“When you asked me what I did in school today and I say, 'I just played.' Please don’t misunderstand me. For you see, I am learning as I play. I am learning to enjoy and be successful in my work. Today I am a child and my work is play. ”Anita Wadley .

Just playing, Poem by Anita Wadley, 1974

It’s time to play

CREACION O INTERPRETACION



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It’s Time To Play

Modalidad: Creación O Interpretación

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION……. 5

RATIONALE…… 7

THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES

The essence of play…….. 9

THEORIES ABOUT PLAY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Play as intellectual development……. 13

Play as sensory learning…….. 15

Play as social development…….. 19

TYPES OF PLAY

Unoccupied play……. 22

Solitary play…… 22

Onlooker play……. 23

Parallel play…… 23

Associative play……. 24

Cooperative play…… 24

Symbolic play…… 25

Game with rules…… 25

Functional play…….. 26

Constructive play…….. 26

Dramatic play…… 26

SPACES AND MATERIALS WHEN PLAYING…… 28

CREATION PROCESS

Knowing the why & the what for……. 31

Writing down the games……... 33

Designing the drawings……. 38

Revision & digital edition…… 41

IMPLICATIONS IN EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE CONTEXT

Play and the workplace…….. 42

Play and language…… 45

Play and pedagogy……. 47

CONCLUSIONS…… 49

REFERENCES…… 51

INTRODUCTION

Play is a very important part of a child's life. A child learns to make sense of the world around him through play. Play is not a specific behavior, (Piaget, 1962) but any activity undertaken with a playful frame of mind. So, in this sense, I would like to quote the concept of play that Stuart Brown proposed in an interview who said that "Play is an ancient, voluntary, inherently pleasurable, apparently purposeless activity or process that is undertaken for its own sake and that strengthens our muscles and our social skills, fertilizes brain activity, tempers and deepens our emotions, takes us out of time, and enables a state of balance and poise". (Brown, 2009, p. 412). It is playing that children engage and interact with peers, developing social and cognitive skills, mature emotionally and gain self –confidence, trying new activities and experiencing new concepts.

Play is something in which humans of all ages from diverse cultures engage, although the purpose for and the type of play may be different across ages and cultures, indeed children learn best when they can act on the environment and construct knowledge for themselves, play helps children weave together all the elements of life as they experience it, children learn to communicate and to think during play by giving children opportunities to learn language from their peers and practice what they have learned in different scenarios. Summarizing the role of play in child development, Vygotsky (1978) suggested that play is "the leading source of development in preschool years he explains that, play creates a zone of proximal development in the child, in play, the child always behaves beyond his average age. As it is stated by Lester and Russell (2010); play is a spontaneous, voluntary, pleasurable and flexible activity involving a combination of body, object, symbol use and relationships. In

contracts to games, play behavior is more disorganized, and it's typically done for its own sake, that is why the process is more important than any goals or end points.

Play is a basic right for all children and is worthwhile for the enjoyment it brings to children in the moment. If we view play primarily as a means to achieve long-term physical, psychological and social benefits we are in danger of losing sight of the essence of play as intrinsically motivated behavior, something children do in their own time, following their own ideas, in their own way.

This project lead to the point that play in early childhood forms a significant nodal point at which understanding childhood, motherhood, education, family and citizenship coagulate. Play has become as Vygotsky (1978) points out an almost mandatory field for teachers of young children. I approach my discussion of play in this document from the perspective provided through three main theorist of childhood development; play as intellectual development carried out by Jean Piaget, followed by play seen as sensory learning developed by Maria Montessori and ending up with Lev Vygotsky whose contributions with play as social development help me underpin the constructs of my artistic work. Such as perspectives begin from an understanding of play as a crucial activity for all children, this means that my starting point in this document is showing play activity as a very effective vehicle if educators are able to realize its potential and strive to provide quality activities, when educators better understand child development their curriculums will be more suitable for the children they serve, so play will be idealize as a tool in ways that potentially create spaces for thinking and re-evaluating the place and role of play in early childhood education.

RATIONALE

What arouses my interest of creating a book that recompiles all the experiences in terms of games and recreation that I have had through this two years working aboard is basically the motivation that I can contribute to my workplace by giving my students a chance to learn in a way that they create their own understanding of the world they are surrounding by.

Play is fundamental to children's happiness and well-being, and the research shows that it is also influential in their health and future life chances, as children develop their values, knowledge and skills they are both being and becoming at the same time. In play experiences children integrate emotion that establish cognitive and intellectual processes, play fosters creativity of thought, imagination, strategies for problem solving and the development of divergent thinking, in this sense play will accomplish children well-being, and that would be my desire as a practitioner teacher. (Lester and Russell, 2010)

This book will illustrate how facilities and spaces for play can have the big benefits for children with a set of well planning and selected games that I have learned through this time, I am having an experience working aboard on a cruise ship, my position there is called Youth counselor and my duties are entertaining kids to the fullest, through a variety of games and methods , this idea emerged from this specific context where I could experience the role of play in early childhood and where I also could experience the knowledge I got from the university in many subjects, one of them, materials design which gave me the skills to create and implement some of the games that I developed in my workplace aboard, planning the daily timetable so that children have blocks of time to develop quality play themes and experiences. This paper presents the

theoretical constructs that support my artistic work, it is argued that we should stop thinking games as an entertaining mean for facilitating participation in the class, and instead try to see games as a content provider and feedback mechanism. A theoretical background is presented on how playing games can benefit early childhood, allowing learning games to change focus from just the act of playing into learning purposes, and of course, to understand how play came to be such a dominant pedagogical tool in early childhood education, and further, how dominant discourses of play produce and manage children and adults in early childhood settings.

Finally, aiming to hope this project contributes to show other pre-service teachers that this field is exciting and worthy. We can be creators of our own art, and materials instead of passive consumers, search for solutions to real learning issues and make our classes really challenging and effective. It is an invitation to touch students' lives through our ideas and daily practice in the classroom. As I discuss in later chapters, as adults we affect children play significantly; we affect what children experience, we regulate time for play opportunities, and we provide spaces and materials, among many other aspects that comes when playing, that is the aim of my project, to recognize play educational basis and from this perspective the influence of play on a child's development is enormous. I would like to paraphrase the words addressed by Hodgkin and Newell; play is differentiated from rest, leisure and recreation as something interwoven into children's daily lives and not control by adults, so play could be seen as children's daily interactions. . My desire in creating this book that recompiles games suitable to each age group draws on the idea that, educators and even parents will see the great benefit we can give to our kids, by letting them play and explore through play, closing up with this splendid phrase cited by the educationalist George Bernard Shaw: "you don's top playing because you grow old, you grow old because you stopped playing"

THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES

The essence of Play

This chapter highlights the importance of play in early childhood influence to children's physical, psychological and social well- being. For the review of the literature that I conducted in order to discuss the main constructs that evolve my project, I will cite some authors view about the nature of play and how this practice make sense of children life experience, the theoretical constructs underlying this project will be divided in three main parts. In the first part I describe the nature of playing and its importance in the educational field, the second part will present the types of play and the final part I will show some studies about play establishing a debate between current theories of play, based on the work of the Russian psychologist (Vygotsky, 1978) and the American educational psychologist (Piajet, 1983) about the concept of play in early childhood.

