

# Spanish Artistic Appreciation methodology in Japan: Learning own culture through Art. Going to Art Museum with kindergarten children.

- A new methodology of Art teaching based on the Japanese concept of expression and the Spanish concept of appreciation. -

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## Abstract

By the comparison of Japanese and Spanish Art Education, we found the Spanish model focused on the teaching of artistic appreciation, whereas the Japanese model is based on the children's expressive development. We support the idea of mixing both models as complementary and necessary methodological change for balance the actual visual education in its scope of instruction of the subject. For instance, through the importation of good school practices adapted to a new context, with a common benefit for both countries. Therefore, this research introduces the Spanish Aesthetic Appreciation teaching methodology model applied to a Japanese Kindergarten as example of the Spanish reality in the realm of Aesthetic Appreciation Teaching Skills and its adaptation possibilities to the Japanese Educational System.

keywords: Japanese Early Childhood, Art and Handicraft Subject, Artistic, Plastic and Visual Education, Course of Study, Going to the Museum with children, Spanish Aesthetic Appreciation, Japanese Artistic Expression.

## 1. Problem and purpose of the research.

Spain is known as “Country of Artists”. Going to Art Museums and exhibitions part of the scholar routine from kindergarten. By contrast, there is not that kind of culture in Japan at any educational level.

For improving Art Education and give to the subject the importance that it requires for living in the current visual environment, to foment of artistic expression alone is not enough. Children need to acquire tools to appreciate the visual stimuli by understanding the messages they are receiving. One of the ways to develop the aesthetic appreciation is to promote an emotional encounter with their own culture by the meeting of original artworks of community artists. To illustrate the possibilities of introduction of Aesthetic Appreciation in the Japanese Art Education, from early childhood, we took the preschoolers to a local artist Memorial Art Museum. The principal aim was to help the scholars to find their identities getting identified with their own culture, recognizing places, stories, and any common characteristics with an artist raised in the same city by appreciating the artworks. And also to use the new knowledge as inspiration for their own expression.

This article presents, by means of studying the

reality of Japanese and Spanish schools, the experience of insert, in a Japanese Kindergarten, the Spanish methodology based on the harmony between Japanese Expression and Spanish Appreciation teaching methodology, starting from each model's strong points and good practices.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Spain is internationally known as birthplace great artists in different fields of Visual Art as Salvador Dalí, Antoni Gaudí, Joan Miró, Pablo R. Picasso, Antoni Tàpies, etc. It is usual to include in the scholar year plan, contents to learn about one (or more) artists' artworks, society, life and, eventually, visit those studied artworks in their original version at the museums. Access to Art Museums is easily manageable for scholar groups with children because there are lots of museums offering educational program and guided visits for scholars. In 2014 there was a total of 1076 museums and 392 museographer collections in the country. A 61.6% of them, were organized guided visits for all the public. Also 52.3% of the total, were providing educational activities. (MECD, 2016. P.23) The 3 most visited by typology are, in order of attendance, the Contemporary Art Museums, the Fine Arts

Museums and the Science and Technology museums. (MECD, 2016. P.27) As seen in the Spanish official National Statistical Plan, the Survey of Cultural Habits and Practices conducted on a sample of 16,000 people aged 15 and older, the annual museum presence stood at 33,2% of the population tested. Attendance rates take their maximum values in the youngest groups, it declines with age, and increase proportionally with level of education. (MECD, 2016. P.32) All this data shows the importance of teaching about heritage as content in the schools to keep it in good conditions and teach the children to appreciate its value. Therefore, in Spain, the development of art appreciation is very important to understand culture, history, enjoy the artworks and learn new significances.

### **2.1.1. Presence of Art Education in Spanish Laws.**

Japanese and Spanish law are quite different in reference with Arts.

The Spanish National law for education called *LOE* was published on 2006. This law was reviewed on 2013 to improve its quality, creating a combination of the previous law and the new document known as *LOMCE*. Both complementary laws are involved all the country. The basis of the course of studies are also predesigned by the government. This document is called *Currículo básico* and there is an independent version for kindergarten and another specific for elementary grades. This documents exclusively contain the basic guidelines to regulate the teaching-learning process of all the country. But, to use it at schools, it must be combined with the course of studies designed by the correspondent province. Also, each school has the pedagogical and organizational autonomy to develop and complete the course of studies by adapting it to the children's characteristics and realities.

#### **2.1.1.1. Kindergarten. (Not compulsory education for second stage of early childhood. 3 to 6 years old)**

The course of studies for kindergarten was named ORDEN ECI/3960/2007 (BOE, 2008) is based in the REAL DECRETO 1630/2006 (BOE, 2007), where the minimum teachings of early childhood education were set. For example, in the autonomous

province of Madrid, the complementary course of studies is the DECRETO 17/2008 (BOCM, 2008). Also, each kindergarten has its own pedagogical proposal developing and improving the official documents in behalf of their pupils.

