

# ***Técnicas de meta-aprendizaje para el estudio independiente de los alumnos universitarios***

## ***Meta-learning techniques for the independent study of university students***

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**Resumen:** A partir de una detallada revisión documental y la observación a actividades docentes y metodológicas, el presente trabajo aborda la problemática de lograr el estudio con autonomía y eficiencia por parte del alumno del modelo de formación semipresencial, de ahí el objetivo de mejorar el dominio de técnicas de estímulo al meta-aprendizaje para la calidad del estudio independiente de los alumnos universitarios con la guía formativa como herramienta didáctica y a través de la asignatura Comunicación y Lenguaje.

**Palabras clave:** Estudio independiente; Autonomía del aprendizaje; Meta-aprendizaje, Aprender a aprender

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**Abstract:** Based on a detailed documentary review and observation of teaching and methodological activities, this paper addresses the problem of achieving study autonomously and efficiently by the student blended learning model, hence the goal of improving the mastery of techniques of stimulation to the meta-learning for the quality of the independent study of the university students, with the formative guide as didactic tool and through the subject Communication and Language.

**Keywords:** Independent study; Autonomy of learning; meta-learning, learning to learn

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## **Introduction**

In the current complex world panorama, where irreversible damage to the planet prevails and war as an interventionist resource increases its standards, the threat to peace and its necessary prevalence as a condition to achieve quality indicators is a concern for most states, in the construction of sustainable human development. “(...) There can be no sustainable development without peace, nor peace without sustainable development” (UN, 2015, p. 2).

Studies related to the topic at the international level, among which stand out: Warleta (1997), Jarés (2003), Tuvilla (2004) and Abrego (2010), visualize education for peace as a way of educating about conflict, with a character of transversely and legally endorsed human right.

These researches enunciate peace education as an investigative line that contributes to a contemporary need. Cuba has not been left out of researching on the subject. The National Ministry of Education (MINED) has focused on priorities that support the development of education for peace in each of the educational systems. Due to the flexibility offered by the curricula, without constituting a subject, education for peace is promoted, including from the curricular content. In Primary Education and High School Education, there are contents that explicitly pay tribute to education for peace from the Civic Education subject.

The analysis of research generated in High School education, among which García (2001) and Rodney (2010) stand out, emphasize prevention to counteract violence. Rodríguez (2012), on the other hand, visualizes preparation in education for peace and human rights for teachers, as a significant element to transform the educational reality.

In Villa Clara province, Arteaga (2005), as a result of his doctoral thesis, builds a pedagogical model to develop peace education focused on moral values in the upper middle school. This thesis constitutes a guideline for the development of various research projects linked to branch programs of the Ministry of Education.

The Projects stand out: *"Role of the middle school in the formation of a culture of citizen coexistence against violence. Coping strategy from school"* (2005-2007); *"Education for Peace aimed at achieving a human coexistence centered on moral values at the middle level"* (2007); *"Education, values, identity and ethnography for a culture of peace"* (2012-2015) and *"The education of ethical and aesthetic values at the base of citizen training for a culture of peace"* (2015-2019).

Research results belonging to the projects referred to above, among which stand out: Torres (2012), Pérez (2015) and Pérez (2017), demonstrate existing cracks in the theoretical-methodological preparation of education professionals. The works consulted, support the need to address peace education in primary education, less favored in the research carried out. This constitutes an investigative gap, for the authors of this article, as active members of the project in current execution. It constitutes the objective of the article, to socialize guidelines that direct the preparation of the Primary Education professional in peace education.

## **Development**

Theoretical approach to peace education and its significance in the preparation of the primary education professional.

For peace to be desirable and an aspiration, its internalization is essential, not as an absence of war, but also as an absence of manifestations of violence that take place in the social relations established by man. Several are the existing definitions of peace. Among the multiple meanings Cruz (2006) states:

Peace is a dynamic, open, dialectical process, with a tendency towards the progressive realization of solidarity, equality, justice and the development of individual and collective potential; it is also a value, a commitment to transform and modify reality, its search supposes the attempt to achieve an internal balance, a model of relationships with others that are based on cooperation, that excludes dominance and conceives a harmonious attitude towards nature, who assumes that the person belongs to nature, but that the this one does not belong to the person. (p.147)

Peace, seen as a value, assumes harmony in human relationships at all levels. Contemplate the rejection of violence in any of its manifestations. It also reveals the need to build knowledge and tools to live in peace, so that the rights of each person are respected. On the other hand, education for peace, according to the criteria of Arteaga (2005):