The definition of play is both complex and contested and has long been the subject of social and academic debate, in other words, play involves children doing as they wish in their own time and in their own way and it is this component of play that is key to understanding the positive outcomes of playing throughout childhood. Psychologist Lev Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development posits that information from the external world is transformed and internalized through language. Since language is both a symbolic system of communication

and a cultural tool used to transmit culture and history, play is an essential part of both language development and child's understanding of the external world. When a child is at play, he or she is in a constant dialogue either with self or others. Children at play are making sense of the world through a process of inner speech, that is, they are often taking out loud to themselves. If we really listen to children at play, we can hear the way they converse with themselves in order to make sense of the external world.

According to Vygotsky language also serves the purpose of regulation, or self-control over one's own cognitive processes such as memory and though; discovering language via play is an essential part of this transition. Summarizing the role of play in child development, Vygotsky concludes that play is the leading source of development in preschool years and it is follow by the Zone of proximal development: as it is explained in his article: interactions and development by Vygotsky (1978)

> It is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined by problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (P. 33)

Thus, Vygotsky's ideas of play creating the ZPD of a child and play being the leading activity for children of preschool and kindergarten age laid the foundations for the theories of play developed by his students and generations of post-Vygotskyan scholars. All share the emphasis on play not as a reflection of past experiences but as an activity essential for the

development of a future child. From the point of view of development, creating an imaginary situation can be regarded as a means of developing abstract thought. The corresponding development of rules leads to actions on the basis of which the division between work and place becomes possible, a division encountered at school age as a fundamental fact. As Elkind stated in the 1980s "Our traditional conception of play was that of free, spontaneous, and self-initiated activity that reflected the abundant energy of healthy child development. Today, however; that conception of play has been relegated to the early childhood years. For school aged children, play is now identified with learning and with the preparation for adult life" (Elkind, unpublished cited in Lego Learning institute 2002, p. 6)

More recently, Thomas and Hocking (2003 cited in Lester and Russell 2010) argued that the replacement of self-directed play with organized leisure activities undermines the very nature of play because it reduces the control children exercise over their free time. Lester and Russell (2010) discussed that, under such strict time schedules when setting time aside for play is not always possible, one solution is to be more playful in the time families to spend together; incorporating this into their routine and lifestyle.

Base on the above, the following review will take into consideration three different perspectives seen through some theorist, whose contributions allow me to understand the implications of meaningful spaces for children to play, the role of play within a particular moment, play regardless of the positive outcomes that should be recognized and discussed in this section. Besides, it is widely acknowledged that, not only is play a fundamental children's

right but it is also central to childhood, offering children choice, autonomy and control, and frequent enjoyable experiences they want to repeat and develop. In the final part of the document we will see that there are many different types of play and children can be involved in more than one type at any time, likewise it will be discussed topics as time, materials and spaces when talking about play.

To sum up, it is important to see that child development theories have greatly impacted and influence how early childhood educators define the importance of play. Early childhood educators that have a greater understanding of the power of play as a learning framework still face some difficulties if administrators and parents do not have the same understanding. This may have negatives outcomes if teachers and parents philosophically differ on what is best for children. (Elkind, 2008). Teachers in preschool and early child programs may feel they need to remove play from their curriculum to satisfy parental expectations. According to L. Katz:

> In a developmental approach to curriculum design decisions about what should be learned and how it would best be learned depend on what we know of the learner's developmental status and our understanding of the relationship between early experience and subsequent development (NAEYC, 1996, p.11).

Research has been done to help us better understand how learning takes place in early childhood in regards to the field of play.

THEORIES ABOUT PLAY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early theorists, as well as those of the present day, have shown different stages in the act of play, theories of play were first developed during the 18th and 19th centuries: the following discussion of a few modern psychological theories and theorist describes the current trends put into play in today's educational settings. Moyles (2010) argues that it is the internal, affective quality of play that is important in development: enthusiasm, motivation and willingness to engage. She also argues that play provides a safe and motivating environment which enables children to explore, develop news skills and gain mastery in their development. In Moyles's words, how practitioners perceive themselves as 'playful' or otherwise in handling children's play experiences and in being playful pedagogues ,distinguishes between the internal, affective quality which she calls play and the outward manifestation of that internal quality which she calls play behaviors. However, this lacks clarity and a more useful distinction is to differentiate between play and playfulness.

Play as intellectual development

Piaget (1983) is most noted for introducing the stages of child development. These stages directly relate to play, as he stated that intellectual growth occurs as children go through the stages of assimilation, or manipulating the outside world to meets one's own needs, play acting as a tool to grow into a working world. This childhood activity of play, prepares them to become healthy working adults.

The role of play in children development has been illustrated in various models and theories. For instance, Jean Piaget's models on child development and learning are based on

the perception that when a child grows, he develops cognition structures and mental images or linked concepts to understand and respond to physical condition in the environment. This is developed through play activities, thus according to Piaget, a child's structure in cognition develops from innate reflexes to complex mental activities. Piaget identifies four developmental stages which include sensory motor where the child at birth to two years builds concepts about how reality works with the surrounding environment. At this stage, a child doesn't have object permanence (knowledge that physical objects exist when not sighted) in the pre-occupational stage the child does not conceptualize abstractly and needs physical experiences by logical structures and can also engage in abstract problem solving.

On the basis of the above stages therefore, Piaget developed the cognitive theory of play which outlines the cognitive principles of how cognition can be built in children. According to this theory, repetition of experiences through play needs assimilation in the child´s structures of cognition, thus the child sustains a mental equilibrium. So according to Jean Piaget, play creates an atmosphere which is relaxed where learning can take place easily, when allowed to pursue areas of their own interest, children are likely to develop a positive attitude towards learning. Piaget additional suggests that when children play with objects, they develop symbolic abstract thoughts and they construct their knowledge through social group interaction which is internalized into though. Play develops social skills in children; Piaget's theoretical cognitive framework originally came from the observations he made of his own children playing and learning. He though in terms of an individual's learning by building concepts in memory to keep information. Piaget (1983) reasoned that children develop schema that can be changed when confronted with new experiences and from