The Spanish course of studies of kindergarten understands the concept of *Art* as a language. The teachings in kindergarten are educational and global, that means that every area is interconnected. It includes 3 areas namely: Self-knowledge and one's personal autonomy; Knowledge of the environment (social and natural); and Languages: communication and representation.

The area of languages, in Spanish kindergarten stage, where art education is placed, comprehend the development of skills related to sending and receiving messages by its understanding and production. (BOCM, 2008. p. 13) It is written the need of initiate the children in the comprehension of audiovisual messages and its uses. The artistic education compiles musical and visual arts. In the Art and Crafts side, it has an educational meaning by manipulation of materials, textures, objects and tools, and the approaching to artworks to develop the aesthetical sense of appreciation as a vehicle of build their own aesthetic criteria.

The weekly schedule by subjects appears as an exclusive design for 5 years old grade as minimum teachings. Languages area practice is set for 9 hours in total, between of which, art education is mandatory, but keeping in mind that at least a daily session must be for the approach to writing and reading skills, one weekly session is dedicated to musical education and one hour and a half per week, in two sessions, must be scheduled for the learning of a first foreign language. (BOCM, 2008. p. 15) Art education is not programmed in the minimum teachings of 5 years old pupils as compulsory teaching, but it is seen as an intrinsic way of communication of the children of this stage. Also the remaining hours can be taken for teaching the contents about art expression and appreciation that may be taught as written in the course of studies.

### 2.1.1.2. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of elementary school.

The course of studies for elementary school is called REAL DECRETO 126/2014 (BOE, 2014). As in the case of the kindergarten, this document matches with the provincial one. In the case of Madrid the course of studies is the DECRETO 89/2014 (BOCM, 2014), which also is complementary with the ORDEN 3814/2014 (BOCM, 2015) where the weekly schedule is held.

Artistic Education area in the Spanish course of studies comprises various forms of expression and representation but also highlights the importance of aesthetic appreciation. It is understood as a need for the construction of cultural and individual identities in a world surrounded by a nonstop of aesthetic references. At Art Education class, the child learns to express and communicate various aspects of their inner world and outer reality through this language. Hence, Spanish Art Education methodology is eminently practical, it provides to the pupils tools and techniques for expression, but also facilitates keys for developing their aesthetic sense. (BOCM, 2014. p. 67) The subject of Art and Crafts develops in the children artistic sensitivity and the ability of expression by expressive practice, but also, through widening the knowledge of cultural references linked to the history of the arts. Therefore, it is emphasized in the text the importance of attending cultural activities, including, among others, museums and exhibitions. (BOCM, 2014. p. 67-68)

It is mandatory to impart, at least, 1,5 weekly hours of Art Education in elementary education. Even so, the ORDEN 3814/2014 (BOCM, 2015. p. 59), in benefit of the new educational law, claims the possibility of suppressing the teachings of Art Education by the learning of a second foreign language as an optional mode. Anyway, schools can increase that time if it doesn't modifies the minimum schedule of other subjects. Each school has 5 weekly hours for free disposal in behalf of its pedagogical proposal that can be used for teach arts or any practice related with it.

Aesthetic Appreciation tools are highly present at the Spanish Course of Studies a content include in the teachings of Artistic Expression. (BOCM, 2014. p. 70) All knowledge about Aesthetic Art Education,

also called Visual Art, is common to each grade of the elementary education stage and is indivisible. By the analysis of the contents set at the Spanish curriculum, the pillars of Spanish Art Education are subdivided in three interdependent groups as follows:

- a) Visual Education.
  - Classify types of images
  - Use ICT for the search, creation and diffusion of images.
- b) Artistic Expression.
  - Use of the basic elements of drawing. Color.
  - Drawing and painting. Techniques and materials. Analogical and digital creation.
  - Creation in volume. (three-dimensional)
  - Spanish artistic heritage. Greatest Spanish painters. Museums and Exhibitions.
- c) Geometrical drawing.

Therefore, Aesthetic Appreciation is concluded as a necessary pillar for developing individuals during their compulsory stage of learning. It is, in fact, an individual subject which includes in its contents the learning about Spanish artistic heritage, the greatest Spanish painters and specifically about museums and exhibitions. Its general aim is to know the most significant artistic expressions that are part of the artistic and cultural heritage, acquiring attitudes of respect and appreciation (value) of this heritage. For the assessment of the ability of Aesthetic Appreciation, teachers must evaluate the subject, in its appreciation field, by checking if each child has acquired the knowledge set by this three items: To recognize, respect and value the most important manifestations of the Spanish Cultural Heritage; To enjoy and appreciate the possibilities offered by museums for learning about the artworks in exhibition; To know about some professions related to the artistic fields, getting interested in the work of artists and craftsmen and enjoy as public of their productions. (BOCM, 2014. p. 69-70) This evaluation items couldn't be valued if the visit to museums and heritage were not included as school activities.

