School Recess in Primary School: Rescuing the Meaning of Play in Education

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The purpose of the article is to identify the games and the playful experience of children, as well as to understand the educational processes triggered by this social practice in the context of school recess, in eight public primary schools located in the province of Talca, Maule region, Chile. In methodological terms, the research is inscribed in the perspective of the interpretive-comprehensive paradigm, through qualitative methodology, with a design that consisted of applying the non-participant observation technique, in such a way that they carried out 32 units of direct observations, with 138 events described during the months of August to November of the year 2019. The results revealed that the schoolyard was a space rich in children's experiences and learning, with regard to the repertoire of games and interactions between children, in the context of these recreational activities. The need to value play in the time and space of the schoolyard is highlighted, for the child's learning and its articulation with pedagogical practices. In terms of conclusions, it is proposed to delve into studies of this nature, since it is relevant that the school considers recess as a pedagogical tool, since it is at that moment when children naturally manifest themselves and express their emotions, in an eminently playful and socializing.

Keywords: school recess, play, playfulness, socialization, learning

INTRODUCTION

The school is a civilizing social institution, therefore, the school environment is a medium that influences, produces or reproduces the processes of construction of the

subject (Berns, 2015; Sithara, & Fiaz, 2017). In the context of school, recess time turns out to be a fundamental need for boys and girls within the educational process, therefore, it cannot be considered as an unimportant aspect, or not necessary to pay due attention, recess allows students to rest, eat, share with peers, play and de-stress from the academic routine (Cardoso et al., 2017; Karasel-Ayda & Güneyli, 2018). The school must recognize that recess or rest is a setting to promote the socialization processes of its students and, when recognition is associated with forms of aggression and rejection, the school must generate strategies that aim to improve these processes. All this especially from a comprehensive logic that follows these manifestations, perhaps, resulting from social realities that reproduce and legitimize them, as shown by the works of London (2019); Zavacky & Michael (2017).

In this line, various investigations report that the playground is of great importance in the individual's training process since during the school period the children are being formed, they are discovering their culture and tastes (Steffens & Horn, 2018; Varea, 2018). Play at recess is a unique and complex moment in the child's experience, because it develops experiences, whether negative or positive. In this line, Delidou et al. (2016), highlight that the space of the schoolyard needs an organizational structure, that is, if the children have nothing to play with, if there is no structure and material, they play with their body or with what they find right there. Children play with their bodies and often invent conflicts, if there are materials, their relationships are mediated by materials and the rules of the games help to resolve conflicts (Castillo-Rodríguez et al., 2018; London et al., 2015). According to the works of Ramstetter et al. (2010), the schoolyard space is a potential environment for ideas for the development and enrichment of learning, since for learning to occur, children must first learn to dream, imagine and ask. Recess could be the only opportunity that some children have to participate in social interactions with other children, since in many classrooms very little interaction is allowed, due to the rational and technical perspective of traditional teaching (Ertmer & Newby, 2013).

Literature Review

Recess is one of the few moments during the school day where children can interact freely with their classmates; in the game, the child faces fantasy and the symbolic. Playing, running, climbing, they compare themselves with other people, try to change their limits, develop language, thought and help establish interpersonal relationships, as shown in the studies by Cordazzo & Vieira (2008); London et al. (2015); Lodewyk & McNamara (2019). The play offers children opportunities to develop and improve their bodily capacities to express feelings of joy, sadness, or to establish relationships with objects and with other children, assign meaning to their abilities and body control, becoming an essential space for the development of the physical, emotional and intellectual health of the child (Galbraith & Normand, 2017). It is in the game where the child rebalances, recycles his emotions and satisfies his need to know and reinvent reality, consequently, the school must give the child the freedom to express his intrinsic motivation, the need to explore, investigate, test and affirm experiences and decision possibilities (Cardoso et al., 2017; Kern et al., 2016; Lodewyk & McNamara, 2019). In

the plays places and situations, the child is the agent of her own development, insofar as he acts by selecting his activities and objects, his favorite places, his companions.

