

***El juego: base para el desarrollo de habilidades en estudiantes de
primero y segundo básico***
***Role play: the basis for the development of skills in first and
second grade students***

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Resumen

La educación fue uno de los sectores más afectados por la crisis sanitaria porque a pesar de tener reformas remediales por parte del gobierno, las brechas socioeconómicas, culturales y contextuales dificultaron el efectivo proceso de las clases virtuales. Por tanto, los docentes se vieron obligados a repensar sus prácticas docentes durante la pandemia de la COVID 19. Esto trajo un sinnúmero de estrategias basadas en el juego. Sin embargo, el desafío continúa y con otros factores, de modo que se han de diseñar actividades que contemplen las buenas prácticas realizadas en pandemia, adaptándolas al aula, para atender la diversidad estudiantil.

Palabras clave: Juego; Aprendizaje; Enseñanza; Estrategias; Pandemia; Comunidad educativa; Tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación (TIC)

Abstract

Education was one of the sectors most affected by the health crisis because despite having remedial reforms by the government, socioeconomic, cultural and contextual gaps hindered the effective process of virtual classrooms. As a result, teachers were forced to rethink their teaching practices during the COVID 19 pandemic, which brought about a myriad of game-based strategies. However, the challenge continues and with other factors, so that activities have to be designed that contemplate the good practices carried out during the pandemic, adapting them to the classroom, in order to attend to student diversity.

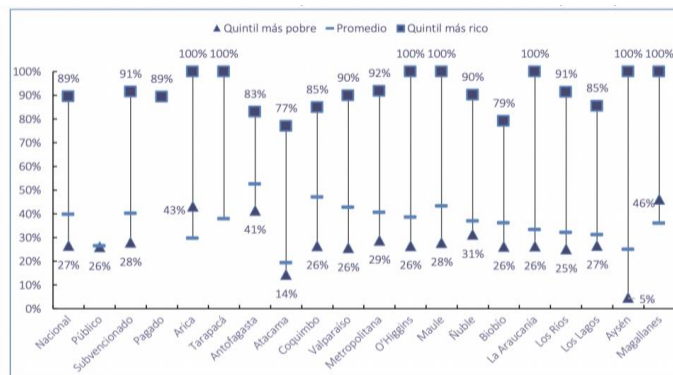
Keywords: Role play; Learning; Teaching; Strategies; Pandemic; Educational community; Information and communication technologies (ICT); Learning; Teaching

Introduction

Education was one of the sectors most affected by the COVID-19 health crisis. According to UNICEF figures (2021), approximately 1.8 billion hours of face-to-face learning were lost by 2021 since the beginning of the pandemic. Such data undoubtedly fall within the national context. Since, in Chile, the health crisis led to a nationwide quarantine and caused the total closure of educational establishments; it generated the need to seek new strategies for the teaching-learning process of children to prevent the country from coming to a halt; various modalities of distance education were accessed. Among them: virtual learning as a replacement for face-to-face scenarios; the insertion of new information and communication technologies (ICT); impacted the learning process of the learner, the role of the teacher, contents and evaluation, among other multiple factors. This is reflected in the graph in the attached image, which shows how distance learning was carried out.

Figure 1

Coverage of distance education provision in pandemic context by COVID-19. Ministry of Education (2020).



Source: Self Made

Municipal establishments and subsidized private establishments throughout the country according to income.

In order to determine the educational process during this emerging period, the Ministry of Education, through the Curriculum and Evaluation Unit, established the prioritization of those learning objectives, considered essential to continue with the formative process of the children and youth of the country, under three essential criteria: balance between the objectives of the curricular axes or formative lines, learning coherence and response to a progression in the cycle that facilitate learning and being essential to continue teaching the following year. This measure, which was planned for the period 2020-2021, has been extended until the end of 2022 in order to meet the educational diversity and to reduce the learning gaps left by the pandemic.

In addition to the above, various platforms were also made available to help students, parents, teachers and other agents of the educational community, with the purpose of supporting the children's process. However, as Belmar et al (2021) point out, the development of e-learning in Chile was learned on the fly by teachers, with little or no knowledge of remote education pedagogy. In addition, the socioeconomic gaps throughout the country, not to mention the inaccessibility of the Internet in rural areas, meant that this system was developed intermittently in much of the national territory.

Students in kindergarten, first and second grade, given their age and dependence on adults for the use of technologies, together with the necessary guidance that many of them require for their first years of learning in the classroom, presented great difficulties in the pandemic, either because of their parents' jobs or the lack of knowledge of the adults responsible for the use of ICT, which made their connection difficult, making them even more dependent on adults and generating large gaps in their school education.

