

10

STRATEGIES

**FOR SOCIALIZATION IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM
DISORDER AT HOME AND IN THE CLASSROOM**

STRATEGIES

FOR SOCIALIZATION IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AT HOME AND IN THE CLASSROOM

ESTRATEGIAS PARA LA SOCIALIZACIÓN EN NIÑOS CON TRASTORNO DEL ESPECTRO AUTISTA EN EL HOGAR Y EN EL AULA

Oscar José Martín-Pinto¹

E-mail: doctoroscar2015@hotmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6461-2183>

¹ Unidad Educativa Particular Saint Dominic School. Ecuador.

Suggested citation (APA, seven edition)

Martín-Pinto, O. J. (2024). Strategies for socialization in children with autism spectrum disorder at home and in the classroom. *Revista Metropolitana de Ciencias Aplicadas*, 7(1), 98-103.

ABSTRACT

This essay focuses on describing and explaining how socialization was achieved in elementary school students with TEA, it is known is a disorder that causes alterations in language, communication, social interaction and thought forms, so the biopsychosocial development of children is affected; The subjects described in this essay have a series of antecedents on the poor development of socialization, in order to solve this problem, the objective of being able to create or replicate existing strategies for the development of communication and therefore, socialization, arose. carried out a methodology that consisted of conducting a bibliographic review to determine what strategies and techniques are used for this purpose. The results found were a series of strategies and techniques of multiple uses, which begins with physical and psychological actions to begin processes of communication, integration and group coexistence. The conclusions obtained were the achievement and progress of the communication guidelines, which also led to the development of socialization and coexistence with their peers.

Keywords:

Communication, socialization, strategies, techniques.

RESUMEN

El presente ensayo se enfoca en describir y explicar cómo se logró la socialización en estudiantes de educación básica con TEA, es conocido que es un trastorno que provoca alteraciones del lenguaje, en la comunicación, en la interacción social y en las formas de pensamiento, por lo que el desarrollo biopsicosocial de las y los niños se ve afectado; los sujetos descritos en este ensayo poseen una serie de antecedentes sobre el mal desarrollo de la socialización, para poder solventar este problema, surgió el objetivo de poder crear o replicar estrategias ya existentes para el desarrollo de la comunicación y por ende, la socialización, se realizó una metodología que consistió en realizar una revisión bibliográfica para determinar que estrategias y técnicas son empeladas para este fin. Los resultados encontrados fueron una serie de estrategias y técnicas de usos múltiples, que se inicia con acciones físicas y psicológicas para comenzar procesos de comunicación, integración y convivencia grupal. Las conclusiones obtenidas fueron el logro y progreso de las pautas de comunicación, que conllevaron también al desarrollo de la socialización y convivencia con sus pares.

Palabras clave:

Comunicación, socialización, estrategias, técnicas.

INTRODUCTION

The first detected case of autism was in 1943 by Leo Kanner, in his studies he describes the first found cases of autism and its symptoms such as, for example, inability to communicate, difficulty to relate or loneliness, with these aspects the psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler associated it to schizophrenia due to the similarity of its symptoms and for this reason it was associated to psychosis, later Lam Wing and Judith Gould, would give the term “spectrum” in 1979, in order to describe the possibilities of types of manifestation of autism and not a category (Pallares, 2017).

The origin of ASD (autism spectrum disorder) is still an unknown field, there are hints about genetic, physiological and psychic aspects, so it is currently considered a syndrome that integrates those mentioned, for Gallardo (2016), *“traditionally it was thought to be a strictly psychological disease and it was believed, and even that its origin resided in the lack of parental affection”*. Currently this conception has changed, since specialists attribute this syndrome with a genetic and environmental origin, according to Panighini (2016), *“when talking about the environmental origin of autism, it refers to a broad sense that includes upbringing, pregnancy and childbirth conditions, as well as infections and toxic components of the environment”*, but in today’s reality, there is no scientific evidence to prove these factors, however, Garriga (2018), *“autism is considered by experts to have a genetic origin of neuropsychological disorders in childhood”*.