Along these lines, it is essential that the school offer environments conducive to the development of children's play. Literature reports that the games most played by children in school are soccer, basketball, and physical activities, such as running, jumping; kicking and throwing; catching and hiding, chasing and searching games. Capture; running and jumping games; launch games; games of agility, dexterity and strength (Condessa & Santos, 2015; López et al., 2017; Lodewyk, & McNamara, 2019; McLoughlin et al., 2019). Children prefer a type of play that requires physical activity and elements such as strength, balance, and dexterity with the body. Consequently, while children need physical play, schools try to avoid the appearance of these activities by reducing them to physical education classes. These impediments are intended to prevent accidents and aggression by children.

School recess is a time when children expect to play, have fun and enjoy joyfully, with many games, that is, expressing themselves in their fantasy world, since recess is a time when socialization occurs between students from different classrooms (Massey et al., 2020). This thought makes us rethink this time, which is magical for students, because playing and moving are important. These games have to be oriented, so that they can really provide a moment of leisure and recreation for the students, as are present in the works of Prompona et al. (2020); Ramstetter et al. (2010); Steffens & Horn (2018); Zavacky & Michael (2017). In line with the above, the propose of this study is to analyze and characterize the types of games played by elementary school students from educational establishments located in the province of Talca, Chile, during the school break period.

METHOD

Design of the Study

This research was characterized as a qualitative study with the intention to seek a more detailed understanding of the meanings and characteristics presented by the participants, in this case, children in play contexts (Given, 2008; Flick, 2009). The technique used for data collection was a non-participant observation, in this regard Guest et al. (2013), specifies that this technique is produced through the researcher's contact with the phenomenon to be observed, taking the reality of the research participants in their own contexts. It is the technique, where researchers do not actively participate in the situation or object studied; thereby seeking to achieve the greatest possible objectivity. Since by not actively getting involved with what is studied, it can be observed in its natural state without the researcher being able to alter its nature simply by studying it or getting involved in it (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The importance of this technique lies in the fact that we can capture a variety of situations or phenomena that are not obtained through questions, since, observed directly in reality; they transmit what was observed directly in reality itself (Jorgensen, 2015; Musante & DeWalt 2010).

Data Collection Procedure

The present study was developed in 2019 between the months of August and November, in six public schools that attend the first years of elementary education, located in the province of Talca, Maule region, Chile. On the occasion, the playground of educational establishments was observed in the morning from 09:45 to 10:10. Direct observations were made during the children's recess, at the fifteen-minute school break. The day of the schools considered in the study begins at 8:30 AM, until 15:30 PM, totaling six hours of class, plus one hour of lunch. In terms of the number of students, the establishments had one course per level with an average of 40 students per course, totaling about 320 students. The playground during recess time consisted of an enclosed court, with bleachers and an outdoor dirt patio of approximately 500 m2.

With the help of an observation form, all the observed events that coincided with the description of the game proposed in this study were recorded, as indicated by the literature (Guest et al., 2013). Thirty units of direct observations were carried out (30 breaks), with 90 events described. In the observation form, the number, sex, and age of the children were recorded. To record the data, the Field Diary instrument was used (Musante & DeWalt, 2010), and collected material was later transcribed to then start the data coding process. The field diary was used in all observations, and they were numbered according to the collection session. The process of organizing and analyzing the data followed a qualitative approach in light of the chosen theoretical framework (Miles et al., 2014; Bailey & Bailey, 2017). The development of the study respected ethical care, according to the Helsinki declaration, maintaining the anonymity of the participants. The field insertions occurred twice a week in each educational establishment, with eight follow-up insertions in each school, for 30 observation units.