Constitutes a continuous, dynamic formative process, based on the concepts of positive peace, real world order, human rights and the perspective of the peaceful solution of conflicts on the basis of ethics, which prepares man in his individual and social dimension to critically unveil the complex and conflictive reality, act accordingly from the regulatory role of values with a deep humanism and taking advantage of the experiences that most favor human relations, seeking constructive, non-violent solutions; avoiding what implies damage or destruction of man, his material and spiritual culture and his ecological environment. (p.20)

This education for the peaceful resolution of conflicts implies the renunciation of violence and the development of strategies and skills for the development of education for peace. For this reason, Cuban educational policy declares the development of this process as a priority

in the training of new generations. In the curricular design of the different educations, it is conceived as an integrated dimension to the training objectives. Values such as justice, solidarity, equality, respect, mutual aid and non-violent attitudes to resolve conflicts are highlighted, so that peace is viewed as a value.

It is important to mean that for the development of this process it is necessary to harmoniously combine the instructional effort and the educational effort. In this sense, the education professional must have adequate preparation.

Professional preparation is a term that has faced several meanings. The authors of the research find that there is a tendency to use the term interchangeably as a synonym for training and improvement. However, "preparation encompasses the system of knowledge and skills that each worker must possess in their profession or position, to carry out the missions entrusted to their respective entities" (Ministry of Justice, 2017 p. 52). It is expressed as a result to be achieved, where processes such as training and improvement intervene, tempered as ways, with their particularities.

To be trained, the cultural level is not an obstacle. The training according to the Ministry of Justice (2017):

Considers the set of preparation actions, corresponding to the needs of production, services and the results of the work evaluation. It is conceived as an investment, aimed at improving the qualifications and requalification's of workers, to fulfill the functions of the positions with quality and ensure their successful performance with maximum results, and therefore must be generally effective. (p.52)

On the other hand, professional improvement "aims at the permanent training and systematic updating of university graduates, the improvement of the performance of their professional and academic activities, as well as the enrichment of their cultural heritage" (Ministry of Higher Education, 2004, p. 2). The improvement integrates training actions. It requires that the cultural level be university and can take self-preparation, postgraduate courses, specialized conferences, seminars, workshops, scientific debates, training and diplomas as organizational forms.

The current Cuban primary school model also refers to the preparation of professionals at this educational level. In this sense, performance requirements are declared for the achievement of the end and the objectives in schoolchildren. Implicitly the demands that are declared, pass through the training contents for the direction of the teaching-learning process. In this context of analysis, peace education emerges from the process of value formation itself. Given this complexity, the primary education professional must have the knowledge and skills necessary for the development of this training process, integrating it into the teaching, extra-teaching and extra-curricular activities.

Process of construction of the methodological guidelines that direct the preparation of the Primary Education professional in peace education.

The theoretical references stated above were of special significance for the research carried out, consequently with the current social reality. The dialectical-materialistic one is declared as the general methodology of the research and the qualitative investigation is assumed, in its variant of Action Research (I-A), since this supposes a collective and democratic form of social transformation of reality. The logic of Participatory Action Research (I-A-P) was used in order to involve the subjects studied (professionals in Primary Education) and make them the protagonists of their own educational change.

Approaches are used in the process of constructing methodological guidelines, according to the model expressed by Espinosa, I. (1998). Each approach includes planning, reflection, the actions to be introduced, as a result of the analyzes carried out, the application of these and a return to reflection, the planning of new actions in a spiral that responds to the dialectical materialist conception in which the positive is taken and rises to a qualitatively higher degree, the information that is significant is selected and what is not relevant or does not contribute to the result is discarded, taking into account the information recorded in the researcher's journal, in the relationship of continuity of actions.

First approach (school year 2015-2016). Access to the field by the researchers. Exploration, diagnosis and collection of empirical data to determine the problem. Second approach (school years 2016-2017; 2017-2018) planning, execution and control of actions aimed at preparing professionals in Primary Education in peace education. Third approach (school year 2018-

2019). Determination of the methodological guidelines to guide the preparation of the Primary Education professional in peace education.

Among the methods and techniques used: Document analysis, participant observation, survey of professionals in Primary Education to deepen the level of preparation in peace education, triangulation of sources and data, key informants, discussion group and daily

Description of the construction process by approach phases.

First approximation. Access to the field by the researchers. Exploration, diagnosis and collection of empirical data to determine the problem.

Access to the field is facilitated by the condition of the authors, professors from the "Marta Abreu" Central University of Las Villas, with an impact on the permanent training of education professionals in Villa Clara province. Exploratory activities aimed at determining the problem through diagnosis help to ensure this access. Exchanges are promoted with officials of the Provincial Directorate of Education and in particular with the Municipal Directorate of Education in the Manicaragua municipality.