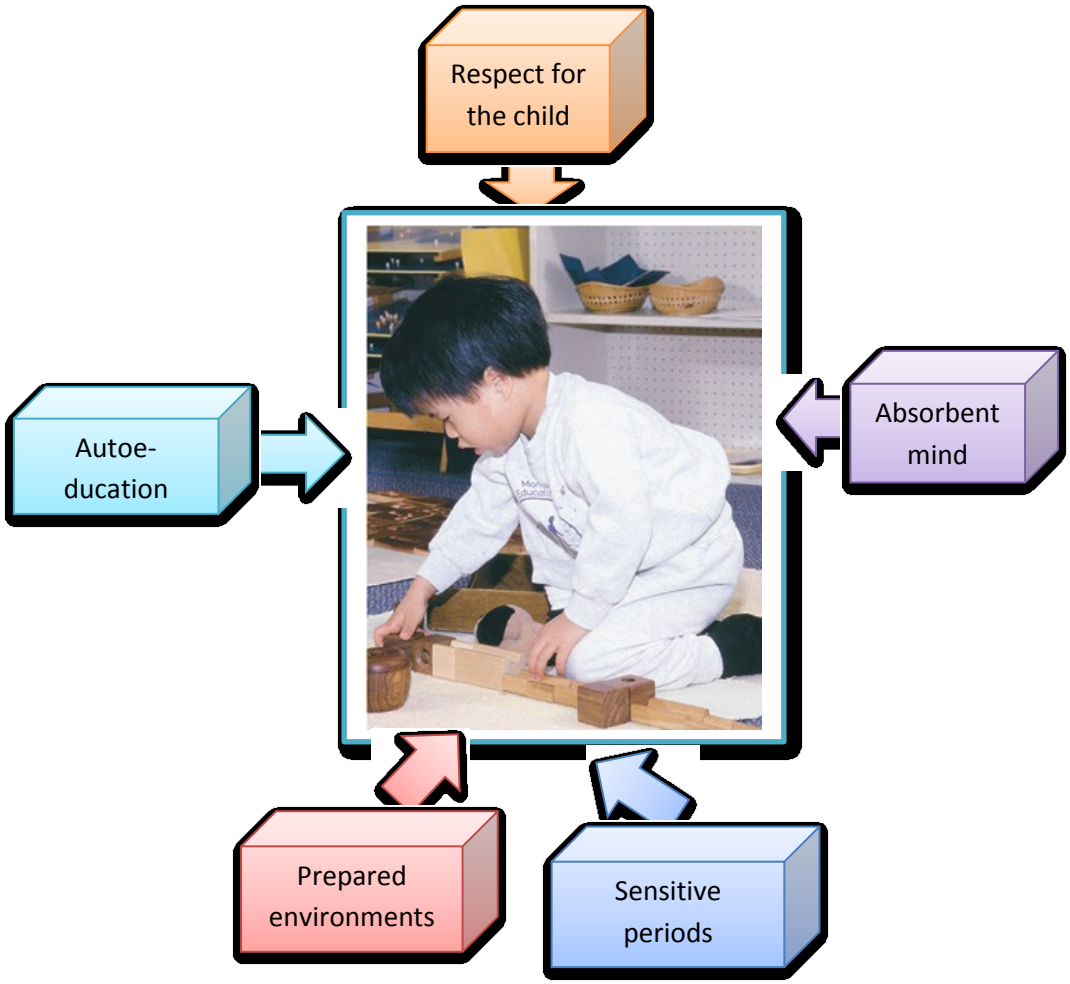
knowledge, schema is what Piaget theorized happened in the brain when humans formed knowledge.

The stages Piaget proposed are about how children learn at different ages based on what is developmentally appropriate for them. From this point of many theorists stated that teachers should observe the children they work with and understand what level of difficulty they are working within, and build upon their strengths.

Play as Sensory Learning

As it was quoted by Maria Montessori during the early 1990s, play is the work of the child, According to the Montessori's method, which is still employed today in private schools, children would be best served spending their play time learning or imagining. Montessori play is sensory, using a hands-on approach to everyday tools like sand tables. The child sets her own pace, and the teacher is collaborative in helping the child play to learn. The Montessori approach is designed to support the natural development of children in a well-prepared environment. Five basic principles fairly and accurately represent how Montessori educators implement the Montessori's method in many kinds of programs across the educational field.

[1]Figure 1. illustrates these five basic principles of the Montessori method- *A system of early childhood education founded on the ideas and practices of Maria Montessori*. George S. Morrison



The Montessori Method into play

Respect for the child

Respect for the child is the cornerstone on which all other Montessori principles rest.

As Montessori said:

[1] Figure 1- Taken from: Early childhood education today , George S. Morrison University of North Texas

> "As a rule, however, we do not respect children. We try to force them to follow us without regard to their needs. We are overbearing with them, and above all, rude; and then we expect them to be submissive and well-behaved, knowing all the time how strong is their instinct of imitation and how touching their faith in and admiration of us. They will imitate us in any case. Let us treat them, therefore, with all the kindness which we would wish to help to develop in them."

Teachers show respect for children when they help them do things and learn from themselves. When children have choices, they are able to develop the skills and abilities necessary for effective learning autonomy, and positive self-esteem.

The absorbent mind

Montessori believed that children educate themselves: "it may be said that we acquire knowledge by using our minds; but the child absorbs knowledge directly into his psychic life. Simply by continuing to live, the child learns to speak his native tongue." This is the concept of the absorbent mind. Montessori wanted us to understand that children can't help learning. Simply by living, children learn from their environment. Children are born to learn, and they are remarkable learning systems. Children learn because they are thinking beings. But what they learn depends greatly on their teachers, experiences, and environments.

Sensitive periods

Montessori believed there are sensitive periods when children are more susceptible to certain behaviors and can learn specific skills more easily, she stated:

"A sensitive period refers to a special sensibility which a creature acquires in its infantile stage, while it is still in a process of evolution. It is a transient disposition and limited to the acquisition of a particular trait. Once this trait or characteristic has been acquired, the special sensibility disappears…"

Although all children experience the same sensitive periods, the sequence and timing vary for each child. One role of the teacher is to use observation to detect times of sensitivity and provide the setting for optimum fulfillment.

The Prepared Environment

Montessori stated that children learn best in a prepared environment, a place in which children can do things for themselves. The prepared environment makes learning materials and experiences available to children in an orderly format. Classrooms Montessori described are really what educators advocate when they talked about child-center education and active learning. Freedom is the essential characteristic of the prepared environment. Since children within the environment are free to explore materials of their own choosing, they absorb what they find there.

Auto education

Montessori named the concept that children are capable of educating themselves also known as (self-education). Children who are actively involved in a prepared environment and who exercise freedom of choice literally educate themselves, Montessori teaches prepare classrooms so that children educate themselves.

Play as Social Development

Vygotsky (1978) suggested that children will use play as a means to grow socially. In play, they encounter others and learn to interact using language and role play. Vygotsky is most noted for introducing the ZPD, or zone of proximal development. This suggest that while children need their peers or playmates to grow, they need adult interaction as they master each social skill and are ready to be introduce to new learning for growth.