For data treatment, the Nvivo 10 software was used, likewise, the content analysis method was used to extract codes and categories inductively (Graneheim et al., 2017; Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019). These were reduced through the constant comparison method. It should be noted that the dimensions were obtained from the review of the theoretical framework Moreira & Costa (2016). Subsequently, the previous categories are grouped through open coding, a question that allows the emergence of the primary categories, giving way from the first descriptive moment to an interpretive instance (Aghaei et al., 2020)

FINDINGS

Next (table N ° 1) the categories and descriptions that emerge from the analysis and interpretation of the systematized data are presented. The purpose of the article has been to identify the games and playful experiences of children, in the context of school recess. In this context, the data began to be analyzed taking as reference two previous categories that emerge from the theoretical framework of the research, that is to say "Kind of Play" and "Character of the Game", then through the coding and categorization process they emerge eight primary categories (see table 1). The foregoing has allowed us to respond to the objective of the study and establish new research findings that are described in the results section and are problematized in the discussion with the findings

reported in the literature. The observation units are grouped into the different primary categories, in such a way that they are assigned a code that expresses the following nomenclature: N (observation unit number); n (described event number).

Table 1
Data systematization matrix

Mega category	Previous category	Description	Primary category
Sense of the Game at school recess	Kind of play	Category that makes explicit the different types of games that take place in school break.	Ball Games
			Traditional Games
			Technological Games
			Competitive Games
	Character of the Game	Category that allows distinguishing the orientation that children give to the game at school recess.	Gender Perspective
			Table Games
			Symbolic games
			Conflict resolution

Source: Own Elaboration

Previous Category Game Types - Primary Category: Ball Games

In most of the school recesses, the recurrent game by the students is the game with balls. These games, such as soccer, basketball, or volleyball, are played almost every day during recesses and are presented with the following observations:

> "In the court, a soccer match is held between the 7th and 8th grade classes and the occasional 5th and 6th grade child, the match is organized quickly, the teams are already defined to make the most of the 15 minutes of recess"(N, 15; n: 44).

> "Walking through the roofed space, I see that they have set up two tables to play table tennis, the kid who gather there, bring their own paddles and balls, so they can play during recess; They take turns every 3 points to make the rotation faster and so that everyone can play "(N, 3; n: 7).

> "Apart from the boys playing soccer, there is a small group of girls who play with a basketball, give each other passes and shoot to the hoop, they can be seen to have fun and enjoy it" (N, 7; n: 19).

> "On the other side of the court, there is a group of 5 students playing "fish" with a volleyball ball, which consists of throwing the ball upwards and the player who falls must be placed in the middle of the circle avoiding being touched by the volleyball ball "(N, 1; n: 3).

As mentioned in the description of the category, the experiences during recess point to the complex process of learning and development of interpersonal relationships, since they are a substantive part of the interaction between students, in the privileged space for this, such as the school recess. Students during recess play ball sports, like volleyball, basketball, or some other game such as table tennis. It can be affirmed that

ball games in each place are essential and create not only a lot of attraction and preference in the students' recesses, but also that there is a diversity of creative activities developed by the children themselves that allow them to be distracted, amused and the development of the playful aspects of free and spontaneous play. An important aspect to highlight is the presence of very popular sports modalities in South America such as soccer, where students transport their interests, preferences and entertainment options to the school recess space. In addition, it is possible to observe the impact of other sports modalities that are part of the school curriculum on physical education, and that are disseminated primarily at school, since in many times the first contact of students with these sports is in the physical education class or sports clubs offered in schools.

Previous Category Types of Games - Primary Category: Traditional Games

Traditional games are a manifestation of the diversity of motor activities that children display during recess, and their essential characteristic is that they have been installed in the imagination of childhood and adolescence in different generations of students.

> "In the big court of the school there is a group of girls and boys who are dedicated to play tag, they run around the yard, alternating between who is responsible for starting and then catching" (N, 9; n: 26).

> "... at the base of the stairs a group of 5 girls and 2 boys play hide and seek, one of the girls is the one who counts, the rest are looking everywhere for a place to hide, some do it in the bathroom, others in the sectors where there are more students, others by the stairs "(N, 20; n: 58)

> "The largest number of school students are concentrated on the large court and where a mixed group of approximately 15 students play jump rope" (N, 5; n: 14).

