PSYCHOPEDAGOGY: A LOOK AT LEARNING PROCESSES AND THEIR DIFFICULTIES

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to investigate the role of the psycho-pedagogue in identifying and intervening in learning difficulties. Specifically, it seeks to understand the foundations of psychopedagogy, the different forms of psychopedagogical intervention, and the main factors that hinder the learning process. The research, of a descriptive and exploratory nature, is based on a comprehensive bibliographic review, which includes works by authors such as Grassi, Lopes, Lakomy, Goulart, Martins, and Mendonça. The analysis of the data allowed us to identify that the psycho-pedagogue works both at the clinical and institutional levels, carrying out diagnoses and proposing multidisciplinary interventions to optimize the teaching-learning process. The structure of the work addresses topics such as the introduction to psychopedagogy, psychopedagogical assessment, psychopedagogical workshops, the relationship between emotional factors and learning difficulties, and diagnostic conclusion. The research results highlight the importance of the psycho-pedagogue as a professional capable of helping students with learning difficulties and promoting the development of their potential and academic success.

Keywords: Psychopedagogy. Learning difficulties. Psychopedagogical intervention. Psychopedagogical assessment.

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INTRODUCTION

In addition to impacting school performance, learning difficulties can affect self-esteem, social development, and the prospects of individuals. Given this complex scenario, psychopedagogy has established itself as a fundamental area for understanding and intervening in learning processes, seeking to promote inclusion and academic success for all students.

The main objective of this study is to analyze how psycho-pedagogues identify and intervene in specific learning difficulties related to reading and writing in elementary school children. The aim is to understand the theoretical foundations of psychopedagogy, the different intervention approaches, and the factors that influence the effectiveness of these interventions. The question that guides this research is: What are the main strategies used by psychopedagogues to overcome reading and writing difficulties in elementary school children, and what are the results obtained with these interventions?

The relevance of this study lies in the need to deepen knowledge about the most effective psycho-pedagogical practices for treating reading and writing difficulties, contributing to the training of more qualified professionals and the implementation of public policies that promote school inclusion.

The expected results of this research may contribute to the improvement of psycho-pedagogical practices, providing support for the development of more effective intervention protocols and the continued training of psycho-pedagogues, aiming at the promotion of inclusive and quality education for all.

Regarding the structure: First, the introduction of the research is presented, therefore the work was divided into topics, A brief introduction to psychopedagogy; Concept of Assessment in Psychopedagogy; Analysis of Results – Diagnostic Conclusion; Psychopedagogical Workshops; Psychopedagogical Assessment; Emotional Factors and Learning Difficulties, and finally the Conclusions of the research and References.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a qualitative, descriptive, and exploratory approach to understand the role of the psycho pedagogue in the identification and intervention of learning difficulties. To achieve this objective, a comprehensive bibliographic review of scientific articles and specialized books was carried out, in addition to the analysis of case studies of children with reading and writing difficulties.

The choice of the hermeneutic-dialectical method, proposed by Minayo (2014), is justified by the need to understand the meanings attributed by the social actors involved in the learning process, seeking to identify the contradictory cores and the power relations present in this context. This approach allows for an in-depth and contextualized analysis of the data, contributing to the construction of richer and more complex knowledge on the subject.

The bibliographic review was carried out through a systematic search in academic databases, using descriptors such as "psychopedagogy", "learning difficulties", "intervention," and "evaluation". The case studies were selected from psycho-pedagogical clinics in the region, based on criteria such as type of learning difficulty, age group, and length of follow-up.

Data analysis involved the identification of thematic categories, from which interpretations were constructed. The triangulation of the data, obtained from both the bibliographic review and the case studies, allows for greater reliability of the results and the construction of a more complete picture of the role of the psycho pedagogue.

The use of this method allowed for a deeper understanding of the complexity of learning difficulties and the importance of the psycho-pedagogue's role in this context. However, the results of the research contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the area of psychopedagogy and can support the development of new practices and public policies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

PSYCHOPEDAGOGY: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The psycho-pedagogue is a professional in the field of education. His/her specific function is to act on learning difficulties, and to do so, he/she needs to understand them based on learning theories. The psycho-pedagogue has a multidisciplinary role since he/she never works alone. A team capable of helping students with their difficulties must be formed by several professionals, such as psychologists, speech therapists, pedagogues, and neurologists, among others.