Vygotsky was also interested in the role of social interaction on cognitive development and argued that development first take place socially. That is, children observe parental behavior, listen to parent's speech and then try to imitate them. As children practice through imitation, parents will guide children, correct them, and provide challenge. Through play, children take on different roles and try out different language uses, all of which help them on the journey from being externally regulated to internally regulate in cognition.

Through play, children become more competent in their language use and begin to regulate their own though process. Vygotsky (1978) proposed that a child's performance differs between instances in which he tries to solve a problem alone and when another child or adult assist the child. He refers to this difference as the "zone of proximal development". If a child is learning to complete a task, such as building a bridge with blocks, and a more competent person provides an assistant, the child is able to move into a new zone of development and problem solving. Vygotsky refers to this process of assisting as "scaffolding", which helps bridge the different between a child's current level of problem-

solving and his potential for more complex problem solving. In this way Vygotsky described play as a leading activity and believed that play allows children opportunities to use language and to learn through role playing. For example, when a child is trying to put together a puzzle and is getting frustrated with the pieces not fitting together, the person with whom the child is working with is could show a strategy to remember when completing puzzles. Therefore, the next time this child attempts to complete a puzzle, she can apply her new found knowledge. Smith and Dziurgot (2001) state that adults modify their involvement in play to meet the needs of the child in specific situations during certain time frames in her development as indicated: A situation in which adults can most effectively enhance play, from this perspective is when children are in Vygotsky'zone of proximal development- a time when children can play independent with just a little indirect guidance from an adult; a question, a hint, or subtle prompt.

Table 1: *Vygotsky's four different stages of conceptual development, adapted from Nixon and Aldwinckle (*2003, p. 6)

Stage	**Characteristics**
1. Thinking in unordered heaps	▪ Preschool stage development ▪ Beginnings of conceptual though ▪ Children use trial and error ▪ Children use problem-solving techniques ▪ Three sub-phases
2. Thinking in complex stage	▪ Children begin to make connections between objects, but not in a consistent manner ▪ Five sub-phases
3. Thinking in concepts stage	▪ Children are able to think in more abstracts concepts and make associations ▪ Cannot see two associations simultaneously
4. Thinking true concepts stage	▪ Mature thinking ▪ Children can manipulate a number of abstract concepts

TYPES OF PLAY

Giving the general lens when defining play, there are been numerous attempts to categorize different types of play. As Moyle's (2010) has demonstrated, for each aspect of children's development, there is a form of play. These categories are generally viewed as age-related, with functional play appearing first in infancy and game with rules appearing last. Piaget, along with socio-emotional theorist such as Erikson, believed that children could see play to act out unpleasant experiences, while Vygotsky saw play as much more significant than Piaget. Play promotes both mental and social abilities in the child, and Piaget, Vygotsky and other theorist have all made contributions in this area. Play comes in many forms and children participate in many forms of play depending upon their situation and individual needs. The educational reformers Jean Piaget (1983) and Lev Vygotsky (1978) on their works regarding play established many aspects important to bring up in this paper. This section will review their work and then report on modern perceptions and practical implications brought up by some others educational theorists.

Different types of play take place within a rich environment that includes associative play: playing with others and sharing materials in unorganized way. Cooperative play: playing with others and sharing materials in a shared manner. Solitary play: playing along and manipulating materials to one's own benefit, and parallel play: playing alongside another child, but not with the child. The following is a well-documented review of theorist whose contributions in the field of play in education shaped the constructs of this study.

Mildred Parten

Parten (1932) focused on social play and its development, the ability to join groups of other children, and the desire to do so, begins at an early age and progresses through a developmental sequence. Parten focused on the different types of social play. In her research; she discovered that children of different ages played together differently. They were capable of different levels or categories of social play. Her categories of social play are still a useful tool to help focus us on how social play changes and develops at different stages of our lives. Play for young children assumes many different forms, Mildred Parten (1932) was one of the early researchers studying children at play. As she focused on the social interaction between children, Partern's categories of play are not hierarchical; however participation in the more social types of groups occurs more frequently among the older children.

Unoccupied play

Generally the very young infant will engage in this type of play. They tend to be looking at their hands or other body parts or cooing to themselves. They do not seek contact with others or appear to have a purpose

Solitary Play

The child plays alone. Usually seen during infancy, infants tend to play by themselves totally unaware of others around them. They will move quite quickly from one activity to another.

Babies usually like to spend much of their time playing on their own. They are exploring all aspects of their environment from the sound of their own voice and the feel of their own body parts. They want to gaze upon, grab, suck and rattle any object that comes their way. Older children at times will also prefer to play on their own, they may spend hours making up histories, build, draw, paint, invent and explore by themselves.

Onlooker Play[2]

This can occur across many stages of development. Evidence of onlooker play is seen when children are near a group of other children and are often following the actions or copying what is happening in the play. The children, however, do not usually want to participate or are waiting for someone to aid the participation. The child also watches others playing without joining in. playing passively by watching or conversing with others children engage in play activities.

Parallel Play

This is usually seen during toddlerhood. During parallel play toddlers will play alongside each other and with similar materials but don't interact with each other. The child plays side by side with another child, often with similar materials, but without interacting. Children playing even in the middle of a group, while remaining engrossed in one's own activity. Also, take into account that parallel play involves children, using each other's toys but always maintaining their independence. Despite having little social contact with his playmate children at this type of play actually learn quite a bit from one another like taking turns and other social aspects. This type of play is viewed as an important bridge to the later stages of play.

[2] This type of game was not included into the book, I did not find among the repertory of games one of the kind. However I consider it relevant to be part of my literature review.

Associative Play

This is first seen usually in the early preschool years. Children will begin to play and talk with each other in dramatic play situations where roles may be taken on. However, these roles are usually not sustained for any length of time. There does not seem to be a common purpose to the play. Children begin to play together, developing interactions through doing the same activities or playing with similar equipment or by imitating. Associative play also features children playing separately from one another, but in this mode of play they are involved with what the others are doing. This is an important stage of play because it helps little ones develop a whole host of skills: socialization, problem solving, cooperation and language development. Through associative play is how children begin to make real friendship. (Mildred Parten, 1932)

Cooperative play

Cooperative play occurs in the later preschool years. Children are able to take on roles and sustain them for the duration of the play. The groups of children have agreed upon goals and roles for the play. Children interact, take turns, share and decide how and what to play. They collaborate, develop, and negotiate ideas for their play. Where all the stages come together and children truly start playing together, cooperative play brings together all the social skills children have been working on and puts them into action. Whether they are building a puzzle together, playing a board game or an outdoor game with a group, cooperative play really sets the stage for future interactions as children matures into an adult.

Jean Piaget and Sara Smilansky

Both Piaget (1962) and Sara Smilansky (1998) developed categories of play, as follows:

Sensory motor play: Here an infant up to two years of age will use various senses and motor skills to explore objects and their environment.