Objective: To diagnose in Manicaragua territory, the state of preparation of Primary Education professionals in peace education, through the participation of the subjects involved.

Action 1. Characterization of the context.

Action 2. Determination of the needs around the problem, through the criteria of specialists.

Action 3. Analysis of normative documents: Guidelines of the economic and social policy of the Party and the Revolution for the period 2016-2021; Cuban primary school model and methodological work regulations of the Ministry of Education.

Action 4. Application and analysis of other diagnostic instruments: in-depth survey and interview.

Description of the application of the actions:

Action 1. Characterization of the context. The Manicaragua municipality is made up of a population in whose idiosyncrasies there are entrenched macho stereotypes that support the process of building masculinity, where violence emerges as a recurring phenomenon.

The municipality has 67 primary schools. The cloister is heterogeneous in terms of its formation. There are practicing teachers who only have twelfth grade. The total of reinstated retired professionals is significant, compared to the total of new professionals. It constitutes a strength, the existence of professionals who completed the Master of Science in Education in Primary Education and investigated topics related to education in values, formation of values and preventive work.

Action 2. Determination of the needs around the problem, through the criteria of specialists. The criterion of specialists is used, applied to 13 managers of the Manicaragua municipality, with incidence in Primary Education. It is applied with the objective of determining the state of preparation of the professionals of this education, in education for peace. They are selected according to the following criteria: professional experience, experience in the position and investigative experience in the topic being addressed.

Most of the specialists consulted consider that there are cracks in the preparation of professionals in peace education. They raise as significant aspects:

- Insufficient approach to the subject in the initial and permanent training process.
- Existence of socially rooted taboos that prevent the identification of manifestations of violence in the different contexts with which this professional interacts.
- Insufficient socialization of the research results related to the topic that can be introduced into educational practice.

Action 3. Analysis of normative documents. In order to analyze what is established in the documents that regulate work in Primary Education, in relation to the preparation of the professional of this education in peace education, the Guidelines of the economic and social policy of the Party and the Revolution for the period 2016-2021; Cuban primary school model and methodological work regulations of the Ministry of Education. The Guidelines for the economic and social policy of the Party and the Revolution for the period 2016-2021, recognize the need to prioritize the permanent improvement of education professionals, based on the main problems that are expressed in educational reality. They also explicitly corroborate the need to pay greater attention to continuing education and training in the

prevention and mitigation of social impacts. From these provisions, it is understandable the search for alternatives for the preparation of the Primary Education professional in peace education, as an alternative to counteract violence as a social phenomenon.

The Cuban primary school model refers, within the demands of teacher performance, to the need to prepare efficiently and systematically to conduct its pedagogical work. It also recognizes, within the general objectives to fulfill its purpose, elements that contribute to the development of education for peace based on the formation of values.

The Regulation of the methodological work of the Ministry of Education, recognizes within the organizational levels the technical council stands out, an organ that guarantees, among other aspects, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the improvement and the methodological work, the impacts of the introduction of results of research and pedagogical experiences. This functional body constitutes a key element to direct the preparation of the Primary Education professional in peace education, specifying the main insufficiencies and potentialities of overcoming and the methodological work for the concretion of this formative process.

Action 4. Application and analysis of other diagnostic instruments. A survey is applied to 32 professionals of Primary Education of the Manicaragua territory, with the objective of diagnosing their preparation in education for peace.

The professionals surveyed express that there are violent manifestations in schoolchildren. They declare psychological and physical as the most common forms, although they do not refer to their typologies. All acknowledge that schoolchildren lack preparation for treatment in the face of manifestations of violence. They also consider that the ways of overcoming projected in the territory to address the issue have been insufficient, so that they can be updated. They consider that guidance for the direction of peace education in schools has been lacking, as a way to counter violence and corroborate the need for treatment of the subject from the different forms of preparation. They reject the methodological preparation.

The results of the diagnostic actions were analyzed in a discussion group in which professionals from Higher Education, belonging to the institutional project "The education of ethical and aesthetic values at the base of citizen training for a culture of peace", from the

“Marta Abreu” Central University of Las Villas. The following conclusions were reached, which were determined in:

Achievements:

- The real access to the field by the researchers.
- The collaboration of the Municipal Directorate of Education in the Manicaragua territory.
- It was possible to sensitize the main directors of Primary Education in the Manicaragua territory.
- Potentials:
- The consensus of specialists that violence is an existing problem in the territory.
- Recognition of insufficiencies in the preparation of primary education professionals in peace education.
- Prevalence of points of view about the need to prepare primary education professionals for peace education

Limitations:

- Little perception of the different types of violence.
- Existence of thought schemes that prevent the visualization of methodological preparation, as a mean of preparation for professionals in Primary Education in peace education.