The psycho-pedagogue may work clinically or institutionally. Clinical work presupposes action and interaction with the individual or groups of individuals. Institutional work presupposes falling on institutional subjects, work teams, teachers, etc. To promote an improvement in teaching strategies, training, or any form of educational intervention.

According to Grassi (2006), both clinical psychopedagogy and institutional action can occur in the same space.

As Grassi (2006) points out, it can be observed that the spaces are repeated, and what changes is the focus of the action. In a school, the clinical action of the psychopedagogue would be with a student, or groups of students, while an institutional action would be with the teachers to establish more effective and enjoyable teaching strategies, or even direct and propose the review of the Political Pedagogical Project (PPP) and/or Educational Development Plan (PDE), but never alone, their attitude will be multidisciplinary, and will involve all the professionals in the school.

As for the form of action, this can be preventive or therapeutic. Martins (2006) points out that psycho-pedagogues develop diagnoses and perform interventions during work with an effort to learn. With this diagnosis in hand, the psycho-pedagogue can help the child integrate into school life normally, which falls under therapeutic work.

FUNDAMENTALS OF PSYCHOPEDAGOGY

Psychopedagogy was born from a need for pedagogy and psychology to act in preventive and corrective action. Recent studies, resulting from the articulation of several disciplines, seek new ways to solve old problems and inherently involve the commitment to transform the school reality based on the understanding of the teaching-learning process.

Psychopedagogy, together with other areas of knowledge, can solve learning problems, thus making it up to the psychopedagogue to establish a positive bond with the learner, rescuing the pleasure of learning. Thus, having an unprejudiced view, always listening attentively, and going beyond the evidence already observed by the family and the teacher in the classroom. A space of trust, creativity, and playfulness should be provided for the work, thus achieving an education that is more integrative of the phenomenon of learning and more preventive than corrective action.

According to Martins (2006), regarding the instruments to be used in psychopedagogy, it is necessary to state that these are not limited but generally include games, play, group dynamics, and other teaching resources that bring playfulness to the educational act. For example, a therapeutic action in psychopedagogy may involve a group of students, and educational games and play may be adopted, always based on the perspective previously mentioned: "recovering the pleasure of learning". In preventive form, the same games and play may be adopted to avoid creating educational obstacles.

LEARNING THEORIES

Given the nature of this study, it would be tiresome, although appropriate, to review all the main learning theories. It is necessary to focus on the main focus of the study, already established in the project, so this topic will address the learning theories that are guided by a constructivist bias. According to Lakomy (2003), the main theorists of this line include Piaget, with his psychogenetic theory of knowledge, and Vygotsky, with his socio-interactionist theory.

It is very common for several authors to focus on the phases of cognitive development constructed by Piaget when addressing the psychogenetic theory of knowledge. Just as important as knowing these phases is knowing how the genesis of knowledge occurs; in other words, how subjects (children/students) learn – hence the name psychogenetic theory, which has no relation to genetic science. - In his studies, Piaget concluded that there are four factors responsible for learning: a) the biological factor; b) the action factor, that is, the experience acquired through action on objects; c) social interactions, especially educational ones; and d) the factor of internal balances.

According to Lakomy (2003), for Piaget, man actively participates in the process of constructing knowledge, whether through direct action on objects or through social interrelations. The act of learning involves intense activity, even if it is internal and not visible to the eyes. For example, when solving a math problem, a child performs mental activities. Learning occurs through a succession of states: balance – imbalance – majorant balance. Thus, when dealing with addiction problems (which already involve action schemes), the child uses his or her knowledge. If he or she has already mastered this mathematical operation, he or she is in a state of balance. When teaching the multiplication operation, the child will make mistakes at first because his or her knowledge (action schemes) is not sufficient. As soon as the child can solve multiplication calculations, he or she will enter a new state of higher balance, called majorant balance.

