



DIDACTIC STRATEGIES IN THE USE OF FREE TIME IN STUDENTS IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC (TEACHERS OF THE TALCA BASIC SCHOOL, MAULE REGION, CHILE)

ESTRATÉGIAS DIDÁTICAS NO USO DO TEMPO LIVRE EM ALUNOS NA PANDEMIA DE COVID-19 (PROFESSORES DA ESCOLA BÁSICA DE TALCA, REGIÃO DE MAULE, CHILE)

ESTRATEGIAS DIDÁCTICAS EN EL APROVECHAMIENTO DEL TIEMPO LIBRE EN LOS ESTUDIANTES EN PANDEMIA COVID-19 (DOCENTES DE LA ESCUELA BÁSICA TALCA, REGIÓN MAULE, CHILE)

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ABSTRACT: The analysis of the use of strategies by educators in integrating formative actions that strengthen the well-being of the student. Therefore, the study had to analyze the didactic strategies in the use of free time in students in the Covid-19 Pandemic by teachers of the Talca Basic School, Maule-Chile Region. The research was supported by a non-experimental design and the sample made up of 65 teachers from the school, to whom a questionnaire structured by fifteen (15) items with a Likert type scale was applied, the instrument was validated through expert judgment technique. The conclusions obtained the relevance of promoting strategies or activities, outside the virtual class hours, that induce students to distraction, recreation and spaces for reflection in order to strengthen self-esteem, and the emotional and psychological aspect.

KEYWORDS: Didactic strategy. Use of free time. Covid-19.

RESUMO: Trata-se da análise da utilização de estratégias por educadores para integrar ações formativas que fortaleçam o bem-estar do aluno. Para tanto, o estudo teve como objetivo analisar estratégias didáticas no uso do tempo livre em alunos na Pandemia Covid-19 por professores da Escola Básica Talca, Região Maule-Chile. A pesquisa se apoiou em um desenho experimental e uma amostra composta por 65 professores da referida escola, que aplicaram

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um questionário estruturado por quinze (15) itens com escala do tipo Likert. O instrumento foi validado pela técnica de julgamento de especialistas. As conclusões evidenciam a importância de se promover estratégias ou atividades fora do horário virtual de aula, que induzam os alunos à distração, recreação e espaços de reflexão, a fim de fortalecer a autoestima, aspectos emocionais e psicológicos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Estratégia didática. Uso do tempo livre. Covid-19.

RESUMEN: El análisis de la utilización de estrategias por los educadores en integrar acciones formadoras que fortalezcan el bienestar del estudiante. Por ello, el estudio tuvo como analizar las estrategias didácticas en el aprovechamiento del tiempo libre en los estudiantes en Pandemia Covid-19 por los docentes de la Escuela Básica Talca, Región Maule-Chile. La investigación se apoyó en un diseño no experimental y la muestra conformada por 65 docentes de la escuela antes referida, a quienes se les aplicó un cuestionario estructurado por quince (15) ítems con una escala tipo de Likert, el instrumento fue validado a través de la técnica de juicio de expertos. En las conclusiones se obtuvo la relevancia que tiene de promover estrategias o actividades, fuera del horario de las clases virtuales, que induzcan a los educandos a la distracción, recreación y espacios para la reflexión en función de fortalecer la autoestima, el aspecto emocional y psicológico.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Estrategia didáctica. Aprovechamiento del tiempo libre. Covid-19.

Introduction

The search for excellence with quality and coherence as a systematic, permanent process in the education of human beings, achieving an experience of particular importance at the level of professional research, no longer as a process leading to a degree, but as an advanced program in the enrichment and projection of a meaningful learning, to the concretion and maturation of a better academic culture, that is curriculum transformative and projective, with solid epistemological and ethical bases, where each educator can innovate mechanisms, strategies and paradigms, creating an educational climate in each classroom, with alternative programs and with options at each level or modality of study.

The use of free time pursues, among other purposes, the deepening of the way in which the boy and the girl learn, how the different affective, social and cultural dimensions interact in the environment of the institutions, at home and at school; if certain autonomy is maintained between the structures of the academic tasks, the social behavior of the students in the classroom, the relevance in the interpretation of the teaching-learning processes, to face learning based on their different intellectual capacities and communication formation of the teacher (DURANT; LEDEZMA, 2015).