Symbolic play: in this type of play, symbols are much more evident. Children can pretend that one object is another; this type of play is usually seen during Piaget's preoperational stage. This type of play supports their developing technical abilities to express and reflect upon their experiences, ideas and emotions.

Games with rules**:** in this stage, children are able to follow rules of games, changing their understanding of the purpose of the rules as they get older. Young children are strongly motivated to make sense of their world and, as part of this; they are very interested in rules. As a consequence, from a very young age, they enjoy games with rules, and frequently invent their own. As well as helping children to develop their understanding about rules, the main developmental contribution of playing games derives from their essentially social nature. While playing games with their friends, sibling and parents, young children are learning a range of social skills related to sharing, taking turns, understanding others' perspectives and so on.

Sara Smilansky

Smilansky (1998) developed three stages of play. She based her work on Piaget's studies, but expanded to include:

Functional Play: This occurs in the first two years of life. Infants explore objects using their body, and progress to other physical activities such as throwing.

*Constructive Play***:** This occurs when children begin to manipulate materials to create objects and patterns. They may not be representational at first but are the child's attempts at working with the materials to produce an effect.

Dramatic play: here children imitate the world around them through their role play. This leads to cooperative dramatic play around agreed upon themes. Jerome Singer highlights the importance of children's imagination and curiosity developed through dramatic and socio dramatic play:

Kenneth H. Rubin

Kenneth H Rubin (2001) and his associates have been working since the mid-1970s studying the development of children's social, dramatic and cognitive play. Their studies have been successful in combining both the Parten and Smilansky categories in observing the relationships between social and cognitive play. The results of Rubin's and his associate's studies have done much to clarify the developmental levels of children's play in light of our knowledge about children. They also have identified how children play and how it correlates with Parton's Stages of social play.

Table 2: *Rubin's Stages of dramatic and imaginative play; A basic introduction to child development theories.*[3] *(p. 13)*

	Solitary Play	**Parallel Play**	**Group Play**
Functional Play	Child plays by self with or without objects.	Child plays parallel to others with or without objects.	Child plays with a group with or without objects.
Constructive Play	Child plays by self constructing or creating something.	Child plays parallel to others constructing or creating something.	Child plays with a group constructing or creating something,
Dramatic Play	Child plays by self in pretending-type activity.	Child plays parallel to others in pretending-type activity.	Child plays with a group in pretending-type activity.

This table would allow us to compare the different type of play that theorist have developed in order to show the various factors that influence into the play activity.

In order to conclude this chapter in regards to types of play; if we as educators get to identify the different type of children learning, for sure we will be able to better shape our practice as educators and its pedagogy implications. Processes of learning, children's age groups fun activities; children's development and creativity were the general themes when categorizing the types of play, despite the nearly belief that play is vital to children's development, health and well-being, there are some aspects that must be analyzed when it comes to children's play exercise, aspects such materials and environment will be analyzed in the next session of the paper.

[3] Table 2, taken from: A basic introduction to child development theories, Centre for Learning Innovation State of New South Wales, Department of Education and Training, 2006

SPACES & MATERIALS WHEN PLAYING

The previous sections have provided evidence that play is a vital part of children's development and is fundamental for every child. We have also examined how accompanied children being a helper and a provider of spaces to play is a great benefit. Any analysis of the distinctive features of play inevitable bring to the point the role teachers play in early childhood learning, and of course when it comes of playing with the kids. Teachers act as facilitator in play, they do this in many ways that include ensuring that there is a proper environment for children to participate in while playing; by providing a safe environment with appropriate materials that will be of interest to the children; and providing safety rules that are understood by all children. Teachers should closely observe children as they are playing.

This will help teachers to better understand the children they teach, as well as present itself as an opportunity to help with appropriate social interactions and behaviors. In my daily practice as teacher I can observe the fact that children's play should be consider in all aspects of activity by providing spaces and the teacher should not be there to do the work for the children, but to serve as a guide to help support them as new learning occurs.

One activity that takes in school where there is much social interaction is play. Vygotsky (1978) described play as the imaginary and dreamlike wants of children through invented situations that were governed by rules. Rules are considered an important part of

play because they help children to learn the conventions of social interactions and to develop self-regulation (Vygotsky, 1978)). The rules that a child may use to govern herself during play could be unique to the play, but could also apply to the child's real life experiences.

Piaget and Vygotsky use play as an important baseline in children's development. Both Piaget and Vygotsky use play as an important baseline in children's development, they believed that children are active learners. They promote methods of teaching that were inquiry based where children used their previous knowledge to build upon new Knowledge.

Research carried out by Armitage (2004 cited in Lester and Russell 2010) found that while school days were getting longer, break times, including lunch time, had been significantly shortened. His research shows that children valued break times during school because it offers a level of freedom from the rules and regulations of the rest of the school day. Confirming previous research, he argue that more resources should be allocated to children's free play, he suggested that changing the arrangements of break times, including altering the length of the breaks, should take children's high regard this time into account. In regards to materials, while children play anywhere and with almost anything, there are resources we can provide that can facilitate and encourage play.

These does not need to be expensive, in fact some of the most effective resources for play are loose parts the term loose parts was coined by the architect Simon Nicholson in the who proposed that the more adaptable materials an environment contained the more creative and inventive children would be.

As an example Nicholson suggests a beach where sand, water, rocks can all be moved and adapted in multiple different ways and so encourage children to play. Loose parts can be anything that can be moved, changed, taken apart, used in different ways, and with no specific instructions. Playing in a space rich with materials supports a wide range of development including flexibility, creativity, imagination, resourcefulness, problem solving, self-esteem and spatial awareness. I would like to close this review of play by saying that playful learning is structured in some ways, teachers guide the play activity within structures of particular focus on the goals they have in mind.

Creating secure, safe and challenging environments that promote play interactions and learning is fundamental for achieving and maintaining quality early childhood education programs. In planning play environments and materials for children to play educator need to consider many aspects to bear in mind, and now taking the words as Montessori brought it in one her quotes saying that play is an activity in which means are more valued than ends, referring to all those aspects in which we can influence the process of a child at play rather than the result. Finally I would like to address the following stamen seen in the Montessori Method: “a child’s education should grow out of and coincide with the child’s own stages of development”. Montessori (1912, p. 49)

CREATION PROCESS

"Play is the highest form of Research"
Albert Einstein

Phase I

¡Knowing the Why & the What for!

Get started!

In this starting phase of the creation of the book was necessary to identify the purpose of creating a book which recompiles of the games I have learned and implement during my pedagogical practice in the workplace I belong. As I pre-service teacher I intend to use my new found knowledge of play to better understand how young children learn through play and to implement child play strategies across the curriculum. I approached this review that is explained above, from the perspectives of theorists in the study of Psychology and education. I chose these areas because Piaget and Vygotsky were educationalist whose contributions help me to shape better the ideas of my book.