Another very important theory for understanding human learning is the socio-interactionist theory. Within the scope of this theory, we find some similarities with the psychogenetic approach since both point to the interaction between biological factors and social factors as essential in the human learning process. a. Perhaps what most differentiates Vygotsky from Piaget in Lakomy's (2003) view is the emphasis that the former places on social relations and language in the learning process. It is possible to

understand these differences if we look at the philosophical and historical bases that guide Vygotsky's theoretical production.

According to Lakomy (2003), the main themes researched by Vygotsky were language, development and learning, and proximal development. Regarding language, he made important observations, which led him to believe that the social development of the child is interrelated to the development of language; when interacting with the environment, the child uses language as well as the legs, arms, and eyes.

Regarding development and learning, Vygotsky admitted that these occurred through distinct processes; however, he emphasized that both were interrelated. Development is linked to the individual's maturation; learning takes place in the social sphere and relationships with the environment; however, learning can drive development and is the basis of learning.

According to Lakomy (2003), Vygotsky also observed that not all children of the same age group in contact with the same teacher learn in the same way. He then developed the concept of "proximal development", which justifies the disparity between the learning capacity of children of the same age group, due to the same stage of development in which they find themselves.

CONCEPT OF EVALUATION IN PSYCHOPEDAGOGY

In psychopedagogy, evaluation means investigating, that is, investigating the causes of non-learning (or learning difficulties) faced by a learning subject (student). It should be noted that the term evaluate was defined from and investigate, given that the proposed evaluation and psychopedagogy differ from that used in the school environment, given that in the psychopedagogical evaluation/investigation, a theoretical framework based on educational psychology and psychogenetic theory will be used, supported by evaluation resources inherent to the psychopedagogue's profession, and of uncommon use in schools. As a product of the psychopedagogical evaluation or diagnostic conclusion, these terms are often used as synonyms, where one, when used, suppresses and subtends the other. Let us see what Shiderlene Lopes has to tell us about psycho-pedagogical work:

> At the end of the clinical psycho-pedagogical evaluation process, the psycho-pedagogue will certainly have an overview of the subject of his/her evaluation. In other words, the psycho-pedagogue will have to be clear about what is happening with the person being evaluated from the point of view of his/her learning and those involved. To this end, it is necessary that, at this

moment, the psycho-pedagogue gathers the collected data, analyzes it, and prepares his/her diagnostic conclusion. (LOPES, 2004 p.39).

The clinical psycho-pedagogue always starts with a complaint, that is, a grievance, about something that is not going well with the learner (child, adolescent, or adult). The complaint may come from family members, guardians, the teacher (school), or the learner himself.

It should be noted that in this case, the intervention is therapeutic and not preventive. Thus, in therapeutic intervention, the evaluation process begins with the presentation of a complaint, however, the psychopedagogue must be attentive to two parameters: the family's complaint and the school's complaint. These two complaints may sometimes differ from each other. After registering the complaint during the evaluation process, it is necessary to ascertain whether the complaints are valid, as they may be limited to labeling the learner, either by the family or by the school.

In psychopedagogy, three aspects must be taken into consideration:

- Pedagogical;
- Cognitive;
- Affective – Social.

When proposing to investigate the pedagogical aspect of the learning subject, the focus is on their school performance, what they know how to do, how their academic performance will be, and how they organize this content. At this point, the assessment must be dialogic; the evaluator must question the person being evaluated, who will provide right or wrong answers, and at this point, the evaluator will ask the person being evaluated to explain (justify) their answer. By doing so, the evaluator will be learning how the learning subject organizes school content.

According to Lopes (2008), about the cognitive aspect, it is necessary to assess the cognitive development of the learning subject, whether they are a child, adolescent, or adult. Remember that in the case of children, it is expected that they are in the pre-operational stage of development, moving on to the concrete-operational stage, and that adolescents and adults are already in the formal-operational stage. Finally, the social and affective aspects must be considered in the evaluation process, which includes formal learning links and interpersonal relationships. These relationships at school are processed with classmates and the teacher, just as they are processed in the family with brothers,

sisters, fathers, mothers, and other relatives. In psychopedagogy, it is possible to evaluate social and affective aspects through projective tests.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS – DIAGNOSTIC CONCLUSION

Here, all the results obtained in the evaluation process are gathered: the family's complaint, the school's complaint, and the results obtained in the evaluation sections. Once these data have been collected, a summary of them is prepared, adding possible intervention measures. Once this is done, we have the "diagnostic conclusion" or "diagnostic hypothesis". This difference in nomenclature may vary from author to author.