These levels were the most affected by this period of virtuality, since in the initial cycle the bases of comprehensive training are traced back, both to promote skills, knowledge, learning and attitudes, from the development of autonomy, basic rules, to develop socially in a harmonious way with their peers, in addition to the content. As stipulated in Decree 373 (Ministry of Education, 2017), between second level of transition and first level of basic general education, it is essential to prioritize learning through play, under an inclusive look and that considers the child as a subject of rights.

In accordance with the above, strategies of games and the use of new technologies are proposed for children to stimulate their learning in the post-pandemic stage.

Based on the above, the main problem we faced, as teachers, was how to redirect the teaching and learning process from virtual classes to face-to-face work, under the new normality we were facing.

In order to address the problem, it was necessary to rethink classroom teaching and, in turn, to establish the following objectives:

- Develop new work plans that contemplate all the techniques used before and during the pandemic to level and enhance the development of children's cognitive processes through a holistic view.
- Design strategies that integrate the needs of the students, both cognitively and socioemotionally, as well as contextually and centered on play as didactic experiences that contribute to the children's teaching-learning process.

Development

In most educational establishments, play in basic education disappears and is affected by the pedagogical environment. In some occasions, it is used as a complement for the so-called dead times, therefore, imagination or creation is limited. In this sense, the focus is on the delivery of content, through a traditional system that implies an evaluation process where the quantitative takes precedence over the qualitative. Aizencang (2005) points out that there is a duality in the conceptions of play. On the one hand, it is associated with a social and natural function, as well as a ludic and recreational one. On the other hand, the second conception differentiates the playful from the serious, considering play as a waste of time. This last idea is still predominant in the pedagogical practices of first and second grade teachers.

All the above, gave space to recognize the importance of these years of education and their work in presentiality, since factors such as the role of the teacher, the environment as a third educator, and the

development of activities in community, as Castro and Morales (2015) point out, favor interactions individually and in groups; they explore, create and imagine and a suitable environment is promoted; they influence in a positive way, in the development of teaching and learning processes in children.

For this reason, once the health crisis subsided and it was proposed to return to the classrooms, new challenges were generated for the educational community. For two years there was intermittency in the acquisition of learning and skills in the pedagogical field, in addition to the socioemotional deficiencies that, for the most part, the physical space of the school provided.

Materials and methods

The following theoretical and empirical methods were used in the work: analysis and processing of sources; hypothetical-deductive identified with the hypothesis proposed; as well as triangulation by means of a theoretical systematization based on an evaluative, critical and reflective analysis. Participant observation was used to obtain significant data for the diagnosis; as a methodological procedure, qualitative-quantitative contrast was used; analysis and synthesis for the foundation of the object, the field of action, to establish essential elements of the research, the relationship between them, the analysis of the data and empirical manifestations to determine the problem.

Results and discussion

According to Huzinga (1972), through play we create norms, rules and limits, whether serious or not. Norms are the framework for the formation of social conventions and therefore, of civilizations and culture as such. In this sense, it is understood that play is the intrinsic basis of society and is presented in various forms in social constructions, also encompassing learning itself.

Nowadays, we can notice how the lack of play, under the great impact of technology, in addition to the pandemic, and the false ideas of educators, parents or caregivers about play have damaged the acquisition of norms and limits; social conventions are modified and the teaching-learning processes are hindered. For this reason, it is of utmost importance not to forget play as a primordial experience in the learning process, since it is an innate activity of the child.

In relation to the challenge posed and taking into account the contingency present during the pandemic, various methodologies and dynamics were implemented to give full coverage to the curricular prioritization. We considered not only the development of cognitive and socioemotional skills, but also the use of new technological tools that would promote the aforementioned skills through play and thus avoid the loss of interest in learning on the part of the students.

The link with the family as the basis for the good development of didactic strategies.

For all the proposed strategies to be carried out with good results, it is important for the family to participate and intervene. In order to generate awareness in the children and to make the activities meaningful for them and for the families. Given that many of them, for the most part, are away from home due to work, the probability of developing this union with the school in pandemic was jeopardized; however, with the appropriate linkage through playful activities, it was possible to maintain a close relationship with the students, which was enhanced when they returned to the classroom, with activities that included their participation.

Examples:

- Invitation to families to develop games and other activities related to a specific topic (experiments, to name a few).
- Presentation of their work (in relation to the content of professions and trades).
- Pedagogical outings to the parents' workplaces.

Storytelling.