### 2.1.1.3. Model of Aesthetic Appreciation learning process through Project-Based Methodology.

This proposal was inspired by a Project-based methodology, based on Art, practiced in kindergartens in Spain. This type of scholar method focuses on improving of the 8 *Key Competences* for lifelong learning set by the European Parliament (EUROPA, 2016), and the contents and aims proposed in the curriculum of the stage using Art, in the case of the example we assisted to. It should be noted that in Spain, as we shall see in the analysis of their Course of Studies, the kindergarten has a formative/educational character, however through play as axis of development.

The model prototype was held in the kindergarten attached to the CEIP. Aldebarán<sup>1</sup> in the city of Tres Cantos, Madrid, Spain. A class of 21 children of 4 years old and their teacher were examined by the researcher as participant in the process of a three-month project-based methodology in the introduction to the artworks and biography of the Spanish painter Joaquin Sorolla. (PASTOR, S. & SUMI, A., 2015)

Project-based learning is a student-centered teaching methodology based on activities which engages the knowledge and skills to the interests of the children. (MERGENDOLLER, 2006) The students select, plan, investigate and create some productions during a long period of time, depending on their stage of development. This methodology challenges children to resolve a task/challenge, they are self-motivated to reach, while improving problem-solving and thinking skills. (Berends, Boersma & Weggemann, 2003; Scarborough, Bresnen, Edelmann, Laurent, Newell & Swann, 2004; Tsang, 1997 in HOLM, M. 2011 ). The role of the teacher is being a guide of the learning “*servicing as facilitators, providing scaffolding, guidance and strategic instruction as the process unfolds*”. (HOLM, M. 2011)

## **2.2. Aesthetic Appreciation in Japanese Art Education.**

### **2.2.1. Japanese Educational Laws.**

The Japanese Aesthetic Appreciation, as well as other specific terms of the different subjects, do not appearing in the National Educational Law. Although, each subject has its own Course of Studies.

As a result of the fact of Japanese and Spanish kindergarten are very different, we focused the

research in aims and contents set at the general Course of Studies for Kindergarten (designed for children between 3-6 years old) and the specific Course of Studies of Art and Handicrafts subject for Elementary Education (6-12 years old). Anyway, getting deeper in the study, we observed that kindergarten objectives of both countries, even focused in different points when written, don't differ so much in their contents.

### **a) Japanese Course of Studies for Kindergarten.**

Guidelines or textbooks for kindergarten teaching didactics of Art Education, beyond the Course of Studies are not being used homogeneously in Japan. Each kindergarten follows their own methodology and theory. Therefore, we have selected two different stages of the Japanese educational level such as, kindergarten and elementary education lower grades, because the correspondences between first and second grade of Elementary Education in Japan and the Spanish curriculum for the second stage of early childhood are higher. Despite of this fact, we adapted the activities caring about the individual development of each children accord to individual rhythms.

The curriculum is designed for a minimum of 4 daily hours in 39 weeks. The contents are divided in 5 areas related to children development:

- Health (physical and mental)
- Human relationships (between the child and others)
- Environment (and the children relationship with it)
- Language (process of language acquisition)
- Expression (feelings and expression)

### **b) Japanese Course of Studies of Art and Handicrafts.**

The Japanese Course of studies officially release the guidelines for teachers at each subject. It is set by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT) it is revised every 10 years based on the educational principles of the Educational Law.

The Course of Studies of Art and Handicraft begins to be set in primary education, in the chapter 7 of its curricula for the Improvement of Academic Abilities.

The Japanese Course of studies divides the educational stages in 3. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This document is focused on the lower grades, but the following objectives are set on all the curricula. The knowledge is divided in two: Expression and Appreciation. The block of expression is also subdivided in 4 points of view of the development of expression: Painting, tridimensional creation or volume, crafts and playful-creation (*Zoukei Asobi*).

The overall objectives are to feel the joy of create by playing, enjoy the different creative techniques and develop the aesthetic sensitivity. Anyway, the Appreciation development is only referred to the kind, positive look to the friend's creations, but it doesn't implies the appreciation of artworks or any critical thinking.

### **c) Japanese Art and Handicraft textbooks for lower grades of elementary education.**

There are not textbooks for kindergarten in Japan, and this subject is not mentioned at the course of Studies, therefore study the importance of Aesthetic Appreciation in Japanese Educational System is to focus in low grades of elementary course of studies and Art and Crafts textbooks.