Once the diagnostic conclusion has been organized, it is time to provide feedback, which consists of providing feedback to the family and the school about the results obtained throughout the evaluation sessions, as well as proposing intervention measures. However, feedback should be provided in separate meetings, one for the family and one for the school, and finally, written authorization should be requested to carry out the proposed interventions, since the family may disagree with the proposed diagnosis.

It is decided to specifically discuss clinical psychopedagogy assessments, as this acts directly on the learning subject, thus differing from other forms of assessment, whether institutional psychopedagogy or other areas of knowledge. The approach will be succinct and does not cover all forms of assessment existing in psychopedagogy.

The Learning-Centered Operative Interview (LCE), a form of assessment proposed by Jorge Visca, has a profound contribution from Piaget and his clinical method since conventional Intelligence Quotient (IQ) tests are not applied for later correction. On the contrary, every assessment is mediated and discussed by an evaluator (the psycho-pedagogue), who must ask the person being assessed (the child) to perform certain activities, which are called assignments. Based on the answers, which may be correct or incorrect, the evaluator asks the person being assessed to justify their answer. When properly applied, this approach allows the identification of cognitive structures that the learning subject has already developed.

INRC - This test can be applied to adolescents and adults and will assess the level of development of formal operations. When formal operations are mentioned, a group of structures and operations called I.N.R.C. (Identical Operation; Negative or Null Operation; Reciprocal Operation; Correlated Operation) is addressed. PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL PROJECTIVE TESTS – This test is intended to evaluate affective aspects, in general

drawings requested, Grassi (2006) suggests that in this test the drawing itself is not the only point to be analyzed, how the drawing is produced must also be the target of analysis, so the evaluator needs to be close to the learning subject observing their production, and questioning when necessary about the meanings in each drawing. The following themes may be asked for in this test: me and my family; me at school; me and my colleagues; someone who teaches and someone who learns; moments of the day (this last sheet can be folded into 4 or 6 parts, and each part can be assigned to a moment).

PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL WORKSHOPS, A WAY OF INTERVENTION

As Grassi (2006) conceptualizes, Psychopedagogical workshops are spaces where the "learner" and "teacher" establish emotional bonds to build knowledge together. The space where a workshop is held must be playful, which requires reflection on the act of playing, given that, as a sociological phenomenon, playing inserts the child into society. It is through playing that the child develops values, beliefs, norms, laws, rules, habits, customs, stories, and principles. The objective of the workshop is not to play for the sake of playing but to play as a strategy to enable the construction of knowledge. Thus, a psycho-pedagogical workshop may involve games, fictional and real adventure stories, fairy tales, myths, fables and legends, dramatizations, music, singing, and dancing.

In psychopedagogy, a workshop is intended for preventive/therapeutic action; that is, it prevents learning difficulties from taking hold or provides corrective measures when they have already taken hold in the subject, as indicated by Grassi (2004 p. 8 and 12). Since the educational actions developed in this space are intentional, they must be mediated so that there is an exchange of experiences between a subject who teaches and one or more who learn.

A good therapeutic action requires a good diagnosis. In this sense, there may be one or more meetings with the subjects targeted by the workshops (children, adolescents, or adults) before the workshops themselves. However, Lopes emphasizes that the ideal for a diagnosis is 10 to 12 assessment sections and points out several resources. In this topic, it is important not to confuse Diagnosis with psychopedagogical intervention.

PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL EVALUATION

Institutional psycho-pedagogical evaluation differs from clinical evaluation because it deals with institutional subjects, while the latter deals with learning subjects, as discussed

previously. In institutional psychopedagogy, when school counseling is listed as the axis of the work, even from the perspective of an external evaluator, it establishes a very broad range of actions, which goes beyond the affective-cognitive-psychological aspects emphasized by clinical action. Goulart (2005) states that the institutional assessment axis also targets socio-political-economic aspects, in which issues are addressed regarding the administrative organization of the school, the curriculum, the PPP, and interpersonal relationships in the school. In this sense, it is suggested that the evaluation follow some established guidelines. In this form of psycho-pedagogical practice, qualitative assessment instruments from the human sciences will be used. Thus, documentary analysis, interviews, and ethnographic research are suggested as input for research instruments, remembering that these constitute research methodologies or methodological resources for scientific research, and therefore the more solid the psychopedagogue's training and the richer his/her reading in epistemology, the more efficient his/her assessment will be.

When mentioning documentary analysis, it is necessary to remember the documents that guide school practice, which can be a pedagogical Political Project, School Development Plan, or Annual Course Plan prepared by the teacher. These documents constitute references that were adopted at some point by the school, and deviation from them constitutes a problematic point. When using interviews as formal assessment instruments, it is necessary to adopt an epistemological theoretical reference. At this point, Phenomenology is suggested, which points out three very distinct forms of interviews: Open, Semi-Open, and closed. The adoption of one or the other may vary according to the evaluation objectives.

As for ethnographic research, it has a qualitative research criterion that must be observed: Ethnographic research involves at least 1 to 2 years of fieldwork. In this sense, it is not feasible to use ethnography as a method, however, some ethnographic guidelines are useful: going to the research field, the ethnographic look involved in strangeness, the field diary, and the dense description.

It is important to emphasize that these instruments suggested here can be accompanied by other instruments or even replaced when necessary. For example, statistical tools, when well used, constitute excellent indicators.

As for institutional intervention, the psycho-pedagogue must be aware that when proposing changes, he will be affecting the institution, even if the change is localized, in one room, for example, because routines are changed and discussed by teachers and other

professionals. However, there must be a positive outlook on changes, as this is an opportunity to change what is dysfunctional in the school. As an intervention proposal, the dynamics of projects are suggested, as it formalizes the actions to be developed and leads the subjects involved to question the theoretical and practical work in search of solutions. In institutional Psychopedagogy, projects can be aimed at both students and the school; when the project is aimed at the student, the actions will fall on the teaching-learning processes. In general, the starting point is the complaint of one or more students with difficulties; in this case, the analysis should not be limited to why the student is not learning at this moment; the student is a cognitive and social being, who is inserted in a larger context, that is, school, family and interpersonal. Therefore, there are some guidelines: a) Listen carefully to the complaint beyond the complaint, paying attention to the vocabulary and (physical) expressions used by educators; b) listen to the student, not only talk to him/her but also apply Clinical Psychopedagogy tests; c) listening to parents, here the anamnesis technique is applied, taking care with the vocabulary used in the conversation with parents. After these first three steps, it is assumed that projects will be developed to work with students, which can be individual or group projects.

Finally, projects aimed at the school are visualized. These necessarily imply: an evaluation of the organizational structure of the institution; getting to know its environment, the community in which it is inserted; and psycho-pedagogical advice in search of the correction of possible dysfunctions in the school. As Goulart (2005) rightly points out, sometimes, these projects focus on problems that are not related to learning the school content but that affect the school. In this sense, projects are necessary to change and improve dysfunctional points in the school, such as the curriculum, the methodology, the division of timetables, and interpersonal relationships (teacher/student; teacher/coordination). In this regard, it is important to note that the project does not have to be ready-made and finished; it must be developed at the school, together with the teachers, coordinators, and principal.

