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UNIT 4. Play activities in the Infant Education classroom (I). General aspects

UNIT 4. PLAY ACTIVITIES IN THE INFANT EDUCATION CLASSROOM (I). GENERAL ASPECTS ¡Error! Marcador no definido.

Main goals of the unit ¡Error! Marcador no definido.

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UNIT 4. PLAY ACTIVITIES IN THE INFANT EDUCATION CLASSROOM (I). GENERAL ASPECTS

What are the main goals of this unit?

In this unit we will deal with general features of Infant Education children, focusing on their characteristics and play activities organization. These contents will be the basis on where the units 5, 6 and 7 will be set.

1	• To know the cognitive, physical and social-affective characteristics of Infant Education children.
2	• To reflect on how Infant Education children play.
3	• To value the importance of the classroom organization for play activities.
4	• To consider the opportunities to play and learn that ICT offers in the Infant Education classroom.
5	• To reflect on the correct use of ICT in the Infant Education classroom.

1. INFANT EDUCATION CHILDREN.

1.1. SENSORY-MOTOR STAGE (0-2 y.o.)

Jean Piaget established that 0-2 years old children are included in the sensory-motor stage. Children acquire the following improvements at the end of this stage:

1) **Object permanence**. The child understands objects existence and the surrounding environment. Objects are not merely a reflection of child perceptions which disappear when the objects are not in front of him/her. In fact, he/she possesses the mental representation of the objects which account for their existence even though they are not present.
2) **Control of surrounding space**. The child is able to represent objects in three dimensions as well as their movements. This means an important control of the surrounding space characterized by the ability to perform return, deflection and conservation behaviours.
3) **Temporal ordering**. The child is able to sequence actions based on a final goal. He/she no longer attempts to directly take a remote object by opening and closing the hand, but rather performs the necessary intermediate actions in advance.
4) **Concept of casualty**. The relationship that he/she establishes with events and experiences allows him/her to differentiate progressively between his/her activity and external events and to realize the causal relations between certain actions and effects.
5) **Symbolic function acquisition**. Before the end of the second year of life, children are able to represent something - any meaning: an object, an event - through the use of a differentiated signifier, which opens many new possibilities for development. Five new behaviours appear:
    - **Deferred imitation.** The child copies observed patterns and is able to represent them without being present. For example, the child pretends to nail something with gestures and verbal sounds (but there is neither hammer nor nails).
    - **Pretend play**. Closely related to imitation, in the pretend or make-believe play the child reproduces observed situations but adapting them to their desires as a play.
    - **Mental image**. Mental images are interiorized imitations. They are not mere copies of reality but involve an effort of assimilation and elaboration of reality. They make possible the dissociated representation of any external act.
    - **Drawing**. The drawing is another form of world representation that shares with the pretend play the pleasure that produces its realization and that constitutes an imitation of reality. Although the child pretends to make a realistic drawing, he reproduces more what he knows than what he sees.
    - **Language.** It is a decisive achievement in personal, social and cognitive development and constitutes the most complex representation system. The importance of mastery of signs will provide children with two important improvements: communication and thought support.

SENSORY GAMES

As we have seen in the previous section, 0-2 years old children need to interact with the environment in order to make connections in their brains that will help them to understand the world. Then, we should plan activities that provide children with the opportunity to discover objects and to cope with achievable challenges. According to Georgina Hood (2014) the sensory stage is divided into three areas:

- Treasure baskets (What is it?)
- Heuristic play (What can I do with it?)

- Further development (What else can it be?)

The Treasure basket. This activity is aimed for children from 6 to 12 months. "*They were developed by Elinor Goldschmied in the 1940s. (…) They include 40-80 natural objects and offer the child texture, color, shape, weight, sensory interest and play value, with safety paramount at all times*" (Hood, G. 2014: 35). They must be natural elements (no plastic or bought toys) so they may be feathers, a piece of wood, pottery, nuts, metal, pebbles, etc. We should include elements that awake senses: Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight and Hearing.