When starting to shape the focus of my book these stamens were taking into consideration:

- Make theory and practice connections to support the design of the book
- Become aware of connections, similarities and different between children.
- To change into an expeditionary practice my job in the cruise ship, where I adapted all the games and activities presented in the book.
- Engage in interactions with children that promote ideas for the book.

- Explore the culture, heritage, backgrounds and traditions of each child within the context of their community.
- Become familiar with the theoretical support behind each one of the games
- Explore designing ideas to set a book suitable for everybody

I named this first phase of creation*, why and what for*; because it is important to note that before thinking of the idea about writing down the games I have played in my workplace, there was a main goal underlying the creation of the book itself. That is the connection between theory and practice. I am an English teacher who works in a different setting. I needed to take advantage of this experience to perform a distinguishable role among my coworkers who are not teachers.

As a teacher practitioner, I have seen many aspects of the educational field within the teacher and student relationship, by focusing not only what is being learned, but on how it is being learned, however I believe that it is my responsibility to organize and create an environment rich in experiences that provide children with opportunities to grow, and with the result of learning while having fun.

Phase II
Writing down the games

As I have highlighted previously, there are many forms of play and with this, different age groups, the games that I wrote in my book are games that I got to discover when I first started to work in the cruise ship. Most of the games spelled out in this book are games made up by me and the whole team of my workplace. Some few games already exist, however, I adapted and create a different version of the original game, adding or subtracting something from the original version.

As I have addressed in the previous chapter I work with 3 different age groups, which means that the games and activities are called to be different because of the moment children are living, regarding physical, emotional and physiological development. To plan ahead the book, I had to read several authors who explain the benefits of games and playing for children development. My concern was to create a book that integrates English as the code for communicating instructions, rules and to have fun with them.

Once I had collected the games; I started to organize them based on the principles quoted here: age, type and benefit Montessori (1912), Jean Piaget (1983). While I was reading theory, I was confronting struggles to organize the book, but with the help of the graphic designer and the guidance of my tutor, I was able to construct a concept to design it. This concept could be summarized as follows: It is time to play.

Principle 1: Age and games

3-5's Games.

For this group of children I wrote games based on dramatic or fantasy play, 'Singer describes the ability to engage in make-believe play as essential to children's developing ability for internal imagery, stimulating curiosity, and experimenting with alternative responses to different situations. This capacity, practiced in play settings, enhances children's ability to engage successfully in new situations. (Singer, Jerome 2005)

That is why games as don't wake up the tiger is a perfect example of this type of games, where imagination is around, in this game, kids believe the teacher as the tiger and they construct all the story around. Here's an example of these games.

Game: Don't wake up the tiger
Players: 20
Materials: No

Fantasy play

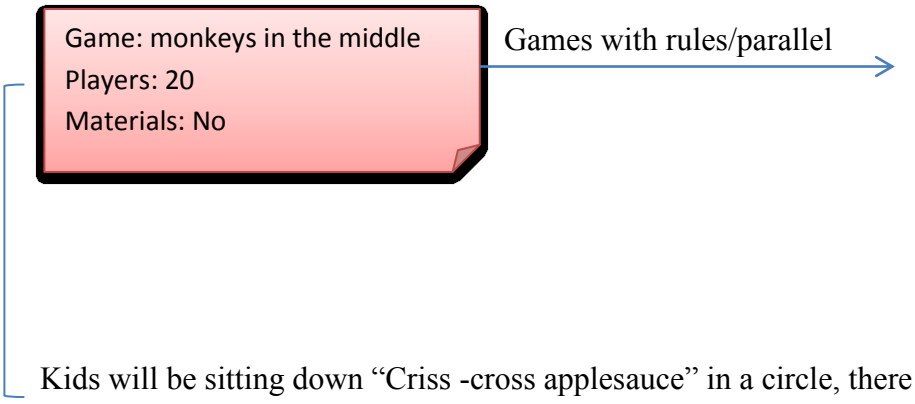
The counselor will be dressing like a tiger and the kids will be sitting by the wall, they will have a mission, the big mission is to get the treasure back, kids will come one at a time trying to steal the treasure under the tigers' hand, the teacher will be the tiger. Kids have to sneaky up because if the tiger wakes up, kids will be sitting around the tigers' fort.

Writing the games for this age group, was a funny and pleasurable staff, I chose the ten more work out best games that I use in our daily activities at work. These games are within the program we developed and bearing in mind the different learning styles looking forward getting all children involved. In this first chapter of games I wrote games that involve physical activity such as the cockroach, freeze and frogies race. The other games are games that involve

cooperative play (Parten, 1932) and games with music that stimulates children development and enhance children energy.

6-9's Games.

When writing the games for this age group, I seek to put into practice all the changes children are going through at this age group, children from 6 to 9 years old are beginning to reinforce what is going to be their learning style, as well as the many other skills that are being developed at this stage. I selected the 10 best games that I have on program and I wrote them base on children's interest and children skills. These games are competitive; some of them are games with rules, these games are established to be played with a large amount of kids involved in the game.



Kids will be sitting down "Criss -cross applesauce" in a circle, there will be one ball, and one kid will be the **monkey in the middle** of the circle, the idea is to get the monkey out, so kids will start hitting the ball to the middle trying to get that kid out, if someone hit the monkey, then, they have to switch roles, so that he will now become the monkey.

Rules: Nobody can dive for the ball
The ball cannot be lift up, just roll it on the ground

These games also included well planned skills that help children to develop strategies to accomplish goals. Since these age group children are starting to developed certain skills and gaining a sense of responsibility, games with rules are addressed in order to enhance children to organize and plan their own game, understanding the concept of cooperation, as well as the rules for social interaction, those are some of the purpose of the games I implement in my workplace and the rules are the essence of the game, when talking about these age group. Writing down this games let me understand better, the types of children's learning.

Principle 2. Benefits

Fisher (1997) (as cited by Goldstein, 2012) analyzed studies of the cognitive benefits of play; he found that sociodramatic play results in improved performances in both cognitive-linguistic and social affective domains. Fisher (1997) found that kids have better language skills after the activity of playing. Both, receptive language (what a child understands) and expressive language (the words he speaks), remained significant, even after controlling for the age of the child.

This means that playing contributes to language development, in all sense; games can help deliver this benefits in the most entertaining way. Therefore as children delight in playing a game, they can enjoy themselves while unconsciously acquiring an array of language skills. The use of games can be a fantastic learning tool to advance in any language, in this approach children are winning in the game by learning more of the target language.