- Experimental presentation of the development of a specific skill (cooking, weaving, planting, etc.).
- Presentation of a skill (playing an instrument, singing, dancing, etc.).

The physical space as a facilitator for the development of didactic proposals.

According to Quinto (2010), everything that corresponds to the furniture, the walls, and even the structure, gives us information about the activities that are being carried out, the communication between groups and how it invites children to develop in one way or another. Taking this into account, we promote strategies that make the most of everything that can be found not only in the classroom, but also in the playground, in their homes and in the structure of the establishment itself. It is not necessary to use spaces designed for a specific purpose, with activities, different environments can be designed in one place. Examples of activities:

- Role play such as being workers for a day (in relation to occupations and professions content).
- School newscast (being journalists to develop oral expression).

- Book tubers (story critics or other textual typologies).
- Little market (to develop numerical and positional value).
- Phonetic dictation using the playground as a blackboard (to enhance phonetics and grammar).
- Stand of typical games (national identity).
- Treasure hunt (going through different parts of the school to look for different words or images that are hidden. Once found, if it is an image, they must write the word in the notebook, and if they find a word, they must draw the concept).
- Word detectives (on a giant poster and using a magnifying glass, they look for different words that help the development of the components of language; form, content and use).
- Form numbers with blocks or multi-base cubes (place value).
- Little architects (use standardized and non-standardized measurements to measure different objects or elements of the facility or classroom).
- Little library mice (look for books that catch their attention, play at reading, become familiar with the library).

Students search for books according to their own tastes in the library and look for words they selected at random from a raffle in the different texts they choose.

Gamification immersed in the classroom.

Children currently in the educational system are students born, raised and educated in technology-rich environments. In this context, the mass media have globalized and made everything immediate; this need to respond quickly to everything has been taken to different areas, including education. Children expect learning to be fast, simple and as entertaining as possible, otherwise they quickly lose motivation and interest.

For this reason, ICT has been an indispensable source in the pandemic period for the development of strategies that motivate children, without losing play as a fundamental basis for their development. Accordingly, we give importance to gamification, which according to Vargas-Henríquez et al (2015) is the use of games to encourage learning in children, developing emotional and social intelligence skills, promoting instances of active learning, generating timely feedback to students and fostering the relationship among peers.

Although gamification is based on the use of ICT, through applications, software and different technological tools, it is not necessary for it to be a digital process to be considered gamification. As long as the game establishes certain rules, has a pedagogical purpose and is developed through score codes or positive reinforcements to encourage the child to participate, we are talking about gamification. In relation to this, once the students were reintegrated to the face-to-face classes, the use of ICT was maintained for the development of gamified activities, as well as activities were carried out that would have the students play games and did not require an electronic medium to be executed.

Among the strategies related to ICT are the following:

- Genial.ly: web page for building interactive PowerPoint.

- kahoot: an application for cell phones, in which games are built and can be sent to each student's cell phone. These games are created by the teacher, and once the children play, the data and results are saved so that the teacher can evaluate the learning process of each student.

- Educaplay: web page with different games created by teachers, like wordwall, the game that one creates can be available to anyone who wants to use it.

- Minecraft: interactive adventure game, where children can create their own worlds using blocks where they must solve various problems in order to keep their creations healthy. This game promotes problem solving, critical thinking, reflection and mathematical logical reasoning.

- That Quiz: website for teachers and students to generate exercises and see results very quickly. In particular, it is a good tool for teaching mathematics from preschool level.

Duolingo: application that provides several daily challenges to learn a second language, provides a vast choice of languages, which are learned through mini-games.

- Canva: a tool for creating interactive PowerPoint.

- Wordwall: web page for the creation and construction of games, with a vast content of games created by teachers from different parts of the world. The game you create can be made available to anyone who wants to use it. Wordwall games promote reflection, problem solving and logical mathematical reasoning. As for the strategies that do not require the use of ICT we find:

- Gymkana: a set of team tests following a route to meet a challenge. For example: to draw a picture based on the reading of words and the grammatical order of a sentence.

- Quiz: with numbers or letters.
- Bingo: with numbers or letters.
- Memorize: with pictures, numbers, letters and/or words.
- Burn: phonological awareness.
- Challenges: board games, dice throwing, among others.
- Board games: ludo, dice, knowledge race, guess what or who.
- High school: development of phonetics and semantics.

Conclusions

The teaching-learning process must be generated, designed and applied by all members of the educational community, through a comprehensive pedagogy based on principles and flexibility in the socio-cultural context. Likewise, it is necessary to consider the interests and needs of the students.

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