Development: We place the basket in front of the child letting him/her discover and experiment with the objects that are included in it. The teacher's functions are to observe and support children, without commenting or suggesting ideas.

Benefits: The main benefits of introducing the Treasure basket to children are that "*they develop concentration, independence, confidence, fine- and gross-motor skills, hand-eye coordination and logical reasoning. They also encourage language development, communication, social skills creativity and imagination*". (Hood, G. 2014: 35).



http://theimaginationtree.com/2010/10/heuristic-play-treasure-baskets.html



http://theimaginationtree.com/2011/04/baby-treasure-basket-12-months.html

Heuristic play. This play is aimed for children from 1 to 3 years. It includes the opportunity to play with other materials such as bowls, chains, balls, etc. Through this play children "*explore the 'cause and effect' (what can I do with it?) and through simple objects categorization, the child's sensorial experiences are increased. Heuristic play enhances the child's social interaction and they experiment, share, take turns and consider the needs of others*" (Hood, G. 2014:36).

Development: The teacher prepares different tins or boxes in a specific area and allows children to interact with the objects that are in each box. Sometimes materials are piled so each child has its own collection. *"This is because while many toddlers are interested in others, they are not yet good at sharing and negotiating. Having a separate collection for each child, therefore, means that each child can focus, concentrate and explore alone"*. (Tassoni, P. 2011:1).

Benefits: According to Tassoni (2011), some of the benefits the heuristic play provides are:

- Children feel independent from adults, doing what they please.
- Children develop hand-eye coordination and shape and sizes concepts.
- Children learn about materials properties and textures, for example, that fabrics do not make a sound when dropped into a saucepan, but corks do.
- Children concentrate and persevere.



http://www.sandcastlesnursery.co.uk/2013/08/seahorses-in-the-gym-doing-heuristic-play/



https://es.pinterest.com/pin/90916486198397171/

1.2. PRE-OPERATIONAL STAGE (2-7 y.o.)

During this stage children tend to use mental representations and logic is emerging from personal experiences.

The main characteristics of this period are:

- **Intuitive Thought.** "*Reasoning based on personal experience rather than on any formal logical system.*" (Littlefield & Cook, 2005:5-15).
- **Egocentrism.** Children at this age are not able to understand others' 'points of view'.
- **Symbolic Thought.** Language, pretend play and images are used to represent the world. They have not developed abstract thinking yet.
- **Animism.** Children at this stage consider that inanimate objects are alive and have feelings.
- **Conservation problems.** "*Certain basic properties of an object (e.g., volume, mass, and weight) remain the same even if its physical appearance changes*". *(*Piaget cited at Littlefield & Cook, 2005:5-15).
- **Centration**. *"Is the tendency to focus on only one aspect of a situation at a time instead of taking several aspects into consideration"* (Littlefield & Cook, 2005:5-15).
- **Irreversibility.** Incapacity to perform an action in both directions.