Other specialists contemplate it from a neurobiological perspective to define that autism has its origin in an alteration in the brain regions and that when they are thoroughly identified, the types of alterations will be better understood and prevention and treatment strategies will be developed (Lord et. al., 2016). On the other hand, the cognitive aspects of socialization, facial interpretation and emotional interpretation that are markedly impaired in subjects with ASD are taken into account; it is deduced that the different regions of the brain systems responsible for social cognition have a brain dysfunction in ASD (Artigas, 2017).

As the description given about ASD, the problem that arises with these children in the educational system, is to be able to socialize with their peers and with teachers in the teaching-learning process, since the current theories and methodologies of education give much importance to the processes of socialization of knowledge in learning, building it and experiencing it in a contextualized situation. Addressing the socialization processes in ASD is a topic that shows many theoretical and practical gaps and this essay aims to deepen to make a theoretical, practical, analytical approach to the phenomenon in order to apply the right strategies to develop socialization in these children.

It is important to initiate socialization processes in ASD children from an early age, so it is important to analysed,

create, implement and evaluate appropriate strategies for this process, socialization allows individuals to exchange information, learning, social norms and regulation of behaviours. It is necessary to develop these processes to be able to interact and externalize experiences, in that process language, is a mediation tool that favours and conditions the learned, this configures the psychic and personality aspects of individuals; and in this case of children with ASD (López, 2002).

The hypothesis that arises in this essay, is whether with the socialization strategies used in the classroom, the processes of that aspect are achieved so that children with ASD can relate to their peers and teachers in the space where the teaching-learning processes occur and at the same time develop patterns of social behaviours towards others involved and in turn the language as a form of manifestation of the corresponding social interaction.

The purpose of developing socialization in children with ASD is to understand their cognitive peculiarities, to better understand what their real needs are, how they process information, to facilitate their understanding of their environment and help them relate to their environment. The role of the teacher is to be a mediator between knowledge, the context and the other members that make up the educational community, also to initiate and encourage the communication process through language, which is so necessary to carry out socialization (López, 2002).

For Lopez (2002), the school context is where more socialization occurs for children with ASD, it should be rich in materials and experiences for children with ASD to interact and develop communication and socialization patterns, It is important that these stimuli are placed little by little so as not to collide with the behaviour of psychological rigidity that is a characteristic of children with ASD, gradually work these stimuli to internalize them, process them and initiate moments of interaction and communication with their peers, with teachers in the classroom and in the process of teaching and learning.

With the above written the main objective that is born in this essay is:

- To analyse the strategies that currently exist that allow socialization in children with ASD for home and school.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology to be used here will be qualitative, which consists of research focused on the subjects of study in order to adopt an internal perspective of the phenomenon studied in an integral and complete way, they are processes of inductive inquiry to find answers to questions that are generated from the social experience, of how they are created and give meaning to human life (Hernández, 2019). Within the qualitative methodology, the technique of literature review will be used to analyse and understand

previous research that is related to the topic described in this essay.

The methodology used here for the writing of the article was the qualitative methodology, which consists of aspects not susceptible to quantification. It starts from a phenomenological scientific approach, its basis is centred on Anthropology, where it is intended to perform a holistic understanding, that is, a global vision of the studied phenomenon that is not translated into mathematical terms. Its postulate starts from the paradigm of the subjective that serves as a source of knowledge and at the same time, object of science itself (Hernández, 2017).

The technique within the qualitative methodology applied here, will be the bibliographic review, which consists of a modality of work to be able to investigate and write scientific articles, papers of fined degree, master's degree... whose main objective is to collect existing information on the phenomenon studied, this causes a documentary research providing a holistic view of the phenomenon at present, it must establish relationships between the sources consulted and make comparisons between them to be able to make a critique of the information collected and thus answer the research questions posed (Hernández, 2017).

Once reviewed, analysed and chosen the sources of information, the analytical-synthetic method will be used, this method is used to study the facts, decompose them to determine all their variables and study them individually and once you have all the information holistically and integrally. Once this is done, the elements are joined again to form a whole and obtain the appropriate conclusions, with this the principles, notions and definitions of the terms are exposed, especially in the experimental sciences to extract the generalizing laws and add new knowledge, (Hernández, 2017).

DEVELOPMENT

ASD is considered a complex pervasive disorder in the brain development of the individual who has it, which affects psychological functioning thus causing disability in three aspects, this is called "Wing's Triad". This triad affects language, social interaction and imagination (Perkins, 2014). Today it remains an enigma whose causes are incomprehensible, which in many cases refers to genetic factors, it has also been found that ASD is often associated with other syndromes such as, for example, Tourette Syndrome, attention problems, moods such as depression or anxiety.