10-12's Games

The games embodied in this age group are mainly cooperative play in which children are engage as a group, their participation involves the division of efforts among children in order to reach a common goal, in order to write these games I needed to understand rule-based (Sara Smilansky, play while emphasizing the important role that the player has, and determining the nature and rules of that play. Here's an example of one of the games for this age group. I choose the ten best games that we use in my workplace, one of these games already exist, however were adapted into a different version:

Game: who I am?
Players: no matter
Materials: character's pictures

In this game players place a post it note with a famous person or thing on someone head without looking at the answer. That players ask the group questions about his/her assigned figure in hopes of deducting who or what it might be, finally if he/she guesses the answer correctly, wins and another one is going to replace him. What we adapted from this game is the rules, since this may be a game for teenagers, and sometimes young children may not guess, even for a long period of time, we added clues round, that is children will help the player by giving him 3 clues, if that kid does not guess will lose the game and will have to sit, another kid will come to play.

So, in writing down these games I include games that involve Physical activity, as well as quiet games in which children will cool down from an active game and finally games that involve attention and logic thinking.

Phase III
Designing the Drawings

In creating the drawings for my book I counted with the meaningful help of Ingri Paola Pacheco Martinez, an Arts student from Universidad Distrital Francisco Jose de Caldas, coursing 10th semester; this girl is a designer and an excellent drawer, she drew all the pictures embodied in my book, these drawings are freehand drawings, using a technique that is called watercolor, the material is called watercolor paper and the special pen's name is estilografo. Here's a sample page from the cover.

The cover



Drawings samples[4]



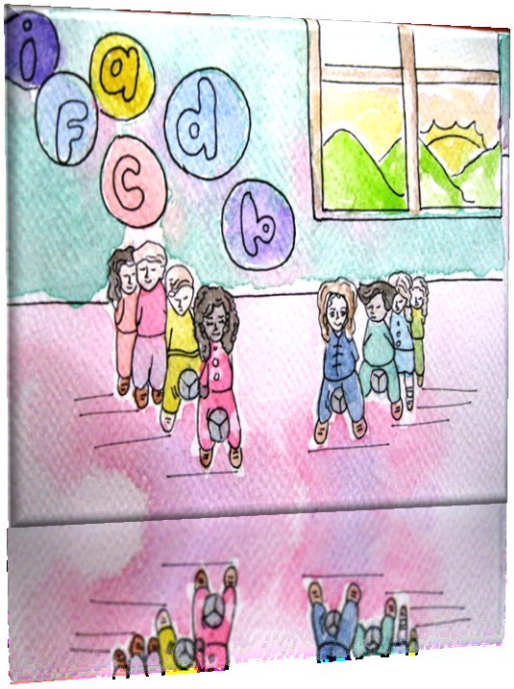






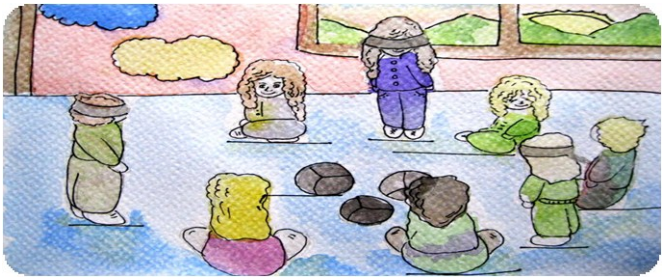
[4] These drawings are originally made by: Ingri Pacheco.

The technique that Ingri used is well known as flat wash watercolor, it is produced by first; wetting the area of paper to be covered by the wash, then mixing sufficient pigment to easily fill the entire area. The pigment is applied to a sloping surface slightly overlapping horizontal bands from the top down.





Once complete the wash, should be left to dry and even itself out. This technique requires the pigment to be diluted slightly with more water for each horizontal stroke. The result is a wash that fades out gradually bringing the color.



Phase IV

Revision &digital edition

I return to the whole book, and I started to revise each chapter reading every single line and making the necessary changes, I had to clarify some information, moved chapters around for sake of narrative flow. This could have included correction of grammatical mistakes, misspelling, and incorrect punctuation, besides it took me a while to change some of the games that better fit for the purpose of my book. I had to make some more changes based on the feedback of some teachers, whose contributions were really meaningful. Regarding the digital part of the book, I counted with the great help of the designer Brian Sanchez; he incorporated the image and design of the book, typography of the chapters and diagrams needed to be bound together to create the ultimate phase of the book. The layout was made based on the chapters of the book and it constitutes the element of the printed book.

Traditional techniques were used to get the physical book, based on that, the type of paper used for printing is called opalina paper, suitable for full color books and magazines printing, also the book size represent the length and shape of the chapters that were put together. Finally, scanning was an important part in transferring the physical document into a digital image that needed to be visualized in order to print the book, this is done using the same technology a copier uses by taking an intense snapshot of the document, where it can be used for a variety of things, the final process was to print the book, that was based on the diagram. Printing was the achievement dynamic result featuring significant elements that I wanted to highlight in my book. It's time to play.

IMPLICATIONS IN EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE CONTEXT

"It is the child who makes the man,
and no man exists
*who was not made by the child he once was" Maria Montessori_*

Play and the workplace

What currently drives my professional activities is working on a cruise ship, entertaining the children that are onboard. Playing games and entertaining kids have occupied my time during the past two years; one happy result of my interest in this pleasurable work field is to come out with memorable activities and games that lead me to create a games book. Taking into consideration the Mission of LEBEI that I following going to quote:

> "La misión del Proyecto Curricular de Licenciatura en Educación Básica con énfasis en Inglés es buscar la cualificación integral de los docentes de Inglés de la educación básica que contribuya al mejoramiento de la calidad de la educación de los niños y jóvenes tanto del Distrito Capital como del país en general".

For educators, being aware of all the factors that are involved in successfully play activities and knowing students benefits when playing, it will greatly benefit the children's individual literacy gains. We as educators must implement the best practice of play into curriculum and daily lesson plans, not only to encourage children to explore the world around them, but also to build bases that will serve students throughout their lives.

Based on the above, I would like to bring the ideas presented by Maria Montessori when it comes to play in early childhood education when she explained that the activities engage in by

children both stimulate and influence the development of fine and gross motor skills, she also refer to language uses and communication.

If we as teachers get to dimension the implications that play has on children's life, for sure we will raise children connected to family, community, culture and place, particularly within families , who are children's first and more influential educators. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.

As I cited in the previous chapter, play may even be the cornerstone of society because it requires communication and cooperation among people playing different roles and following agreed-upon rules. My project has focused on how our leisure activities can be put to good use in education and workplace to improve the quality of life for children. Yet it is through play that infants, toddlers, and young children develop and demonstrate their understanding of the world, an understanding of the interrelationships among people, objects and events, various dimensions of play to children's language and literacy development. The evidence confirm that allowing children opportunities to play can benefit their physical and mental health, well-being and social and emotional development.

By creating this book, I can contribute to my teacher's colleagues and educators in general to integrate play in their everyday classroom and to enrich their curriculum with this benefit educational activity. I have to say a personal appreciation and also something I have seen and experience in my house and workplace, and is that unfortunately, the play experience for today's child is often quite different; with the ever expanding influence of electronic media including

TV, videos, video games and the internet, children are spending much of their time being passively entertained by or minimally interacting by way of a keyboard or control pad with an electronic device, even today's toys are more often structured by onboard computers that dictate the play experience. This robs children of unstructured play with other kids as well as individual playtime spent in creativity play, I think that educators and parents need to understand the play needs of children and provide an environment to meet those needs.