There are some differences with the Spanish textbooks. In Spain, the textbooks are usually illustrated by adults, with famous artworks as inspirer of the activities, or as workbooks where children have to follow the adult examples for copy or continue a draw began for someone with a different stage of development. There are more than 30 textbook's publishers and also they provide more than one offer in textbooks for the same grades. After observing the Spanish textbooks, the appreciation activities seems to prime in the Spanish methodology over the self-expression skills.

Japanese textbooks are filled by children-made creations in the same stage of development. Also the materials proposed are being studied carefully by a material's research. Japanese textbooks quality and quantity is supervised by the MEXT. Therefore, to maintain the standards, in Japan, there are just two textbooks publishers: *Nichibun* (MIZUSHIMA, *et al.* 2014 a&b) and *Kairyudo* (SASAKI, *et al.* 2014 a&b).

Both companies are working in collaboration with the government. Hence every activity has a narrow relationship with the values of Japanese Course of Studies for Art and Handicrafts. The comparison between expression activities and appreciation ones is adverse to the last one. For example, the first time that Nichibun introduced an activity with an artist-made artwork to be appreciated is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **3. Japanese Course of Studies of Art and Handicrafts subject and the adaptation of a Spanish methodology to the Japanese curricula.**

The specific objectives and contents in the Japanese Course of Studies for Art and Handicrafts in elementary school are divided by grades. In this case, it connects the lower grades, and specially the first one with the kindergarten curricula. That's the reason why this research took the primary school Course of Studies as reference in a kindergarten environment, because in the Course of Studies of kindergarten the appreciation is not considered as an individual learning. However the first aim of the Expression area is to develop a sense of beauty, and the contents of the area foster to recognize the beauty and the emotions that things can transmit and which can be connected to encourage aesthetic appreciation. The curricula of kindergarten attaches the appreciation to the children's environment focusing it, only in the contact with nature. In the case of elementary school, the Course of Studies suggests a relationship between art museums and Schools based on the realities of each individual context. And also, introduces the importance of stand artworks in the school as galleries of appreciation in children's ordinary life

The contents are divided in three blocks: a) Expression; b) Appreciation; and Common Matters: skills acquired by interconnecting the knowledge between expression and appreciation.

Beginning from the common matters of Japanese Course of Studies, the contents are understand owns each individual sensory perception, and be capable of visualize figurative images through looking at colors and shapes. The means of appreciation are related with the children's environment artworks. Noticing

the qualities of the products, enjoying looking at it, and communicate their feelings about it while listening to their friend's points of view. (MEXT, Section 7 Art and Handicraft. Pp.2)

All this contents and aims were the origin of the PBL activity at the Japanese kindergarten. Based on the Japanese curricula and the tightness of the previous school plan, the Spanish model methodology set during three months in small portions of time, was re-designed for 4 long sessions in three weeks in a Japanese Kindergarten. But respecting the importance of being familiar with the artist, having a motivation for learn about him, and finding the identities shared with the artist for understand the artworks surrounding the school environment through the children's understanding and being a guide and a facilitator as teacher.

### 3.1. Japanese Art and Handicrafts Textbooks.

We can see an interest in developing in children an interest in Japanese heritage and craftsmanship, by looking at the special pages in the textbooks, but not in the activities. There are two textbooks created in collaboration with the Japanese government and no more. The company Nichibun divides the activities in 5 types: a) to do *Zoukei Asobi*. As Ebina, A. (2012) wrote "*Zoukei-Asobi is an activity that combines both art and play, and thus has the capacity to arouse interest in most children in correspondence with their stage of growth.*" A kind of activity genuine from Japan where the objective is enjoy through the experimentation with materials to find out new uses and applications based in the intrinsic interest of children depend on their stage of development. b) Representation through drawings. c) Tridimensional representation. d) Representation by crafts. e) Appreciation. In a case where the book has 22 activities the media of

**Table 1: Activities of expression and appreciation in Japanese textbooks published by Nichibun.**

Activity / Grade	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>
Expression (From a to d)	21	20	20	19	16	16
Appreciation (e)	1	2	1	1	2	2
Total	22	22	21	20	18	18
% approx.,	4,5	9	5	5	11	11

them should be 4, therefore in 6 years it would be 24 while the reality is being different. From 121 activities in total, in the 6 years of compulsory Elementary Education, there are just 9 activities designed for aesthetic appreciation, one or two per book. That makes just a 7,4% of the total of propose activities.

But in every activity there are 4 items for evaluation and one of them is about look and feel. Even if is centered in the own and friend's creations, is a beginning for trainee the Critical eye with the handicap of being compulsorily positive in their judges for succeed in the subject. That means that children can't be free expressing their feelings about an artwork because the creator is in front of them, and in this case, the important lesson is not to hurt other feelings. Anyway is interesting for the point of view of teaching to be constructive and positive while criticizing and appreciating Art.