To address the problem described, numerous authors speak of a series of strategies and techniques to develop socialization in children with ASD, Delgados (2014), describes that social skills are a set of behaviours that allow internalizing with other people and the environment, thus establishing interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships,

these behaviours are learned since children begin to understand the world around them, in this way they learn forms of behaviours to acquire patterns and social skills that help to automate the rules and norms that establish the social context.

To achieve socialization, human beings have been equipped with an information exchange system that is called communication, this process is formed or contains two structures called oral and written communication, in the oral there is a series of visual cues that revolve around the human being and his context, helping him to locate, obtain information and understand what is happening around him, these visual cues are used in the planning of special educational needs, Brasil (2016), calls them as "Augmentative and alternative communication system (SAAC). These are forms that aim to increase and/or compensate for communication difficulties.

Social skills have an intrinsic basis to the individual, who since childhood feels the desire to belong to a social group in order to identify and participate in that group. It can be stated that the human being is a social being by nature, but the question here is: What happens in children with ASD? (Delgados, 2014). This author describes that people with ASD present many difficulties in the understanding and internalization of social norms, showing rejection to situations that involve initiating socialization mechanisms.

For Barrios (2016), social skills should be trained for children with ASD in natural environments where opportunities to socialize and interact with other children and adults arise. All this starts at home and specifically in the daily routines of that context to begin the training of social skills, which should be encouraged by helping parents to teach their children to interact from an early age, with the aim of progressively exposing them to situations that require some social behaviour, but never forcing them to expose them to situations for which they are not yet prepared.

Barrios (2016), exposes in his research a series of strategies to promote social skills from home and they are the following:

- Enhancing greeting and farewell: it consists of each of the family members when leaving home or arriving home, taking the child's hand to put it with his/her own and generate an affable and loving contact, verbalizing the greeting, the emotional tone and the names of the people involved. This action is repeated every day in the same way and gradually withdraw support so that it arises spontaneously, this same action can be extrapolated to other family members and neighbour's where you live.
- Establish a visual panel of social rules at home: with the help of a visual poster, establish the daily routines and characteristics of the child with ASD, with this the rules are reviewed on a daily or weekly basis and offer a reward when compliance is achieved.

- Create situations that encourage interaction and socialization: Invite classmates of the child with ASD, neighbour's and other family members for short visits of 10 minutes and gradually increase the time of stay; with the visits establish a specific and motivating task for the child with ASD.
- Have toys that facilitate social interaction: it is highly recommended that there are toys at home that encourage social relationships, that are fun and that can be played with other family members; the use of video games or tablest is not recommended because they generate isolation.
- Other tasks proposed by Sakai (2005), are an example for children with ASD to develop social skills at home and in the classroom and are the following:
- Act as mediators in interpersonal relationships: here the mediators (family and teachers) let freely interact to be able to direct and redirect inappropriate behaviour's, explain why it cannot be done and generate another behaviour to correct the previous one.

Other strategies mentioned by García (2016), already for the educational context serves to avoid social isolation, control compulsive behaviour's, communication problems and stress that is generated in the child with ASD by mental rigidity, these strategies are closely related to those described above and are a complement to those performed at home and are as follows:

- Post a panel with the classroom rules: place a visual panel that shows the daily routines in the classroom and how they should be carried out, this serves as a model to take in when he/she does not know what to do or does not understand the situation and at the same time reward the behaviour when it is achieved.
- Create situations of social interaction in the classroom with school tasks: organize team work and family meetings in the classroom to develop social skills, in some cases giving him/her the leadership of the situation so that he/she can develop solution guidelines and gradually increase the time in the duration of the tasks and the number of tasks.
- Provoke the request for help in classroom tasks: with simple tasks and actions in which he/she needs help, this will lead him/her to have to relate and interact in different ways depending on the person he/she asks for help.
- Practicing sports: the practice of sports relieves tension and improves motor activities in addition to this, for children with ASD serves to relate to a different environment to achieve beneficial activities.
- Music therapy: is presented as one of the latest trends in therapy for this type of disorder, performing activities that are related to music and serves to improve communication and perception of children with ASD.