From this perspective, it is plausible to be able to satisfy the cognitive and moral needs, of quality, as philosophical, social and cultural strategies of all students. On the other hand, it is possible to promote teamwork by integrating telematic networks developing learning strategies, to form people prepared in the search and selection of relevant knowledge among the innumerable possible options for its application.

Didactic strategies represent the set of instructions, activities, methods or procedures used by the teacher in order to achieve learning in the content developed during the formation of students. In other words, a planning of the actions leading to the teaching and learning process must be carried out in which the teacher fosters a set of joint decisions with the educator regarding the educational process. Likewise, the main objective is to create proactive changes in student behavior to consolidate meaningful learning in order to improve or transform their personality and integrity (GÓNZALEZ, 2017).

In this sense, it is necessary to have confidence in the students, recognizing their potentialities and their possible significant contributions for a better coexistence, proposing flexible and habitual projects in school, from the psychophysical point of view using the game, sports and recreational practices, as part of recreational activities, to build their identity, the recognition and acceptance by the members of the group, as a basic unit of interaction and the basis of the social structure.

Based on the above, the events that have been generated worldwide as a function of the Covid-19 pandemic have generated a series of transformations in the behavior and lifestyles of citizens and, to a greater extent, in educational establishments. This has brought changes in the educational system because of not being in face-to-face classes in classrooms, measures had to be taken to withdraw all members of the school to function from their homes, using remote or virtual education.

Therefore, in Chile the health emergency generated by Covid-19 has produced quite significant situations at the educational level. According to UNESCO, cited by Martínez (2020, p. 73, our translation) states that “the pandemic has affected a large percentage of students belonging to the formal educational system, who have had to be confined to their homes without having access to their premises of educational institutions to which they belong”. It means that many students are receiving classes at home using remote education.

However, in the Maule region, in the Basic School of Talca, using the digital platform Meet, non-formal interviews were carried out with teachers in which they stated that the use of virtual education has generated some difficulties in the learning of students, and one of them has been planning activities to take advantage of free time in their homes, in spaces that do not





hinder academic activities. Likewise, they stated that the students lack recreational and leisure activities as a result of the pandemic situation that is being experienced and the large amount of work, activities that promote creativity, imagination and reading in students have been put aside.

The situation described is quite worrying for teachers, which is why students need to take advantage of their free time, while they are not in virtual classes, in order to promote quality of life, mood, motivation and, therefore, recreation and to get separated from electronic devices, such as cell phones, tablets, computers, use of different social networks, among others, reaching an optimal emotional, social and psychological state that guarantees their well-being. All this will benefit the health of the students.

From here, the question is generated: What type of guidance strategies do teachers use in taking advantage of free time in students in a Covid-19 pandemic? It is intended that teaching professionals have strategies in which they integrate recreational activities, socialization and of course that frame significant learning in these times of crisis, uncertainty and overcrowding in homes. Likewise, to motivate family members to consolidate positive environments in the participation of actions that favor the integral development of their represented. Teachers from virtuality can generate spaces for reflection in which they lead their students' well-being and their mental, physical and psychological health.

Teaching strategies

The didactic strategies are represented by formation actions in the individual that seek to improve behavior in terms of personality and biopsychosocial well-being. In this regard, Barrios (2016, p. 7, our translation) states that “didactic strategies can be defined as the anticipated projection of the transformation process of the subjects who participate in the formative activity to achieve changes in the personality”. It means that they affect the behavior of the subject in order to generate changes in their behavior and attitudes in their personal education.

Hence, the didactic strategies symbolize the activities that have an intention in themselves that help the instructional process in the formation of students in order to facilitate teaching and interaction inside and outside the classroom. The teacher provides the student with learning through the set of activities that examine participation in each of the contents addressed by the teacher. They lead the student to be more collaborative and motivated to effectively carry out their instruction (CARRIZALES, 2017).





For his part, Pérez (2019, p. 74, our translation) points out that didactic strategies are “a set of activities, techniques and means that the teacher uses during the planning, organization and execution of the teaching process with the students in their charge. They are planned according to the needs of their recipients”. The strategies are given by the actions and methodologies that educators use to carry out the teaching and learning process, in a more dynamic and interactive way and, in turn, students use the resource in a consistent, critical and intentional way.

Therefore, the educator in his daily work is directly responsible for the application of techniques, methodologies or teaching strategies, as he is responsible for facilitating the development processes of educational content according to the needs and interests of students in which, through proper planning, with an effective organization, he can direct and guide activities that contribute to the learning, well-being and social-emotional development of students, applying strategies that lead to a more collaborative and participatory instruction.