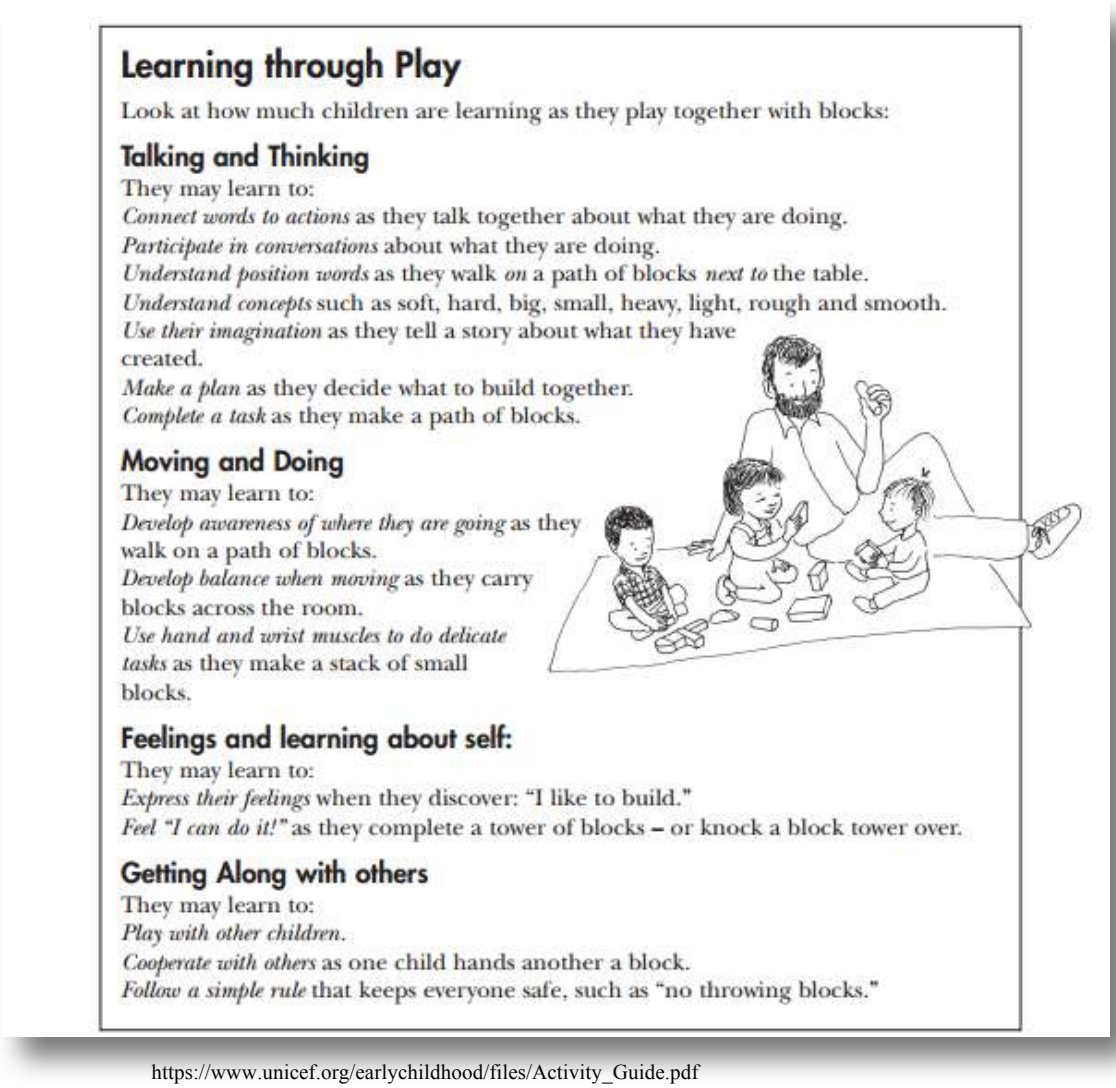
Children at this stage are able to classify objects according to a simple characteristic.

As we have seen in the previous unit, play activities constitute a valuable tool to promote children development. However, we should bear in mind children characteristics in order to plan according to their real capacities and needs.

Infant Education children are interested in knowing and learning about their environment, and the way they learn is playing. The child's brain works hard when he/she is playing; thus, we should provide him/her with pleasant experiences in order to promote brain development. Play activities are plenty of opportunities for children to learn about the world as they organize the perceived information from it.

The sensory-rich play is introduced in the previous stage through two main games: Heuristic and Treasure basket games. These games provide children with the opportunity to experiment with objects from their environment through their senses.

Simple games such as playing with blocks contribute to children's brain development in different ways:



Learning through Play

Look at how much children are learning as they play together with blocks:

Talking and Thinking

They may learn to:
Connect words to actions as they talk together about what they are doing.
Participate in conversations about what they are doing.
Understand position words as they walk *on* a path of blocks *next to* the table.
Understand concepts such as soft, hard, big, small, heavy, light, rough and smooth.
Use their imagination as they tell a story about what they have created.
Make a plan as they decide what to build together.
Complete a task as they make a path of blocks.

Moving and Doing

They may learn to:
Develop awareness of where they are going as they walk on a path of blocks.
Develop balance when moving as they carry blocks across the room.
Use hand and wrist muscles to do delicate tasks as they make a stack of small blocks.