As described, it can be deduced that children show motivation and enthusiasm for traditional games such as "Tag", a game that has crossed generations, and consists simply of running and catching the partner, however, generates a high dose of complicity and emotion, since the available space is used. Another of the traditional games is jumping the "rope", as it is a game that requires the participation of several students and of both sexes, it makes it a fairly safe and playful activity for students, experienced by several generations of schoolchildren in Chile and Southern Cone. It is worth noting the participation of men and women in traditional games; consequently, this type of games integrates the gender perspective during recess.

Previous Category Types of Games - Primary Category Technological Games

The category of technological games is emerging with increasing force in educational establishments, as the use of cell phones and Internet access becomes widespread, boys and girls take advantage of recess time to play technological games.

> "In one of the corners of the school yard, they are dedicated to play with their cell phones; apparently they are playing an online game, since they constantly yell at each other to look back, and that they are in front" (N, 12; n: 34).

> "On the other side of the courtyard, there was a group of students sitting on the ground with their backs against the wall while playing on their cell phones." (N, 18; n: 53)

> "Seventh grade children are standing in one of the corners of the playground, playing with their cell phones, for the most part you can see how they hardly pay attention to their surroundings while they play and only speak to "give instructions" to each other" (N, 2; n: 6).

As described, technological games have both, a recreational and competitive objective. In this kind of activities children seek to overcome "virtual opponents." In these actions, the use of technological devices such as cell phones and tablets predominates. Technological games are typical of the 21st century in the schoolyard, since today's children have been called digital natives; they were born in a digital and technological world that has come to stay. Consequently, the school must understand this sociocultural phenomenon and adapt the pedagogical strategies necessary for systematic learning, leaving certain lapses for fun, such as recreation, in which children take advantage of the alternatives provided by virtual environments in the dimension of play.

Previous Category Types of Games - Primary Category Competitive Games

Competitive games have the purpose of demonstrating and developing the competitive aspects in the players, where one of the kids or a team is victorious, and therefore, the right to stay in the game is earned until another player defeats it.

> "Groups of students from 2 different grades (5th and 7th) play soccer games simultaneously, there are approximately 30 children involved in one of these games" (N, 22; n: 65).

> "There is a group of students playing table tennis, apparently they are students from 5th to 7th grade, they play up to a certain number of points and the winner keeps playing" (N, 13; n: 38).

> "A group of girls climb the climbing wall installed in the schoolyard, they are divided in groups, one in each climb and compete with each other, at this moment, the boys are only spectators of the game ..." (N, 17, n : 51).

> "A group of children is inside a soccer goal; two of them compete with a coin in the air and quickly run to the other end of the field to touch the goalposts and return to the teammates, they touch their hands and the other comes out. There are two teams playing as a mini-post or team races to see who comes first, the losers must perform 10 arm flexion-extensions or squats ... "(N, 6; n: 17).

In these types of games in which success is marked by triumph and failure by defeat, it can be understood that triumph will always be sought, since it symbolizes superiority in their skills or performance. Victory is marked by the highest number of points scored by a team, or by whoever manages to reach the goal first. In this category, the competitive game space is almost exclusively male, both in participation and in the occupation of space, leaving women in a secondary role, an issue that shows the cultural factors that

the school reproduces. Men preferably play these games; however, women also have their preferences as presented in the observation records.

Previous Category Character of the Game - Primary Category: Gender Perspective

In the gender perspective category, observations of games that aim at the interaction of boys and girls are presented, without causing segregation, since what is relevant when playing boys with girls is that they are able to create games and have fun during recess.

> "A girl pulls out a rope, jumps for a while, and then several girls and then boys get together and begin to jump rope in a group" (N, 4; n: 10).

> "In the roofed yard, 10 boys and girls aged 7-8 play foosball and another group of 8 boys and girls aged 10-13 play table tennis, both in a dynamic in which one player loses and it is up to the next one that waits aside "(N, 24; n: 70).

> "The vast majority, about 30 students, are on the fields where 3 soccer teams are quickly formed, men and women participate in it" (N, 16; N: 48).