The results obtained in this essay are based on the search for the most used strategies to achieve socialization in children with ASD, the strategies found in the research

process speak of a series of guidelines and context in which this process takes place. All of them agree that the first moment of socialization should be with the family and at home, where the steps are established to initiate socialization with communication strategies begin with greeting routines and living routines with the family.

Another of the results found is that when using the strategies to initiate the acts of socialization is that they should be rewarded, so that little by little the socialization guidelines are internalized and emerge on their own, this occurs as long as there is a control of the context by the family and teachers in the classroom, the exposure times of children with ASD should be measured so that little by little they can be prolonged to strengthen socialization with more strength.

The behaviours of children with ASD such as, for example, mental rigidity, anxiety or depression should be worked with strategies that generate tranquillity and calmness to these children, these strategies such as the practice of a sport or music therapy causes changes at the behavioural level, because by making physiological and psychological changes, the brain structure changes and therefore the manifestations of socialization and communication undergoes positive changes, and with that the anxiety and depression is combated.

Finally, it is that the family together with the school and especially with the classroom climate, must work together, always guided and accompanied by specialists who will always be evaluating the situations in a relevant way, thus producing the changes that are necessary to improve the processes of socialization and communication in children with ASD, with the help of the strategies described in the previous section that are used as resources to make children with ASD communicators and socializers and ultimately autonomous and independent people.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions obtained in the present essay are based on the different techniques used for socialization with children with ASD at home and in the classroom. The interventions made with these techniques are done individually or in groups, with several sessions per week in both contexts. The techniques mentioned in the previous section are the most commonly used to initiate and develop socialization in the aspects of social interaction, personal interaction, communication and social motivation in this study group.

The concept of socialization is a logical and epistemological definition that is compatible with the psychological term of internalization, since by internalizing and developing the psychological bases of socialization, the desired behaviours of said process are achieved, being able to initiate and maintain socialization with communication, allows growth and manifestation of the adaptive

behaviours of communication and extrapolate and apply them in new contexts.

All the mentioned techniques have pursued the objective of initiating and improving the social functioning for the situations of daily life, this has implied as a result, that the families were the ones who initiated by recommendation of the experts in the application of the techniques at home the first processes of socialization. When working on socialization from the family, the first thing that must be worked on to obtain correct results are the processes of acceptance of friendship, self-esteem, anxiety and depression.

The family, the school and the community are three important contexts of action of the child with ASD that should be considered as a condition to alleviate the difficulties or the subjective modification of the child with ASD, with the learning of new habits, according to his psychic capacity, living conditions and education. The emergent learning in the child with ASD responds to the instrumental class, that is to say, in most cases a reward must be given to maintain the socialization behaviours already achieved.

REFERENCES

- Barrios, S. (2016). Uso de estrategias visuales para promover la autonomía persona de las personas con TEA desde la terapia ocupacional. *Autismo Diario*. <https://autismodiario.com/2013/01/17/uso-de-estrategias-visuales-para-promover-la-autonomia-personal-de-las-personas-con-tea-desde-terapia-ocupacional/>
- Brasil, C. (2016). ¿Qué son los SAAC? Portal Aragonés de la comunicación aumentativa y alternativa. Unitat de Tècniques Augmentatives de Comunicació. https://aulaabierta.arasaac.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/que_son_los_saac.pdf
- Córdova Rodríguez, S. V. (2011). Eficacia del sistema PECS para la superación de las limitaciones comunicaciones y de lenguaje en personas con diagnóstico de autismo. (Trabajo de grado). Universidad Central del Ecuador.
- Delgados, C. (2016). *Mi comunicador de Pictogramas*. Editorial CEAPAT.
- García, E., & Jorreto, R. (2016). Síndrome de asperger: un enfoque multidisciplinar. (Ponencia). Primera Jornada Científico- Sanitaria. Sevilla, España.
- López, A. (2002). ¿Podría haber tenido Einstein autismo? <https://www.elmundo.es/elmundosalud/2003/05/16/pediatria/1053088775.html>
- Sakai, K. (2005). *Finding Our Way: Practical Solutions for Creating a Supportive Home and Community for the Asperger Syndrome Family*. Autism Asperger Publishing Com.