Feelings and learning about self:

They may learn to:
Express their feelings when they discover: "I like to build."
Feel "I can do it!" as they complete a tower of blocks – or knock a block tower over.

Getting Along with others

They may learn to:
Play with other children.
Cooperate with others as one child hands another a block.
Follow a simple rule that keeps everyone safe, such as "no throwing blocks."

https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/Activity_Guide.pdf

PRETEND OR MAKE-BELIEVE PLAY

"Pretend play activities are the subset of play activities characterized by an "as-if" stance". (Garvey cited in Lillard et alt 2013:2). This type of play supports children's physical, language, cognitive and social-emotional development. Children create the play so they guide the process making decisions and acting according to them.

According to Cemore, J.J., *"Make-believe play allows the child the opportunities both to develop those skills valued as a society and to inhibit those we do not value*" (Cemore, J.J., 2005:18).

Through pretend play children understand the meaning of what is hapenning. According to Stagnity, pretend play involves the development of 3 thinking skills:

- "*Children use objects and pretend they are something else (for example, the box is a bed.*
- *Children attribute properties to objects. (for example, the tea is 'hot' or the teddy is 'sleeping' or the truck is 'fast').*

- *Children refer to invisible objects (for example, there is a door in a certain space or dera is a dog near the doll (but the dog is invisible)).”* (Stagnitty, K. 2011:1).

In the pretend or make-believe play children make use of symbols to play. In fact, they use objects with an added meaning so they are transformed, pretending to represent other objects. In pretend play, a real object or behaviour becomes imaginary . For instance, a big box can be used as a bed or a car.

Children tend to copy adults or films when playing pretend play. They are also able to face some intern conflicts through pretend play; for instance, when a child reprimands a doll as if he/she were teachers, he/she can be representing something that happened at school (maybe the teacher reprimanded him/her or he/she saw the teacher reprimanded a classmate).

These games may be individual, shared with adults or with other children. If they play with other children, they need to talk and make decissions when playing. This is possible because children have the same goal so they accept the rules. As children become older, pretend play becomes more complex.

As pretend play is an amazing learning tool, Infant Education teachers usually include a pretend play corner in their classrooms.

SUMMARY

- Infant education children are included in:
    - Sensory-motor stage (0-2 y.o.).
        - During this period children acquires:
            - Object permanence.
            - Control of surrounding space.
            - Temporal ordering.
            - Concept of casualty.
            - Symbolic function.
                - Deferred imitation
                - Pretend play (initiation)
                - Drawing
                - Mental image
                - Language
        - Sensory play: Treasure basket and Heuristic play
    - Pre-operational stage (2-7 y.o.)
        - The main characteristics of this period are:
            - Intuitive thought
            - Egocentrism
            - Symbolic though
            - Animism
            - Conservation problems
            - Centration
            - Irreversibility
        - Pre-operational play: pretend play

2. THE INFANT EDUCATION GROUP

The crucial feature of a group of children is that they have a common outcome. Sometimes they are together because they enjoy sharing a task or just for the pleasure to be together. Infant Education children tend to be egocentric but, as they are getting older, they feel the necesity to know and interact with other children.

Children are able to compare their abilities with others and start understanding that other children have a different point of view through playing. As the play is more complex, they need to create structures to support it, so they need to organise the group.

According to Perret-Clermont et alt. (1979), children collaboration in a task has positive effects in logic reasoning. As they share different ideas and opinions, their brains tend to reorganise concepts. Moreover, sharing materials let them acquire new information. Thus, teachers can organise the classroom in small groups in order to facilitate space and time for sharing opinions and learn from others.

The Infant Education groups are complex. According to Edgar Morin, *"children can teach adults about complexity. Before separating everything, they are able to link elements, especially when they are educated in nature. (…). However, schools teachs how to separate everything"*. (Adapted text from Morin, E. 2010:127).

Therefore, children tend to have a general view of the world, connecting elements, feelings, people, … and we should support these connections and make them aware of the importance of relationships in life. Most of the children relationships are created at school and play activities play a crucial role in this socialization process. Because of this, the Infant Education classroom is usually organised in a specific way and play activities follow an order according to children development.