> "... In another place there is a group of boys playing to throw paper airplanes from the second floor down, and the girls wait for the airplanes on the first floor…, then they change positions (N, 10; n: 29) .

> "... By my side some boys and girls making origami, among them there are pigeons, penguins and what abounds are airplanes, a number of impressive models ..." (N, 21; n: 63).

The games played by children are always linked to a large number of members and there is almost no exclusion between them, but they all play. The games most played by boys and girls as a whole are related to games such as jumping rope, table tennis, foosball, and creativity games such as origami. The competitive play space is a space dominated by boys, with a low participation of girls, and a hierarchical space, where older children tend to occupy the center of the courtyards, and younger children are located in the peripheral spaces. The preference for activities closer to professional competition sports is observed in the case of boys, and in the case of girls, activities that are more inclusive, participatory and with an important possibility of developing integration and communication skills.

Previous Category Game Character- Primary Category: Table Games

Table games are those that, as their name indicates, are played on a board or flat surface, the rules of the same will depend on the type of game, one or more people can participate in them; some games require the application of manual dexterity or logical reasoning, while others are based on chance.

> "2nd grade children with 1st grade classmates sit on the edge of the hall and begin to play cards competing between the two grades" (N, 27; n79).

> "Children who are located on the edge of the corridor to play cards, form in a circle and while some are playing, others observe and support, giving a bar to their classmates who are on their turn to play" (N, 8; n: 22)

> "In the hallway, two students from 8 to 10 years old play Pokémon cards, they are arranged face to face and deal a series of cards on the floor" (N, 30; n: 89).

> "Two children in the bleacher's sector of the school play chess, apparently they come with the pieces ready from the room, around them a large group of children, classmates apparently, observe them in silence" (N, 26; n : 77).

In board games, one or more children can participate and the rules will depend on the type of game, children seek fun through logical reasoning. They use cards or chessboard, in which they face each other, in some cases, celebrated the triumph of a play or supported by their peers; who are awaiting their preparation to face the opposing play. In both situations, the characteristic of the game is the strategy implemented by the players and the counterattack using the different strategies and rules that they respect.

Previous Category Game Character - Primary Category: Symbolic Games

The symbolic games category is characterized by the use of imagination, fantasy, as presented in the following field observations:

> "Two children play superheroes, they make gestures pretending to have powers, apparently one of them has the power to fly, since a jacket acts as a cape" (N, 29; n: 86).

> "A couple of children they play with simulated weapons by the hands, they run all over the court shooting each other, when they get close they start shooting, in such a way that they begin to fall to the ground simulating a battle ..." (N, 11; n: 32).

> "A group of little girls take out some dolls from their backpacks and place them on a kind of cloth in a corner of the school's yard, the girls begin to dress the dolls, and they are placing them in different positions in space, as a catwalk "(N, 28; n: 84).

Symbolic games are influenced most of the time by what children see on television, they bring to their games a world of fantasies, making assimilation of the imaginary world with everyday life, organizing the images and symbols observed in cartoons, integrating those images into their games. All symbolic games reflect a world full of magic and without restrictions. It is a period of fictitious representation that makes them dream and navigate their fantasies.

Previous Category Character of the Game - Primary Category: Conflict Resolution

The conflict resolution category refers to those moments in which difficulties occur in the schoolyard, which cause children to argue or fight among themselves, over objects or events that happen, as presented in the following field records:

"A couple of children apparently have a conflict with a ball, in such a way that they begin to push each other and quickly roll on the floor in a kind of fight to see who is the strongest. The fight is only resolved with the arrival of the other companions who separate them and force them to shake hands" (N, 23; n: 67).

"In a sector of the school playground, an intense game of soccer is played, one of the players, very skilled with the ball, scores a goal between the legs of the goalkeeper…, his teammates yell at him and they draw him from the bow, leaving him on the bench" (N, 25; n: 74).

"A couple of girls fight over the rope, apparently one of them does not want to lend the rope to her friend, so the very angry girl snatches the rope from her, throws it to the ground and pushes her partner" (N, 19; n: 55).