The linking of didactic strategies in a constant and permanent way of learning with attitudes and values in student behavior strengthens critical, productive and demonstrative knowledge in the development of personality and therefore increases self-esteem, motivation and recreation in the pedagogical event through interactive collaboration in the use and use of time in homes during the Covid-19 pandemic. As well as the participation of teaching professionals fused with meaningful learning in activating knowledge in daily didactic activities (FIGUERO, 2017).

Taking advantage of free time

Free time is characterized as that which is consigned to the dissimilar actions and free choice of each individual. Every day free time occupies a stage in each boy or girl, which is why certain appropriate and inappropriate customs have been found in the development of the personality and the well-being of life in each subject; influencing a healthy emotional, sentimental, psychological, recreational, formative and educational environment in students.

Manco (2018, p. 27, our translation) states that free time “is all that temporary space that is not occupied by the obligations derived from daily work. In the case of boys, girls and young people, obviously, it is the time that remains after studying and attending class”. That is to say, it represents the activities that have no direct link with the study, homework or other activities, on the contrary, they are given by that space outside of said activities and that are characterized by recreation, imagination and leisure.





Indeed, the use of free time symbolizes the selection of activities that are attached to personal tasks that contribute to academic formation, distraction, nap, break, recreation, fun, promotion of the spiritual values and the discovery of abilities, skills, talents and potentials that each individual has in their daily work.

The teacher as a facilitator of learning is responsible for promoting and directing education in the use of free time, that is, the promoter must generate various didactic strategies that lead to the development of social, sentimental, formative and educational knowledge in students; with the search to enhance their body, intelligence and energy in fully healthy actions for them (MURILLO, 2015).

For this reason, it is considered important to make use and enjoyment of free time in the students they orient, advise and guide in guidelines where they can transform the time available, according to their needs and interests, into educational actions that seek the formation of the personality, well-being and health through recreational, sports and cultural activities that promote the entrepreneurial spirit with the intention of strengthening their motivation and self-esteem; all this outside of the academic activities taught by teaching professionals (DURANT; LEDEZMA, 2015).

Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic came to people's lives in an abrupt way, causing behavioral changes, unstable economies, a severe social crisis and therefore transformations at the educational level, that is, the vast majority of students and staff of school establishments had to leave the classrooms and adapt to a virtual or remote education from home. This situation caused in the family members a process of assimilation and layering of their houses in learning spaces (MARTINEZ, 2020).

The situation described, induced, according to Analuia (2020, p. 8, our translation), that “teachers teach classes and subject online, either in video conferences, PDF and use of materials that are easy to get at home, so that the children continue learning and continue with their studies”. In other words, the teachers, from the confinement, had the need to change their teaching strategies, the planning, organization and direction of the classes using different digital tools.

Consequently, students were also affected, since they quickly assumed a change from face-to-face classes in which they maintained a socialization with their classmates, teachers and others to a virtual education from their homes. This, according to Borraz (2020, p. 2, our





translation) “has generated an emotional crisis. The emotional, physical and psychological effect derived from the pandemic has a specific impact on the minors, who also face a strange and unknown situation”. It means that children have had more effects from the psychological, socialization and emotional point of view during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Teachers, in times of pandemic, must assist and guide students in everything inherent to the teaching-learning process and something fundamental such as orientation in motivation, stimulation and use of free time in activities that contribute to the integral formation of the student through the application of didactic strategies aimed at recreation, self-esteem, critical thinking with creative reading, visits to historical sites, virtual museums, among others that strengthen their well-being, physical and mental health. Also, keep the student active so that they feel that they are not alone, but that they have a helping hand that guides them and leads them in these times of crisis and uncertainty (VALENCIA, 2020).

Methodology

The research was inserted in the quantitative approach, which is why it shows the extent and depth of discernment in the research, finding out and investigating all the components that are immersed in the subject of study. As stated by Arias (2016), this research aims to describe, examine and elucidate the object to be investigated. Likewise, the descriptive non-experimental-transsectional design was used, motivated to consider the variables didactic strategies and use of free time in which it was carried out in an explicit time and to a group of people that made up the population (PALELLA; MARTINS, 2016).

The population consisted of 65 teachers who work at the Talca Basic School, Maule-Chile Region; likewise, the population census was used to obtain the sample. Hernández and Mendoza (2018) state that the population census consists of using all the elements that are available to the population in a limited and defined way. Therefore, the sample consisted of the entire population; consequently, the teachers in confinement providing the virtual education of the referred school.