Taking into consideration this complexity of the Infant Education groups, Ovide Decroly established the **Centers of interest.** The play model is based on this method. According to García and Llull, they *"consist in outlining a central idea motivating for children that serves as the guiding thread of the educational process, connecting different activities through elements of a symbolic, imaginative or environmental character"* (Adapted text from García & Llull, 2009: 31).

Centers of interest method confers children the main role of the learning process, motivating active participation and experimentation.

2.1. PLAY STAGES IN INFANT EDUCATION

Children's play evolves from birth until the end of Infant education. (0 to 5-6 y.o.). This evolution is produced at the same time children develop cognitive, language, social and physical skills. Here you have a chart with the main types of play according to the child's age.

Age	Type of Play	Description of Play
0 –2 years	Solitary Play	During this stage, a child will play on their own. For example, a child may be in a room full of children but will choose to play blocks on their own.
2—2.5 years	Spectator Play	Child will observe other children playing
2.5—3 years	Parallel Play	During parallel play, children play next to each other but will not share the same activity.
3 –4 years	Associate Play	During associate play, children will be playing the same game or activity but will not be working together or making connections with peers.
4—6 years	Cooperative Play	During cooperate play, children learn to play with their peers. They start to use social skills and interact with their friends.

https://es.pinterest.com/pin/59250551326719328/

Solitary play. From 0 to 2 years old the child does not interact with others; they are discovering the world and developing senses through direct contact with objects. They usually play with toys and do not show interest in what other children do. Some actions these children perform may be: putting things into mouth, repeating actions, looking at adults and trying to imitate them, …

Spectator play. From 2 to 2,5 years old the child is aware of other people presence, especially children. So they spend time observing others playing but do not join their play. They usually engage in conversations in order to learn more about the play. They can play with adults. Summarising, there is not interaction among children but they can copy them.

Parallel play. From 2,5 to 3 years old children tend to play next to other children but they do not share the play, they perform different activities. Children at this age show some reasoning skills, learning by trial and error and imagination is part of the play so they tell toys to do things.

Associate play. From 3 to 4 years old children play alongside other children but they do not share the play but they perform the same type of activity. Children at this age are able to solve jigsaw puzzles mixing thinking and trial and error. Another feature of this type of play is that it is imaginative: children love dressin up, for instance.

Cooperative play. From 4 years old onwards children share goals and play together. Thus, social skills are developed: children take turns, make decissions together, etc. Children at this age shows understanding of simple rules.

2.2. PLAY SPACES IN THE SCHOOL: CORNERS

The classroom is the place for children learning and development, so we need available space for play activities in and outdoors. Moreover, these spaces should be organised in different areas. We should make the Infant Education classroom a pleasant, imaginative and practical space. In order to do so, teachers should arrange the classroom creating small areas that encourage different types of play and let children see and experience the choices on offer. Thus, we can organize the classroom in an art area, a pretend play area, a library area, music and movement area, a construction area, a computer area, etc. Outdoors we can define different areas too, such as a climbing area, a place to play with sand, water, buckets and shovels, a natural area, an area to run, an area to sit and relax, etc.

In order to organise the Infant Education classroom, we should put into practice these strategies:

- Decorating the different areas of the classroom with appealing drawings or colours.
- Avoiding interferences among the different areas.
- The organization should be flexible.

Furthermore, according to García and LLull (2009), other elemental criteria we should bear in mind when organising play spaces in the classroom are:

- The space for play activities should be functional.
- Differentiated from other areas of the school.
- Accesible for children and teachers.
- Toys and other materials should be within reach of children. They should be organised and easy to pick up and tidy up.
- The space should be appropriate for age and evolutive children characteristics.
    - Healthy.
    - Safe.
    - Practical
- The space should be comfortable and appealing for children.

- Colourful.
- Stimulating.
- With enough materials and toys.
- Decorated.