"A small boy 7 to 8 years old is sitting crying in the grandstand at the back of the school, suddenly a girl and two boys are approaching, who sit next to him and accompany him for a while, and after a few minutes hug him. Then they invite him to continue playing and he gets up and runs to chase them" (N, 14; n: 41).

The schoolyard is not only the place for recreation, fun, playfulness, and creativity, manifested and expressed by children, but it is also the place for socialization and resolution of personal conflicts, fights, discussions. Sometimes blows are experienced in the yard, sometimes with high intensity. Consequently, it is necessary to consider this space as a possibility to learn to listen to, recognize, respect and take care of each other among children.

DISCUSSION

The playground is considered a rich pedagogical space for children's experiences and learning, which allows unleashing educational processes that are built in the interactions that occur between them, as shown by the studies by Alves et al. (2018); Cardoso et al. (2017); Lewis et al. (2000); Massey et al. (2018). Recess, at school, is perhaps the greatest space of freedom for students, it adds various learning experiences for students, enabling the development of creativity, collaboration, imagination and also reasoning, respecting differences, and contributing to the conservation of the school environment (Lodewyk & McNamara, 2019; Ramstetter et al., 2010). The child needs the socialization space during recess, since it turns this space into a place to play and learn at the same time, reducing indiscipline and aggressiveness (Castillo-Rodríguez et al., 2018; Ramstetter & Fink, 2019; Vincent et al., 2018).

In this sense, it is clear that playing during recess is not only a way of occupying time, but also a facilitating element of socialization, since, in the spontaneity and freedom of the moment, the child interacts with the group, seeking complicity and company. The playground is part of the routine established by the school, and therefore, should be valued as an educational-pedagogical environment (Brez & Sheets, 2017; Pellegrini & Bohn-Gettler, 2013). According to the observations made, the game was the main social practice developed by the children during the school break. In relation to the first

previous category Types of Games, it is evident that children, during the scarce 15 minutes of school recess, develop activities associated with games with balls, racing games, traditional games, technological games, and games in those who dominate the competition. In this sense, the literature reports that during school recess children jump rope, play with balls, play catch, hide, play table tennis, basketball and volleyball preferably (Cordazzo & Vieira 2008; de Oliveira- Martins et al., 2016; Lodewyk & McNamara, 2019).

On the other hand, a relevant finding of the study is related to technological games, which are among the favorite games of students. The growing access to mobile phones and internet, allows children to take on challenges with peers, or with children from other places connected online (Sabirli & Coklar, 2020; Pramono et al., 2021). The process of socialization in the educational field is carried out at all times, since this context gives students different opportunities to share and recognize others in a space of mutual coexistence (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003). According to the observations made during recesses, there are children who sit down to talk with each other, share their snacks with friends or also carry out any physical activity in small groups or large groups such as those mentioned above, which is a clear example of a socializing action. In this line, the literature reports that school recess can contribute many values and strengthen ties not only affective, but also communication between peers, also bringing various standards of respect, companionship, solidarity, and many other positive elements that can be given in the educational context through socialization (Brez & Sheets, 2017; Griffin et al., 2017; Kern et al., 2016). Likewise, those who socialize can get to know each other; they can recognize new or unknown realities, stories, and cultures for some, which generates a positive good in each person who performs it. On the other hand, during this time, male and female students are in constant motion, which brings them important benefits for their health according to what was stated by López et al. (2017); Frago-Calvo et al. (2017); Shervey & DiPerna (2017).