EMOTIONAL FACTORS AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

In general terms, most research that addresses learning difficulties involves emotional factors. Thus, two strands appear in this field: a) one that argues that children with learning difficulties have emotional factors as their cause; b) one that argues that children who have school difficulties, whether for pedagogical or other reasons, end up

having emotional problems as a consequence. In the first strand, it is observed that subjects whose emotional factors negatively interfere with learning present aggressiveness and/or apathy and/or tolerance to aggression. Monrõe presents a list of possible causes of emotional disorders:

> 1 – Parents overprotect the child, creating a relationship of dependence on adults, which makes learning an impossible task to be accomplished alone.
> 2 – The learning process requires fixed and systematic patterns of behavior for school tasks to be completed. Children who have difficulty accepting limits may have problems adapting to the educational system.
> 3 – Social demands (from school and parents) for the child to perform the symbolic functions of reading and writing before he or she is physically, emotionally, and cognitively capable of doing so. These demands can develop feelings of failure and resentment that impede the normal learning process. (MONRÕE apud MORAIS, 2006, p. 72)

As well as the main learning disorders. The relationship between learning difficulties and teaching methods should not be ignored, since the problem will often lie in the methodology used in the classroom, and even if the teacher uses coherent teaching methods and techniques, the teaching methods used should be studied in situ, since certain individuals should pay special attention to the methodology applied. For a quick discussion of teaching methods, the following quote will be used:

> The phonological route is slower than the direct route since the process required is much more extensive until we can recognize the word. However, it is no less important, and we can even say that the initial stages of learning to read depend on phonological awareness. The visual or direct or lexical route - This is a global and very fast route since it allows us to recognize the word globally and pronounce it immediately without needing to analyze the signs (signifier and meaning) that compose it.(MENDONÇA, 2010, p.7)

There are three main strands in teaching methods: Synthetic methods, Analytical methods, and Eclectic methods, as pointed out by Morais (2006). Individuals with dyslexia will be well-literate through synthetic methods, also called word-based, syllabic, and ABC methods, as they start with syllables and letters in the literacy process. Here, the individual with dyslexia will observe the word in its smallest units and can use them to construct new words.

The same individuals with dyslexia will have a difficult literacy process if they are taught through analytical methods, also called global methods, such as the sentence method, as the smallest unit used will be the sentence or paragraph. Thus, the individual must build their knowledge by observing texts in their entirety. Herein lies the great paradox:

as with dyslexia, the individual has double the difficulty in constructing reading and writing skills. Eclectic methods are a fusion of synthetic and analytical methods, a viable alternative in the school context. However, not all techniques of the eclectic method are welcome in therapy, since the intervention process requires an analysis of the state of readiness and the skills already developed by the subject, to develop "exercises" that aim to recover the healthy and enjoyable learning process.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrated that a psycho-pedagogue plays a fundamental role in identifying and intervening in learning difficulties, both at the clinical and institutional levels. By making accurate diagnoses and developing personalized interventions, the psycho-pedagogue contributes significantly to improving the teaching-learning process.

For clinical practice, the psycho-pedagogue will use several diagnostic methods. Throughout this work, three instruments were addressed: The Learning-Centered Operative Interview (E.O.C.A) allows the professional to construct the interview in a spontaneous, but directed and experimental way, according to Lopes (2008); The I.N.R.C. verifies the development of formal operations, which are: Identical Operation, Null Operation, Reciprocal Operation, Correlative Operation; and finally, Psychopedagogical Projective Tests, which consist of taking drawings to investigate affective issues, since, "through drawing, the subject expresses feelings and reveals attitudes concerning his/her development" (LOPES, 2008, p. 28).

The analysis of the diagnostic instruments used, such as the EOCA, the INRC, and the projective tests, revealed the importance of a comprehensive assessment that considers the cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of the learner. The psycho-pedagogical workshops proved to be an effective tool for the prevention and remediation of learning difficulties, promoting the autonomy and integral development of the subject.

The multidisciplinary work of the psycho-pedagogue, together with other education professionals, is essential to ensure the success of the teaching-learning process. By working in partnership with teachers, psychologists, speech therapists, and other specialists, psycho-pedagogues can offer more comprehensive and effective care to students with learning difficulties.

The results of this research highlight the need to invest in the ongoing training of psycho-pedagogues and in the implementation of public policies that promote school

inclusion and specialized care for students with special educational needs. In addition, they suggest that new research be carried out to deepen knowledge about the different psycho-pedagogical approaches and their effectiveness in overcoming learning difficulties. However, the psycho pedagogue focuses on a multidisciplinary task in search of diagnosis and intervention proposals to improve the teaching-learning process, but also to understand.

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