



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

EDUCATION AND LEARNING STRATEGIES.

LEARNING STRATEGIES: THE KUMON METHOD AND THE RESCUE OF AFFECTIVITY AT SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a study about the importance of affection and its influence on learning process in a theoretical view. It's based on the method Kumon that exists for 100 years in Japan and more than 50 years in Brazil, the method works as an affective tool, helping thousands of learners to get over challenges and empty spaces provenients of the current school system. The main goal is not to find an unique answer but feed the search for these questions which should be always questioned. The main research was realized by ethnographic qualitative approach, with field researches and observing the students and the professionals from Kumon. My expectations about the method were all confirmed during my work in there working or reading about it on my academic work.

INTRODUCTION

According Ukai (1994), Kumon is a Japanese teaching method that aims to encourage children's autonomy in their studies, seeking to strengthen their learning potential.

Orcos et al (2019), declares the objective of the Kumon method is to make students like mathematics, developing high skills in calculus, reading and interpretation. According Oakley et al (2003), it is necessary for the student to develop the study habit, the ability to perform his tasks. Through a planned learning process, the student is able to face the challenge of gaining knowledge.

The history of the method begins in 1954 when Toru Kumon, born in March 1914, initiates the guidance of his son, Takeshi.

Families who want their children to study at Kumon begin the process with an interview to get to know this student a little and explain the importance of the family's presence during the project. From that point then, after clarification, it is submitted to the Diagnostic Test (TD) to then know what content will need to work in order to evolve safely.

According O'Brien & Rutland (2008), based on the results of the Diagnostic Test done by the newly enrolled student, the point at which he will begin to study is determined. He will continue to study at his own pace, according to the ability and understanding he demonstrates, doing the repetitions he needs.

The material is exactly the same size Toru Kumon used with Takeshi. Sheets in size A5, front and back and with their own space to mark the start and end time of the material proposed for that moment.

Even though the process has been described in a very simple way, the process involves affection and

identification of the student with the assistant.

The objective of this research is to present the Kumon method as an excellent tool for students' learning and affection.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this research is qualitative, of an ethnographic nature, with field research and observations of students and their relations with professionals at Kumon.

In general, through this research, we seek to understand how to better connect theory and pedagogical practice, with emphasis on the use of affection in the relationships between students, teachers, advisors and family.

In addition, we believe that, like all research, the broader objective is to contribute to future research and stimulate interest in other researchers and professionals.

CASE STUDY

Case 1

Let's start with João, who at the age of six took the Diagnostic Test in the unit where I work. This is a first grader, as we call it, and who took the K1 test. First, the assistant talked about the child's family, hobbies and personality, as well as his wishes and dreams. João, he seemed to have a great relationship with his parents and two older brothers. His mother is a systems analyst and his father is a lawyer. The boy is very creative, loves to draw and swim and let himself go, he spends all day drawing.

We will now talk about activities carried out in childhood by João. The student was always encouraged by his brothers in terms of quantities, numbers and calculating skills. He has adoration for his middle brother. He liked to count how many cars passed by the apartment window.

Regarding letters, words and language skills, he was slow to speak, as the brothers always ended up speaking for him. The mother always read books and encouraged her children to read. In his relationship with music and interests in other activities he has a preference for swimming, as he loves water and going to the beach.

Returning to TD K1, he performed in the maximum duration time, 10 minutes with nine hits of 11 and his starting point was stage 4A, block 1. He understood all the exercises on the last sheet without needing much explanation, but was unable to do calculations on the last sheet. During the test, the student presented calculation difficulties in the execution of the last sheets.

We will have to gradually increase their ability to perform tasks, from the 2nd month of class onwards and work on the student's posture in the execution of the material.

Case 2

The next case is that of the student we will call Beatriz. This student has been studying at the unit for a longer time and with that we will be able to evaluate its graphs and its evolution over a longer period of time. The subject studied this time is Portuguese.

Beatriz is a girl who loves to draw, dance, sing and read. His dream is to study there and be part of the riding team. She is a sweet, cheerful and very affectionate girl, especially with words and drawings.

When starting the Diagnostic Test, he showed concern when drawing a super capricious letter, writing and reading with great attention and concentration. An impeccable reading of those who really like to read and are involved in history and, precisely, therefore, involved everyone with their reading. The student took her own test for her school grade, then six years old, in the first year and started at Stage 4A. He did all the stages without repetition of blocks until Stage BI, which was when he started to show some resistance.

She is a girl with a passion for books and reading, excellent vocabulary. In a few months of class, we established a greater contact and she always wanted to tell some news or just comment on some story she read. She is now a more organized and concentrated girl achieving the highest grades both in school tests and in the competitions she held.

Case 3

Rafaela is an 8 year old student. Dispersion and lack of attention were the reasons that led his mother, Alessandra, to look for Kumon.

Concerned about the development of her daughter's reasoning and concentration skills, Alessandra decided that Rafaela would study the Kumon method.

After she started to study the Kumon method, Rafaela gained more independence, she became more confident to solve the exercises and study alone at home, without the need for the

collection and company of her mother. According to Alessandra, the daughter is more organized and is satisfied to see Rafaela's progress in her studies.

For the mother, Kumon offers great support for parents to be able to ask questions or ask for help in monitoring the study at home. Alessandra believes that meetings are essential for Rafaela's development. Alessandra is sure that the Kumon differential is the individualized method, and this is the main reason for her daughter's successful development.

Rafaela acquired the posture of studies that her mother wanted, developed her reasoning and concentration skills and also gained independence and security in her studies. When talking about her daughter's future, Alessandra is emphatic: her dream for the future is that Rafaela will be able to achieve everything she wants and be very happy.

CONCLUSIONS

According Maiese (2017), we can see that the affectivity between students and the school environment is increasingly taken into account, as well as the positive relationship between students and teachers.

According Da Silva et al (2020), whether learning another language or at school, children spend most of their days in classrooms with their teachers and the teacher-student interpersonal relationship is a determining factor.

According Soares et al (2020), it is possible to consider that individuals learn through different strategies, influenced by multiple variables and over time.

According Weischadle & David, (2002), Kumon acts as an affective strategic tool uniting learning and emotional creating affective baggage of the teaching that the student takes for the rest of his life. He has stimuli to study, because he learns without constant intermediaries and only punctual through the material or advisor. In addition, the student feels so good in the unit that he always wants to return interested in his evolution and in participating in that teaching and learning environment for everyone.

In relation to the general educational context, we need to have a reflection of the schools in relation to their curricula and their Political Pedagogical Projects without ever losing the sensitivity of a more humanized and concerned with learning in a real way. Our study aims to contribute to this aim.

In relation to Kumon, its final objective is aimed at the student's independence and autonomy, through the curiosity, motivation and self-confidence that can be obtained through basic reading, writing skills and calculations in which they prove their ability to go beyond, finding pleasure when trying to be successful in tasks and these are useful skills for a lifetime.

At the end of this work, we were able to perceive the importance of affection in learning based on theoretical assumptions and also the

importance of the Kumon Method as an affective tool for bringing together current school education and students, also serving as a preventive and remedial solution against failure school. The connection between learning and affectivity is of paramount importance. We hope that more and more studies will take place with different theoretical perspectives on this topic.

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