Infant Education classrooms are usually organised in corners. This organisation enhances playing, facilitating spaces to carry out different activities. Corners are differentiated according to a topic, type of play or resources. Some examples of corners may be: pretend play corner, tales corner, jigsaw corner, music corner, etc. This organisation promotes children autonomy according to their needs at the same time they are interacting with other children. The group is organised in small groups that play at the same time while the teacher is monitoring the play moment. Thus, children develop imagination and social skills: making decision, taking turns, leading groups, exchanging opinions and feelings, etc. through corners organization.





http://thecutestlittlehouseintown.blogspot.com.es/2010/09/check-out-my-room.html http://www.kindergartenkindergarten.com/classroom-pictures/

According to Garzón & Martínez, "*Corners are delimited spaces in the class in which children work individually or in small groups simultaneously in different learning activities. The work by corners allows to cope with the interests and rhythms of learning of each boy and girl. The corners require a different organization of space in the classroom and delimits clear spaces for each one of it*". (Adapted text from Garzón, M. and Martínez, S. 1989:40).

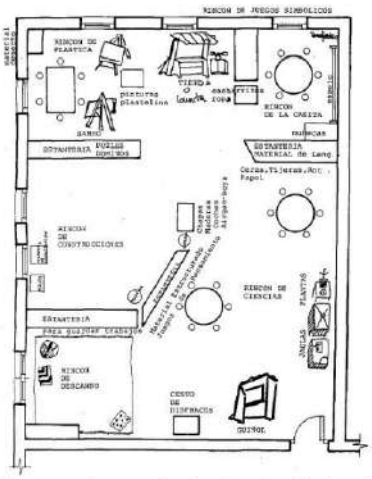


Figura 1. Organización del aula por rincones. Fuente: Garzón y Martínez (1989). *La práctica de los rincones con niños de dos a seis años.*

Some corners need some guidance from the teacher but there are corners where children play autonomously. The number of corners is established according to the goals or the areas we want them to work on.

SUMMARY

- Children make a group when they have a common outcome.
- Through playing children are able to interact with others and understand different points of view.
- The Centers of interest method (Decroly, O.) outlines a central idea that guides the learning process, conferring children the main role.
- Play stages:
    - Solitary play (0-2 y.o)
    - Spectator play (2-2,5 y.o.)
    - Parallel play (2,5-3 y.o.)
    - Associative play (3-4 y.o.)
    - Cooperative play (4-⋯)
- Classroom organization for play: Corners
    - The space for play activities should be functional.
    - Differentiated from other areas of the school.
    - Accesible for children and teachers.
    - Toys and other materials should be within reach of children. They should be organised and easy to pick up and tidy up.
    - The space should be appropriate for age and evolutive children characteristics.
        - Healthy.
        - Safe.
        - Practical
    - The space should be comfortable and appealing for children.
        - Colourful.
        - Stimulating.
        - With enough materials and toys.
        - Decorated.

3. ICT RESOURCES FOR INFANT EDUCATION

3.1. BENEFITS

We should bear in mind that the current law in Infant Education (LOE, 2006), establishes that we should develop the ICT competence in children from an early age. ICT resources involve all technological resources we can use in the classroom. Thus, not only computers are included in it. If we have an ICT corner in our classroom, we can include a computer with loudspeakers, microphone and other devices in it. Some cd's or dvd's with songs or tales for young children may be placed in this corner too.

We can point out many productive forms of using ICT in the Infant Education classroom. However, "*several writers in early childhood education present an assortment safety concerns. (…) Most of the safety worries may be classified into groups of concern about:*

- *Harmful physical effects.*
- *Children's learning , cognitive , social and emotional development.*
- *Exposure to harmful contents.*
- *New technologies displacing other important play activities.*"

(UNESCO, 2012:5)

According to Siraj-Blatchford and Whitebread, "*ICT encourages children to be passive recipients, that it is isolating, or that young children cannot learn effectively through these kinds of experiences* (Siraj-Blatchford & Whitebread, 2003 cited in Ministry of Education of New Zealand, 2004:25). Although some authors have expressed concern about the isolated play that computers may promote, some studies suggest that computer provides a valuable context for cooperation and positive learning experiencies. "*For example, studies which indicate that young children prefer to play computer games with their friends than on their own*". (Linderoth et al., 2002 cited in Ministry of Education of New Zealand, 2004:24).

