinary projects that promote cooperation and meaningful learning. Finally, schools should adopt policies that value communication as an essential component of human development and school coexistence. Researchers are encouraged to continue advancing the joint study of assertive communication, reading, and related centers of interest, including comparative analyses across rural and urban contexts, as well as across different educational levels.

As the final remark, this study confirms that assertive communication, reading motivation, and centers of interest constitute fundamental pillars for building a more human, participatory, and emotionally aware education. In this educational setting, learning is experienced as a shared, reflective, and meaningful process that extends beyond the classroom, fostering a sense of community within the school.

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