Nichibun exalts the appreciation of other student's creations. In each book there are special pages showing other children and artist artworks, natural elements, materials and tools, illustrated books, traditional crafts and festivals, performances, design, types of architecture, visit to the museums, Japanese technology, and, in higher years, artist and artworks profiles.

We find artist's artworks represented in this textbooks on the shape of activities in its 5<sup>th</sup> grade. For the first time there is a proposal for Going to the Museum, while this possibility appears in the Course of Studies related to all the grades, exhibit artworks at the school as decorations and using an art-card-game.

There are also pages of the book related to aesthetic appreciation from 1<sup>st</sup> grade, but there are not activities. The sections of Aesthetic Appreciation proposed at the textbook are:

1. *Tanoshiina, omoshiroina*: Fun and interesting.
2. *Kyokasho no bijutsukan. Tanoshii katachi ya iro no sekai*: The textbook museum. The world of fun shapes and colors.
3. *Zoukei no mori. Mite, kanjite, kangaeru*: The creation forest. Look, feel and think.

The other authorized company of textbook's design is Kairyudo. This company also divides the activities of textbooks by the same 5 kind of skill

developments to promote in children. In this company the special pages are related directly with the contents following the same pattern in each book, three parts of appreciation of five. From the first page of the first grade textbook children can see pictures of original artworks made by famous artists. The second proposal of appreciation is the introduction of a contemporary artist profile, its artworks and the relationship of it with children by showing children’s creations based in similar technics. And the third one seems to be related with the benefits of collaboration in art creation for the community and what to do out of the classroom. In this third part called “everybody’s gallery” we can see in first grade textbook children’s collaborative artworks exhibited at the streets, panels at cultural festivals, creations with the environmental nature or individual reinterpretations of traditional decorations. The second grade book owns children’s collaborative plastic artworks at exhibitions. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade book shows art workshops at museums and cultural festivals. Those festivals are also an excuse for going out the class and make traditional decorations and games related with create their own toys. 4<sup>th</sup> grade textbook shows the power of child communication through arts by the design of a bus exterior decoration, using old furniture to create art and one more time learn about traditional technics. In 5<sup>th</sup> grade art is shown as a pacific way of expressing feelings and challenge by working together with the same aim. We can see the beauty of individuality and originality in expression through handmade crafts. 6<sup>th</sup> grade artworks are big creations inside and out of school by decorating unusual places with the power of the group. Finally the back of the textbook displays aesthetic points of view of everyday objects and exalts the beauty of human creations and nature.

**Table 2: Activities of expression and appreciation in Japanese textbooks published by Kairyudo.**

Activity \ Grade	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>
Expression (From a to d)	23	22	21	16	17	17
Appreciation (e)	1,5	1	1	1	1	1
Total	23	22	22	17	18	18
% approx.,	6,5	4,5	4,5	6	5,5	5,5

In Kairyudo textbooks, only taking in account the activities, without special pages, as done before, there are 120 proposals. Of those, just 6,5 are related with the objective of develop the artistic appreciation. Also there are some Aesthetic Appreciation proposals beyond the traditional activities:

1. *Chiisana bijutsukan*: Little Museum.
2. *Yume wo katachi ni*: The shape of a dream.
3. *Minna no gareri*: Everyone’s gallery.

In 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades there are any specific activities exclusive for this subject, while next textbooks of elementary education of this brand just propose 1 appreciation-based activity per academic year. At 1<sup>st</sup> grade 3 activities are shared with other contents, as in second year 2 are too. Therefore if the activities are dividing their objectives in 0’5, the percentage of appreciation activities in the total of activities is just a 5,41%.

The aesthetic Appreciation level of the artworks showed in the book is very different to the Spanish ones, because almost all the examples are children-made. Therefore, children can compare positively their creations with those showed at the book for the same develop growth. Also, they show different productions of the same activity, so the children don’t copy the examples but get inspired by it.

#### 4. Going to the museum with children

The teaching plan designed for this research was inspired by the Project-based teaching methodology model experienced in the public school Aldebaran from the city of Tres Cantos, in the North of Madrid province.

The prototype project had three basic steps, as recommended by Inmaculada del Rosal, in her conference “Real museums in the virtual world”, celebrated at the Autonomous University of Madrid in 2012. Her proposal model is adaptable to all the stages of basic education by having correspondence with children development. In the case of kindergarten we researched, the data compilation depended not only by the children but with the teachers as assistance and guide. The model works as follows:

Based on an artist related with the environment of the children, who provokes intrinsic motivation to

them from his/her life, artworks or themes.