Moreover, other authors support that ICT holds any potential benefits for young children when they are used appropriately:

- *"ICT can support children's cognitive and emotional development, and the development of social and co-operative skills.*
- *ICT can assist in the emergence of early literacy and mathematical thinking;*
- *ICT can "level the playing field" for children with special learning needs;*
- *ICT can enhance and strengthen relationships between children and adults, or give adults new ways to gain insight into children's thinking or their interests, thereby providing opportunities to better support and scaffold children's learning;*
- *ICT can facilitate the emergence of "new literacies" or "multiliteracies" in children*".

(Hill & Broadhurst, 2001; Pastor & Kerns, 1997 cited in Ministry of Education of New Zealand, 2004:24)

3.2. USE RECOMMENDATIONS

UNESCO establishes some criteria to determine the apropriateness of the ICT tools in the Infant Education classroom. Thus, according to (Siraj-Blatchforfd, 2006) and (Siraj-Blatchford and Whitebread, 2003), the ICT tool should:

- *"**Be educational.** Any ICT tool employed in the early years should be educational in nature. This effectively excludes all applications where clear learning aims cannot be identified.*

- ***Encourage collaboration.** Working in collaboration in a range of different ways in interacting with technology is of key importance. Joint attention and children learning to share and being engaged jointly provides a cognitive challenge for young children.*

- ***Support integration.** ICT applications should be integrated as far as possible with other established ECCE practices (play, project work) which make the curriculum relevant to the children. ICT products should be integrated as tools. Tools are designed to be applied for particular purposes when required; they are not usually designed for continuous use for their own sake.*

- ***Support play.** Play (role-play) and imitation are central to the processes of learning in the early years. Artifacts such as toys and other devices (functioning or pretend, including ICT tools) provide important symbols for the children to play with, a wide range of virtual objects and environments.*

- ***Leave the child in control.** If possible, ICT applications should be controlled by the child; they should not control the child's interaction through programmed learning, they should not control the child.*

- ***Be transparent and intuitive.** If possible, we should choose only such ICT applications which are transparent – their functions should be clear and intuitive.*

- ***Avoid violence or stereotyping.** Where applications fail to meet these criteria it would be difficult to justify their use in any educational context.*

- ***Support awareness of health and safety.** Time spent using any desktop computer application (and any other application) by a child should be comparatively short, not extending beyond 10–20 minutes at a time in the case of 3-year-olds.*

- ***Involve parents.** When parents, teachers and children collaborate towards the same goals it leads to improved academic performance."*

(Siraj-Blatchford and Whitebread cited in UNESCO, 2012:6)

We should highlight the importance of the teachers' role in the ICT learning process. This process should be monitored by teachers who support, supplement and evaluate it continuously.

There is an assortment of ICT resources that can help teachers to develop contents in the Infant Education classroom. Moreover, these resources will provide children with the opportunity to experiment and learn how to use ICT tools on their own.

ICT resources may be: computers, DVD players, camcorders, loudspeakers, microphones, web cams, digital camera, etc. Children can use these devices to investigate the surrounding world: animals, plants, materials, etc. and to learn about English speaking countries culture through stories, songs and films, for instance.

3.3. ICT ACTIVITIES

Some ICT activities that can be put into practice with Infant Education children may be:

- **Pretend play**. Children can use some ICT resources when playing. For instance, they can use a microphone to pretend to be a singer or a computer as if they were working in an office.

- **Karaoke concert.** Using a CD player, microphone and smart board.

- **Storytelling.** Listening a story at the same time they see images on the screen.

- **Reading together.** Using the smart board, the computer, loudspeakers and a cd children can read simple letters, words, sentences or stories depending on their level.

- **Playing games together.** Children can use the computer to play games individually or in pairs.