In fact, the technique used was the survey and as an instrument a questionnaire with a Likert-type scale with three answer alternatives: Agree (DA), Neutral (N) and Disagree (ED) with a total of sixteen structured questions on the instrument of investigation. Thus, the instrument was validated by judges and experts in the specialty of methodology and didactic strategies; This is how a pilot plan was applied for 20 subjects who did not belong to the show,



but had the same characteristics of the population as the object of study. We applied Cronbach's Alpha to determine the required correlation and factor analysis.

Results

With the application of the questionnaire to the study object, namely, the teachers of the Talca Basic School located in the Region of Maule-Chile, the analysis was carried out using the absolute frequencies and the relative frequencies, which were represented through of tables indicating the variables, dimensions and indicators for each item asked in the survey.

Table 1 – Variable didactic strategies, dimension actions for the indicators: knowledge, methodologies, activities and participation

Items	Alternatives	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
		Fx	%	Fx	%	Fx	%
1. Manage knowledge about the concept of didactic strategies in the teaching and learning process.		45	69,23	3	4,61	17	26,15
2. Applies methodologies in the actions that lead to the use of didactic strategies for the use of free time in the Covid-19 pandemic.		27	41,53	7	10,76	31	47,69
3. Use activities in the application of didactic strategies for the use of their students' time in virtual education.		23	35,38	7	10,76	35	53,84
4. Promotes the participation of students in other educational spaces for the use of free time through didactic strategies.		19	29,23	6	9,23	40	61,53

Source: Devised by the authors

The results obtained in Table 1, with respect to the didactic strategies variable, it is observed that a high percentage considers to agree that they handle the concept of didactic strategies in the teaching and learning process; the other answers were located in the alternatives of agreement and neutral. This leads to infer that educators have a clear and precise definition of didactic strategies, possibly they are a valuable tool for the development of classes, especially in these moments in which educational praxis is being carried out in virtual terms.

Regarding applying methodologies in the actions that induce the use of didactic strategies in the use of free time in the Covid-19 pandemic, a high percentage consider themselves to disagree and the other reactions were located in the alternatives of agreement and





neutral. This agrees to infer that educators have the need to appropriate methods that induce the use of strategies in the use of time; This is possibly because educators have had to make changes from a face-to-face education to a virtual education in which they have had to guide the student with various technological resources.

Similarly, in the use of activities in the application of didactic strategies for the use of their students' time in virtual education, a significant percentage of disagreement is observed and the other answers were in agreement and neutral. It is deduced that teaching professionals lack the use of activities in the application of strategies that strengthen the free time of students during the health crisis. This could be due to the little use of tools by teachers in terms of promoting virtual actions that lead students to create recreational spaces from their homes.

As for the reagent related to promoting the participation of students in other educational spaces for the use of free time through didactic strategies, there is a high percentage of disagreement and the others indicated the alternatives of agreement and neutral. This allows us to infer that educators need to promote the participation of students from other educational environments in the use of time; This might be generated from the changes that the teacher had to implement in terms of distance or virtual education and, therefore, it has been complicated with the planning processes where the time available for students to carry out activities that can enhance creativity, imagination and inventiveness and learning is strengthened. Faced with an unexpected situation of generating activities that contribute to the emotional and psychological well-being of educators.

Table 2 – Variable use of free time in the Covid-19 pandemic, educational dimension and orientation, planning, recreation, expression and creativity indicators

Items	Alternatives		Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	Fx	%	Fx	%	Fx	%	Fx	%
5. Uses didactic strategies to guide students to make good use of free time.	19	29,23	5	7,69	41	63,07		
6. Plan recreational activities that lead to the use of free time.	15	23,07	5	7,69	45	69,23		
7. Apply the didactic strategy of corporal expression that allows the use of free time during the Covid-19 pandemic.	13	20	5	7,69	47	72,30		





8. Promotes creativity as a didactic strategy in the use of free time during the Covid-19 pandemic.	17	26,15	5	7,69	43	66,15
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Source: Devised by the authors

The results of Table 2 of the variable use of free time during the Covid-19 pandemic, the item related to the use of didactic strategies in the orientation of students for a good use of free time, a quite significant percentage considers to be in disagreement and the others were placed in the alternatives of agreement and neutral. It is inferred that the respondents lack the use of didactic strategies that access guidance in the use of free time in their homes; This is possibly due to the fact that the teachers have not planned actions that specifically go to that time available to the student when he/she is not doing school activities and that must be carried out outside of class hours; or has digested the changes that the pandemic has generated.