#### Step 1: Before going to the Museum.

This step is an approach to the pieces exhibited at the museum. And to the epoch and the spaces represented in the artworks.

This step is subdivided in the following stages:

- Motivation Experience
- Check previous knowledge about the theme
- Complementary activities
- Sharing information

#### Step 2: Visit to the Museum.

The itinerary should be planned by the teacher on behalf of the desirable content. It could be a general guided visit, a monographic on a single subject, a discovering visit using the didactics guide proposed by the museum or designed by the teacher. In this stage the teacher should provide activities to enjoy the appreciation at the museum. And a safe place of self-expression for sharing the data recovery of each child in the big group.

This stage includes:

- Remember the rules
- Encounter with the artworks and chat
- Activity at the museum (Not compulsory)
- Leisure activity

#### Step 3: After visiting the original artworks.

For Inmaculada del Rosal (2012), the visit couldn't be complete without a continuous learning after having visited the museum. Here resides the innovation of her model. This step is necessary to set the knowledge and consolidate the relationship of communication between the original artwork, the artist and the child emerged at the museum. This step is a summary and an activity report where review and widens the previous knowledge and collected data. That could be done by the following activities observed in the Sorolla Project:

- Memorabilia collection
- Complementary activities
- Chat about the experience
- Assessment of acquired knowledge
- End of the project and portfolio ensemble

Also for this third step, Del Rosal displayed

complex tasks conducted for higher grades. As criticize the artworks and the theme of the Museum, critical analysis of the artworks from the aesthetic and historical artistic point of view and the possibility of visit other spaces with similar topics. However, this last activities need a teacher with a formation in Art History.

For this three steps is not necessary, for the teachers or the students, any deep or specialized knowledge about art, but willing to learn about the artist, themselves and their environment, since it is a program to build knowledge together. With this simple program of three steps, the teacher can design a successful visit to the museum by adapting the possibilities of their pupils in each stage from kindergarten. As well as the Aldebarán school did in Sorolla's program.

The school is a participative micro-society for children to approach to the social environment. And the school must create secure social meeting spaces designed so that children can gradually immerse themselves in the world around them.

We live in the age of communication, where children are exposed to numerous visual stimuli. Toddlers do not have a cultural background beyond that what they learn every day from their families and scholar relationships. This background depends on the culture in which each child is getting rise, growing and developing. The study of the works of art in the environment is one of the keys to understanding one's culture, history, respect the human-made environment and get now knowledge. In the article based on Sorolla's Study Case, we claim that *Works of art can be critical or serving as a function of exaltation. The decoding of images develops the cognitive knowledge of children, making their own forms of cultural heritage through the process of learning in the competence of languages and understanding of the environment*" (Pastor & Sumi, 2015). The theory of Piaget, as seen in Tejada in 2009, said that in order to learn something it is necessary to destroy some cognitive schemes to create new ones. And going to the museum and meeting the artwork itself produces a different cognitive learning than using another medium of visual representation. The exchange that

occurs facing the reality of an artwork implies reasoning and a cognitive connection. In addition, the fact of performing the activity in a social space with the characteristics of a museum requires an extra-learning for the development of the social competence of the child. According to Tejada, let the children go to the museum to generate a sense of ownership and responsibility in the importance of heritage maintenance. However this process needs the guidance and be supported by teachers or didactics professionals.

Rudolf Arnheim (1993:32-33) wrote in his book *Thoughts on Art Education* that “the action of seeing implies thinking.” To see is to consider as a cognitive process of decoding the sensorial perception through the abstraction of the symbol for find out an interpretation related to the own experience. From general essential components children can identify the characteristics of a visual representation. Perception allows humans to classify and differentiate even between characteristics previously untagged. (Arnheim, 1993: 17) For example, a man and a woman are reconognizable as well as wearing trousers or skirts. Is in the perspicacity analysis where resides the ability of understand the meanings deeper than wide generalities to understand the specific structures. It is possible because the vision is bound to the mental resources such as memory and concept formation. (Arnheim, 1993:30)