- **Listening activities.** We can access to native accent from different English speaking countries using ICT resources, so children will understand better native people when they become Primary students.

- **Smart board activities.** We can create many activities in our smart board. They can include hand-eye coordination, writing, matching, drawing, identifying, etc.

- **Listening and singing songs.** There are many websites with songs for children. Through songs children can learn language basic concepts (vocabulary, grammar functions and cultural aspects) at the same time that they practice listening and speaking skills (pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, …).

- **Recording performances.** Children performs an activity (singing a song, playing or acting out a story, for instance) and the teacher records it with a camcorder. Then, the teacher displays the recording and children see themselves in action. After watching the video children can talk about their feelings. Sometimes this video can be given to parents at the end of the year.

- **Portfolios.** We can create students' portfolios recording their improvements.

- **Playing on the computer.** There are many websites in the internet for this purpose. Games can be focused on hand-eye coordination, reading skills, vocabulary, listening skills, phonics, and so on.

- **Working with Ipads.** Children can work individually or in pairs. There are many apps to practice English, Maths, Science, etc.

- **Classroom blog.** We can create a classroom blog so parents will know what children are doing at school.

Finally, one of the most valuable ICT tools for teachers is the use of **didactic websites**. They include many activities aimed for young children that can be used in the classroom or at home. These websites suggest different activities (songs, animations, games, stories, crafts, etc.) that enhance children development.

3.4. WEBSITES FOR YOUNG LEARNERS



https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/

Teach your monster to read: From letter-sound recognition to blending, segmenting and tricky words.



https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/

Oxford owl: With effective support for school improvement, eBooks and inspiring teaching resources.



http://www.fungooms.com/

Fungooms: Games and activities for young learners to practice fine motor skills, problem solving and thinking skills.



http://www.starfall.com/

Starfall: It is a very useful tool to practice science, reading, calendar and more activities with young learners.



https://www.turtlediary.com/preschool-activities.html

Turtle diary: This website includes games, worksheet, experiments, crafts and other activities for Infant education children.



http://duckiedeck.com/

Duckie Deck: Games and activities for young children.



http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/SoundStimuli.html

Phonics play: In this website you will find many activities to practice phonics with young learners.



http://www.peterrabbit.com/

Peter Rabbit: With play activities, animations and other activities with Beatrix Potter characters.



http://pbskids.org/

PBS Kids: This website includes many games to practice fine-motor and cognitive skills.



http://www.cbeebies.com/?cdrid=RaBT96AmoK

CBeebies: Songs, animation, games and other activities aimed for young children. It includes the alphablocks videos, that are very useful to introduce reading in English in class.



http://www.enchantedlearning.com/categories/preschool.shtml

Enchanted learning: Books, crafts, games, rhymes, letter activities and more are included in this website.



http://www.dreamenglish.com/

Dream English: With songs to learn the days of the week, months, clothes, good habits, etc.

SUMMARY

- ICT resources are a valuable tool in the Infant Education classroom.
- Some authors support that ICT holds any potential benefits for young children when they are used appropriately.
- ICT in the classroom should:
    - Be educational
    - Encourage collaboration
    - Support integration
    - Support play
    - Lead the child in control
    - Be transparent and intuitive
    - Avoid violence or stereotyping
    - Support awareness of health and safety
    - Involve parents.
- Some ICT activities to develop in the Infant education classroom may be: karaoke, listening activities, storytelling, smart board activities, pretend play, reading together, listening and singing songs, recording performances, playing on the computer, etc.

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Do you want to go further?

PLAY STAGES: Here you have a Prezi presentation about how children play develops by Bridget Lessentien.



https://prezi.com/st2gqbequb0b/stages-of-play-developmental-milestones/

A CHILD'S WORLD: Video collection about child's mind development.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEOTHXxOgm8&list=PLB-XPH1S0fxjgh9Fm_Y6TYnxSevXc62BS

BABY, IT'S YOU: Video collection about the first years of child's life.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwfRxs35nlM
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo8zneIVvVY

ICT in the Infant Education classroom. This video shows examples to use technology in the pre-primary classroom.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fKRhgnio2g