In terms of the second previous category, Character of the Game, it was observed that students learn to negotiate, give in, play as a team, win and lose freely, findings that are consistent with that reported by the literature in the works of Alves et al. (2018); Kern et al. (2016); Pellegrini & Bohn-Gettler (2013); Vincent et al. (2018). Recess is a very important socializing space within the school day, since it is the place where children begin to practice their social skills, their affection and their empathy. In addition, it is a perfect time to develop imagination, invent games and their own rules, play different roles, and do it, especially collectively (Steffens & Horn, 2018). Among these findings is the gender perspective; observing children during recess, it could be noticed that, in mixed play groups, the predominant games were in which boys and girls share space, without making distinctions between men and women. What is relevant is fun in the game, by sharing materials and enriching the socialization processes between them (Dorovolomo, 2020; Rodriguez-Navarro et al., 2014). From another perspective, table games such as cards or chess are visualized, which require greater concentration than games associated with more intense bodily practices, however, these types of games are recurrent in the recess space, allowing in turn, other children take the place of spectators

of the game and thereby generate instances of group socialization (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2003).

Socio-cultural aspects, typical of the territorial space in which the schools are located, also permeate this socialization of students. Competitive play and sport are a masculine space, and hierarchical, because the older boys occupy the center of the court and the younger ones on the periphery. This space is concentrated in almost exclusively masculine segregation. Games where girls predominate are more inclusive, where children participate equally, and competitiveness is not marked, but the possibility of sharing and contributing to the game. This coincides with the proposals of Moral Garcia et al. (2021), where they argue that female schoolchildren mainly practice individual sports and as a hobby, while men did so collectively and competitively, with a higher level of sports practice among males. This confirm gender stereotypes in the social imaginary, which makes sports practice support these differences, which are currently being questioned (Muñoz et al., 2021)

In terms of the symbolic character of the game, the literature suggests that in this type of game children express their emotions and their deepest fantastic life; they put themselves in relation to mental and unconscious representations, which shows how they represent their experiences, making reference to everything that they have experienced based on creativity (Hoffmann & Russ, 2016). During symbolic play, the child uses real objects to transform it into symbolic objects, an activity that produces a lot of pleasure, and, on the other hand, through symbolic play they affirm their identity as presented by Freitas & de Lara (2010); Mattos & Faria (2014); Sarlé (2013). Another finding of the study is related to the way in which conflicts are solved in the courtyard. Various investigations highlight that during recess, boys and girls present conflicts and learn to resolve them, it is here when problems of coexistence generally occur, and conflicts arise and, above all, are resolved (Castillo-Rodríguez et al., 2018; London et al., 2015; Prompona et al., 2020). In this sense, the school cannot ignore the values that permeate its space, and recess time is a very significant moment for children's interactions among their peers. It is a time and a space constituted by a network of relationships between subjects that include alliances, conflicts and transgressions, appropriation and (re) meaning of the spaces and corporal practices. Because of that the school should promote an instruction oriented to the global development of the capacities of the students, in the academic, artistic, sports, social and human (Mendes et al., 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the present study allow us to verify the objective set, in terms of identifying the games and the playful experience of children, as well as understanding the educational processes triggered by this social practice in the context of school recess. The above, since recess can be conceived as a space that allows the integral development of students, since it not only implies the development of various bodily practices such as sports, but also contributes to the development of emotional, cognitive and social language. The above, since a break of at least 15 minutes, contribute to the improvement of learning, social development and health during the stage of primary education, also improving the behavior of children in the classroom. The above, since

the game must be important for everyone, since it allows children to learn the value of understanding, respect, listening, empathy, and fun, that is, the really important things that cannot be taught.

The observations made during four months, in the playground of the eight public schools during recess time, allowed to identify and characterize the types of games that children develop and then interpret the character of those games, since every child, feeling free in a space such as recess, he manifests his behavior in a spontaneous, and real way. Along these lines, it was observed that children preferably play ball games, traditional games, technological games, competitive games, board games, and symbolic games. On several occasions, we were able to verify that these games allow them to resolve conflicts and that a gender perspective is reflected in them. Consequently, recess is a complex pedagogical period of time in which many factors intervene, in this sense, it is relevant that the school considers recess as a pedagogical tool, since it is at that time that children manifest themselves naturally and express their emotions, as evidenced by field notes and records made during the investigation.

LIMITATIONS

As limitations of the study, the possibility of complementing the non-participant observation technique is pointed out, with semi-structured interviews with the students, in such a way, to generate an articulation and triangulation of data.

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