Going to the museum with children, as any other visit or excursion with scholars, has advantages and disadvantages. None is an easy task. The SoVA professor and curator of education for the Palmer Museum of Art of Pennsylvania, Dana Kletchka (2016) highlighted the similitudes between churches, museums and libraries as one of the cons of going to the museum. All this three types of buildings are associated to be quiet places, where being bored and suspicious to try to alienate people with their teachings. She also underlined the big problems a school has to deal with to take the pupils to the museum. Not just because of the schedule tightness for teaching the contents proposed in the course of studies on time, but also because of the means of transportation, the tickets, the fees, and the fear of many teachers to introduce, to children aged between 0 to 6, into a real

social experience. Nick Gray (2005) was a museum hater for the same reasons besides the “*gallery fatigue*” syndrome, until he realized that the everlasting beauty of artworks can communicate with the viewer beyond time. He found out, that story-telling and starting with passion to motivate the museum visitor when showing an art piece, makes the tour an adventure. As a matter of fact, Gray created his own company of museum tours based in three premises: guide, games and gossip. He rises the importance of playing at the museums and talking about what is after the official story of any art piece using the word gossip to describe the interesting facts for the visitor. If we extrapolate this thinking to our scholar excursion, we noticed the importance of being motivated before going to the museum (step 1). As well as having a playfully active visit to pay better attention to the artworks (step 2). And finally search interesting incidents, facts or even gossips related with the art works, the artist or its epoch for finding out new contents to check and learn about after the visit (step 3).

Nowadays the general public can have access to artworks easily by the internet thanks to huge companies’ proposals. For instance, the Cultural Institute of Google offers *Google Art Project* where scans of the principal museum’s pieces are ready to be discovered, observed, analyzed and shared between individuals. With Google Art Project the democratization of art becomes a fact. Today, 778 museums of the world are participating, among them we can find The Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) of New York City, United States of America (showing 194 pieces of 44 artist); The Tate Britain of London, United Kingdom (sharing 271 artworks of 108 artists); 59 Spanish museums and 50 Japanese art collections. Having this tools, going to museum seems to be unnecessary for appreciate art. This applications are indeed a great opportunity to approach to artworks, unfortunately it is just a half way to appreciation. In words of David Franklin (2011) the reason why going to museums still matter in the society of knowledge is because:

*“Only the museum can people truly engage with art.”* (Even the pictures are tridimensional and that cannot be appreciate by the computer)

*“Only the museum can art engage with art.”*

*“Only a museum can provide a physical space for reflection, appreciation and conversation.”*

*“Authenticity matters.”*

Going to an exhibition or a brand shop and finding a replica instead the authentic artwork or product does not cause a good feeling. That is the importance of the authenticity. The original products and its history matters. Actually that is what makes the something exceptional. Every artwork at the museum has a relationship with its context, the author, the own experience of the artist and it also creates a relationship with the visitor. Franklin (2011) asserted that Art must be experienced. Art reproduction is, in fact, a new vocabulary, however, it cannot gain this unbeatable intimate connection.

As Eisner (1997:1) said *“artistic learning and aesthetic experience are among the most sophisticated aspects of human action and feeling.”*

## **5. Methodology of the research**

The participants were 38 preschoolers of the 5 years old classroom at the Kindergarten attached to the University of Toyama, Japan. During 5 sessions of different lengths.

The city of Toyama is the capital of the homonym prefecture. To the North it faces Toyama bay, to the South beautiful forest, to the west beautiful hills and in the East the Tateyama Mountain Range, also known as the Japanese Alps. The main industry is medicine from old times to our days.<sup>2</sup>

The model prototype was based in a group of 4 years old children in a 3 months length project. Cause of the characteristics of the Japanese kindergarten methodology the length cannot exceed of 5 days. Therefore the complexity was higher so we selected a group of children of 5 years old to adapt the level to their cognitive development. It can be checked at PASTOR & SUMI, 2015.

### **5.1. Designing the project: From Spanish Sorolla Project to Takamura Project in Japan.**

In Spain, nation of artists, to go to a museum at weekday mornings means to see waves of kindergarten, elementary and high school students on the halls,

with their teachers. This situation seems not to be as current in Japan, and many of my university colleagues had never before visited an art museum before, even with the school.

We live in a visual world. In fact, as teachers are conscious of it, try to draw information to children via multimedia formats. But this practice alone is insufficient. While learning one’s own culture, it is indispensable for children to know their own closer environment. One way to reach that goal is through looking at artistic representations of other periods and contexts in the same closer environment. Children are capable to understand the world around them by knowing original artworks. On that path children can feel culturally identified, with others and environment, by the exclusive human ability of aesthetic sense.

For all these reasons, we thought on the need to introduce this artistic project, applied in the second level of Spanish kindergarten (3 to 6 years old), in Spain, as a means of analysis of good practices for their possible inclusion in Japanese educational system.

## **6. Gyujin Takamura Art Project.**

Gyujin Takamura Art Project was divided in the same 3 phases, as Sorolla Art Project also was. With this 3-step-process, children had enough time to learn some basic data about the artist’s life. They could understand and know 4 artworks set at the museum in the moment of the excursion. And have the experience of self-express themselves creating their own artworks based on techniques, colors and themes used by the artist that they learnt by the study of his creations. All of this, just before going to the museum for the first time. That preparation, and also, the understanding of social rules at museum, made the visit successful. After coming back from the museum, the Art Project cannot end until children share their feelings and new acquired knowledge with the big group for the experience enrichment.