Second approach.

Planning, execution and control of actions aimed at preparing primary education professionals for peace education.

Objective: Prepare professionals in Primary Education in peace education.

Action 1. Agreement with professionals in Primary Education for their participation in preparing for peace education.

Action 2. Design of the preparation actions.

Action 3. Application of the preparation actions.

Description of the application of the actions:

Action 1. To carry out the agreement with professionals of Primary Education of the Manicaragua territory, the criterion of key informants, belonging to the Municipal Directorate of Education, is used. 37 are selected, respecting each area into which the municipality is divided, due to its geographical complexity. All professionals admit the need to address the issue, establish start and end times, given by the place where they reside. During consultation, participant observation is used to verify the preparation shown by the Primary Education professional in peace education. It is corroborated that there are marked insufficiencies in the preparation of professionals in peace education. They do not know terms, they cling to socially ingrained taboos regarding violence and peace in their criteria, they lack tools to provide a solution to conflicts in a peaceful way. They raise the need to address violence prevention in all contexts.

The authors use this criterion when designing a professional improvement program with the following topics:

Topic I: Role of the teacher in current Cuban society. Professional role of the teacher and its involvement in the orientation of the educational forces. The tasks and functions of the teacher tempered to the main social problems.

Topic II: Violence as a social phenomenon. Forms and types of violence. Myths and realities. The conflict and its solution. Family, school and community as significant contexts in the face of violence.

Topic III: Education for peace. Necessary synergy with education in values and citizen education. Dimensions of peace education. Significance in the current Cuban context. Educate to be at peace with yourself. Strategies from a personological approach. Educate to be at peace with others. Communicative and ethical strategies for human relations. Educate to be at peace with nature. Existing realities. Environmental strategies.

Topic IV: Educational prevention from the perspective of education for peace. Pedagogical tools for its development.

The program has 96 hours and contributes two credits to the preparation of the professionals involved. Theme II raised various controversies: How to correct the behavior of a schoolchild with violent manifestations? How to compensate schoolchildren who are victims of domestic violence at school? These topics were analyzed in the technical councils of the primary schools involved in the preparation.

The following are identified in this approach:

Achievements:

- Professionals show greater preparation to recognize the scope of conflicts and their mediating role.
- They assume attitudes of rejection towards violence for themselves, for others and for nature, based on the knowledge they have of their levels, forms of manifestation, their cycle, causes and effects from the perspective of existing myths and concrete reality.
- They base education for peace as an aspiration according to the Cuban social model.
- Insertion of the theme in the projection of methodological work in primary schools in the territory.

Potentials:

- The support of managers of Primary Education.
- High level of motivation for the topics taught.

Limitations:

- Treatment of the subject from the different methodological work routes.

Third approach. Determination of the guidelines to direct the preparation of the Primary Education professional in peace education.

The discussion group performs a round table work to determine the guidelines for the preparation of the Primary Education professional in peace education. They determine the following:

1. The agreement with the professionals of the Primary Education, contributes to the democratic and non-tax participation in the preparatory actions. It is also important for them to assume peace education, as an educational alternative to violence and the commitment to develop this training process in the different contexts with which they interact.
2. The diagnosis of needs (insufficiencies and potentials) of the professionals of Primary Education in peace education, is of special significance for the efficient direction of preparation.
3. The design of the actions of preparation in education for peace, must propitiate the demystification of violence, as well as putting emphasis on the cognitive, affective, and procedural levels.
  1. Cognitive: The preparation must contemplate those knowledge and theoretical principles related to education for peace. Knowledge (theory) constitutes a necessary base on which behaviors will be based. Without this basis, the development of this training process cannot be solid.
  2. Affective: It implies the formation of a personal bond, of a commitment, with ideas and principles that are transmitted, in addition to eliciting positive feelings and attitudes favorable to peace.
  3. Procedural: Preparation must lead to the training and development of professional skills and abilities, to act according to knowledge and draw up intervention strategies in the school context, with a preventive-corrective-compensatory nature and its consequent extension to the rest of the contexts.
  4. The preparation actions must go through the different forms of preparation and be inserted into the different methodological work routes.

## Conclusions

The preparation of primary education professionals in peace education requires guidelines to orient this process. This guarantees that not only is education about peace, which would offer information, definitions and conceptions about peace; the social reality indicates that you should educate for peace, where you prepare in the know-how with the acquired knowledge, so that this training process takes place in the different contexts with which this professional interacts.

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