Regarding the planning of recreational activities that lead to the use of free time, a high percentage of respondents considered that they disagree and the others indicated in the alternatives of agreement and neutral. This allows us to infer that educators lack planning recreational activities in the use of time; which probably leads to students maintaining attitudes that are not very proactive, participatory and apathetic regarding the teaching and learning process and, therefore, can generate emotional, physical and health exhaustion, as a result of confinement and the absence of tasks that create spaces for reflection, amusement and recreation.

The reagent related to the application of the didactic strategy of corporal expression that allows the use of free time during the Covid-19 pandemic, it is observed that a fairly significant percentage disagrees and the others indicated in the alternative of agreement and neutral. It follows that teaching professionals lack the application of the didactic body expression strategy that allows the use of time; This could possibly cause educators to put aside the feelings, emotions, needs and interests of students as a result of the current pandemic situation.

Likewise, the promotion of creativity as a didactic strategy in the use of free time during the Covid-19 pandemic, a high percentage of those surveyed consider that they disagree and the rest answered in the alternatives of agreement and neutral. It is inferred that teachers need to develop creativity as a didactic strategy, which is why it represents an important action for the mental development of students. This could be due to the fact that teachers need the implementation of creativity in which the personality of the students is developed and strengthened.





Conclusions

The results obtained in the variable didactic strategies, dimension actions for the indicators: knowledge, methodologies, activities and participation, it can be affirmed that the teacher manages the knowledge about the didactic strategies, however, does not use actions, activities and participation to promote the use of free time during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The data, previously exposed, are far from the thought of Limas (2018) when he states that didactic strategies must be planned, with an intention in terms of the learning process, where they start from reflection that lead to the active participation of students. At the same time, the organization of actions according to the needs and interests of the students in search of achieving the objectives proposed in teaching.

Similarly, the results differ from Pineda's (2019) approach, where he points out that didactic strategies in the application of the teaching and learning process are fundamental since they contribute to the integral formation of students in order to strengthen knowledge, creative thinking in harmonic and dynamic environments. Likewise, the organization of activities on a permanent and continuous basis in which their needs and interests are considered and, in the search for meaningful learning that contribute to well-being and quality of life.

Studies support the importance of the use of didactic strategies in the development of activities that are directly aimed at integral development, changes in attitude, behavior of students in the face of a health crisis that has generated havoc in society and therefore has affected the distancing from students and socializing with their peers and other active entities, both from the family group and from the community.

On the other hand, the results obtained in the variable use of free time in the Covid-19 pandemic, educational dimension and orientation, planning, recreation, expression and creativity indicators, shows the absence of the use of didactic strategies that contribute to strengthening the use of free time during the pandemic. The use of recreation, corporal expression and creativity have been little applied by teachers, as a result of the changes and transformations of changing, in an insurmountable way, from a face-to-face education to a virtual education.

In light of the above, they disagree with the study by Salas (2013) when he points out that the use of free time is immersed in activities aimed at the integral development of students based on recreation, rest, fun, entertainment that contributes to mental, emotional, physical, social, spiritual strengthening, among other fundamental aspects of well-being and quality of life. These aspects are essential for changes in students' attitudes, as they lead them to high self-





esteem to face any adversity, especially those they experience as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Also, the research by Posso *et al.* (2020) state that the use of free time strengthens in the student an entrepreneurial spirit of harmony in his spirit-soul, because it generates recreation, joy, harmony, release of stress, critical and analytical capacity. In turn, the teacher can generate easily accessible activities, spaces for socialization, encounters, music, dance, fostering values, responsibility, culture, commitment to himself and the family. The latter must also get involved in the activities of its constituents, actively participating in the actions programmed by the teachers in this use of time.

It is essential that students worldwide take advantage of the free time that is being generated due to the pandemic, for this reason creative strategies must be fostered in these spaces in order to achieve the incentive of students in terms of creativity, imagination and the desire to Improve one's quality of life. Likewise, parents should be involved in carrying out teacher-guided activities because they are directly responsible at home for ensuring the execution of actions that promote recreation, reading, distraction, joy and love for their children, in these moments of crisis and uncertainty.

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