We as teacher do not see very often the big favor we are doing to children while encouraging play, play involves a great deal imagination, perhaps a teacher who supports play is thereby also encouraging creativity and exploration and influence in the child's life. Along the time I have worked on schools I have seen how play is sometimes seen as the opposite of teacher-directed and organized activities that is why the purpose of my book is to make teachers aware of the necessity of think about classes that estimate play as an important time if we want to get better children outcomes.

Teachers should begin by providing opportunities for children to have spontaneous play experiences, within this in mind, the classroom design must also be conductive to play, based on the above I consider an important implication the relationship between play and the workplace, since the benefits of play are maximized when teachers facilitate play, viewing the teachers 'role as the one who assess with problem solving, questioning, redirecting undesired behaviors, and enticing children into play themes.

Play and language

The implications brought up by play when it comes to language development are established in different ways, by doing my games book, I could identify in my workplace how language is constructed through play activities. Children learn a lot of skills while playing. They are helping to lay the foundations of their speech language and communication. As I cited in previous chapters, when children play with other children, they learn how to get along with others, to problem solve, and how to communicate and use language effectively.

I find pertinent to cite a game that is illustrate in my book, to identify how language serves as vehicle of communication. In this game we observe that each participant need a guide to get the ball that is in the middle, since the participants are blindfolded, the guiders' job is to direct the kid to the ball and avoid being hit, so the guider would say go right, left, get down, grab the ball etc.

Language development is how children construct and utilize oral sounds and words to form meaning. That is the example of this game that better fit the constructs that I talked about in this paper; daily activities for children should require the use of language to construct meaning, comprehension and retention. Communication, forms and functions, purposeful verbal interactions and playing with language are consider to be how language develops in children.

These theoretical implications and meaning-making surrounding play are but a few of the perspectives and practical applications of play at school.

Social interactions are prevalent in play when language is the primary vehicle of communication and understanding, children participating in play episodes will engage in their environment , discovering their interest that are important for later social experiences.

Because of its significance in development, play may provide a foundation of fairness and cooperation that is advantageous to communal living. This is what happens during social play, in the sense of how do players negotiate agreements to cooperate, to discuss rules, to behave fairy, and to develop trust. General speaking play would serve the child to extend and enhance learning process.

When I came to identify the great benefits that play brings to language I for sure agree and believe that the link between children's confidence and motivation when playing, expand their linguistic development and move the languages uses as children develop skills to communicate. As my experience working with children has increased my curiosity about children's well-being I can say that in play children's interest determine how language is served and how language is used as a vehicle of communication and feeding language development.

Play and pedagogy

Pedagogy is a very popular and necessary term in my career, since I am becoming a teacher, but, to what point, the creation of my book of games enhance the current pedagogical methods using at school in the educational context? To respond this question, I would like to keep bringing up the work of the educationalist Maria Montessori whose contributions help me underpin this chapter in regards to showing the various advantages of caring and addressing play in today's educational context. When I first though about designing a book, I of course thought about the holistic nature of our professional practice that is the *pedagogy* key, a range of perspectives and theories can challenge traditional ways of seeing children in teaching and learning aspects, since the mission of LEBEI is the integral qualification of the English teachers, to help contribute to the improvement of the quality of education of children, pedagogy is the cornerstone for this aim, that is why my book is an example for educators who give priority to nurturing relationships and providing children with the spaces and materials needed when addressing play as an important activity in everyday classes. Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when educators work in partnership with kids, when we recognized and respond to the children's needs, we are contributing to our professional practice as well as enhancing children learning.

By developing our professional knowledge as pedagogical teachers and integrating play as a tool, to enrich children process, we will strive to find equitable and effective ways to ensure that all children have opportunities to achieve learning outcomes through play. As Montessori stated:

The children in our schools have proved to us that their real wish is to be always at work-a thing never before suspected, just as no one had ever before noticed the child's power of choosing his work spontaneously. Following an inner guide, the children busied themselves with something, which gave them serenity and joy. Dr. Maria Montessori, the Montessori method.

The implications in the educational context may seek for teachers and students to reflect upon the current practices of the ongoing learning that involves engaging in a culture of stop seeing the student as the passive receptor of knowledge and the teacher as the giver. Spaces for children to play, materials, curriculum quality among others have to be bringing as an important topic to discuss when creating the curriculum.

Pedagogy is the directly implicated when it comes to play, because once the children's play begins, facilitating social interactions as well as assisting children in joining play is a role the teacher will fit. Educators recognize and respond to barriers to children achieving educational success.

CONCLUSIONS

Through my own life experiences I have seen that play is not only important for children's physical, Psychological and well-being, but also for the wider community and society. This book of games that I wanted to design is just a window, of the importance of children having access to play spaces, and the importance for adults having positive attitudes towards children playing freely. As we saw in the previous chapter, play is a fundamental human right for all children, regardless of age, gender, culture, social class etc. this must be reflected in a range of play environments and with experiences that help improve their quality of life. However, the literature suggests that it is not enough to merely provide play opportunities for children, adult must adopt a culture of tolerance towards children playing, and children must be given the time they need to engage in free play.

I would like to conclude this paper by saying that; my role as educator makes me reflect on how giving children the time and space for play must be taken seriously, because the benefits of play are both immediate and long term, and contribute to all aspects of children's health and development. If we seek to encourage our daily professional's practices at school or wherever the learning and teaching process takes place, we should see inside first, I mean before being teachers we are humans and we have the big challenge task to help shaping students identities and life projects, by seeing inside I mean to understand that we as

teachers need to be happy on doing what we do best that is teaching, if we are, then we will transmit this feeling to our children or students, whether play is purposeful and self-directed, or free and unstructured, it is a dynamic and lifelong process. When parents and teachers engage in play activities with their children, they have an opportunity to facilitate and reinforce the growth of their skills across several areas of development and this, believe me would make a big difference, when our students grow old and we have the pleasure to see how these students make use of the tools that you gave them when they were younger, would be satisfactory to see our students giving meaning to their lives and to recognize teachers as contributors of that meaning.

Finally I would like to say that it is important to note that, we should give greater importance and emphasis in planning a good quality curriculum that will foster students' performance and learning, If we as teachers or parents get to support children's play, we will pay attention not simply to the external expressions of play, but to the conditions in which play thrives, that will tell us a lot of our children, in that way we would be able to potentiate our children skills to the maximum. There is a premise that I always carry with me in my daily practices with children and this is a quote made by Plato that says: "*No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nature and education."*

With that being said the joy and pleasure of playing, of doing thinks for the sake of children, rather than performing obligations to adults, enable children to maintain openness to the world.

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