As teachers, the objective is to let the children learn by playing, expressing themselves, sharing questions and answers. In fact, to promote an encounter with art, capable of provoke an intimate communication between the artwork, the child and the other

viewers. As well as create a good experience in their first time to go to the museum to introduce them in the cultural market as consumers of quality.

Also, in this case specifically, as intrinsic aim of the project itself, help the children to discover their similitudes with the artist.

### 6.1. About Gyujin the artist

Gyujin Takamura (箕牛人) (1901-1989) was an artist from Toyama City, Toyama Prefecture, Japan. Takamura was influenced by the appreciation of Pablo R. Picasso and Leonard Fujita<sup>3</sup> artworks. He created a unique style of drawing Japanese painting with ink by tracing long, thin and powerful curve lines and using the dry-brush technique in Japanese paper (washi) for fulfill the dark shapes and shadows.

We selected Gyujin Takamura because he is from Toyama and lived almost all his life in the city. Takamura's artworks are related to the city, stories for children, nature and animals, and family. All this themes are relevant in 5 years old children life. Also his Memorial Museum is close to the Kindergarten, neighboring children's homes, hence children can feel the relationship with the artist through their same cultural identities. With the selection of this artist we covered all the needs set on the Japanese Course of studies about appreciation and contact with the museums.

The *Takamura Gyujin Memorial Art Museum*, is located at the vicinity of the *Toyama Municipal Folk Craft Village*; a cultural space created in 1979 with the aim of offering knowledge and relax to the visitors. The craft village consist on various buildings built from 1965 to 1993. At the Folk Craft Village it is possible to visit the *Folk Art Museum*, the *Folk Craft Gassho Museum*, the *Folklore Museum*, the *Archaeological Museum*, the *Ceramic Art Museum*, a traditional *Tea Ceremony house*, the *Museum of Medicine*, the *Takayama Gyujin Takamura Memorial Art Museum* and the *Toyama Clay Doll Studio*. Also, at the Management central building they offer activities such as ceramics or Chinese hand-painting added to those provided at the different buildings. For example, painting oneself own Clay Doll or drink tea at the tea ceremony house. The Village, set at the slope of

Kureha hills, is a container of the local culture and folklore of the city through history.

The structure of the building was designed by Kikutake Kiyonori<sup>4</sup>, architect of the famous *Sofitel Hotel Tokyo* in 1994 and one of the founders of the Japanese Metabolist School<sup>5</sup>. The Metabolism architects combined multifunctional sculptural shaped mega-structures on raw molded materials (Brutalism<sup>6</sup>), with a high-tech archetypal inspiration. Kiyonori was concerned with sustainability and environment. The building is located in the slope of the hill beside the road. It is composed by an elongated main building and a storehouse connected by a hallway. There are exhibitions in the second and the first floor of the main building connected by a central spiral staircase. The *Takamura Gyujin Memorial Art Museum* was completed in 1989 and its exhibition changes 4 times a year. (Toyama Museum Association, 2013)<sup>7</sup>

### 6.2. Phase 1. Before to going to the museum.

All the activities were related to the artist artworks in the museum, focused in 4 artworks with direct relation to children's interests. And also, Toyama's *Kōgei Art* (工芸) concept where artisans elevate the value and the aesthetics of traditional crafts to the level of Art by innovating. That change of convention was possible as a result of the introduction of their own individual expression and creating innovation in the traditional use of materials. (MAD, 2015 web) The combination of antonyms as past and future, tradition and individuality, memory and creativity, and the differences between the makers, defines the unique beauty in each piece of *Kōgei art*

By the visit to the surrounded cultural places, scholars can explore the roots of their identities. For children, going to museums, can be a stopover for growing and deepen the knowledge learnt at schools in a fun, leisure, interesting and experiential way. It is not necessary to go far. It is possible to find one of those companies ready to share their artisan knowledge with the children. Teachers and schools can arrange workshops and visit to the companies or find social centers where retired artisans willing to claim their experience with young people.

Every child, because is still unknowing the

environment, needs of an “understanding of the meanings” in the process of categorizing the world, as seen in Bayo Margalef quote of Bartlett.

The aesthetic appreciation of artistic artworks in history, and the development in the ability of use of art techniques, materials and tools to raise the quality of the creations. Also the confidence of the creator in their abilities and the knowledge of different applications generate creativity and innovation. As *Kōgei*, the program searches to inspire the children to make their own creations through the appreciation of the artworks made in their environment. In *Kōgei* art the artisan already has the abilities to create the traditional products, but they add their personal visual experiences to innovate in the design. This research highlights the importance of knowing the surrounded creations in the environment to understand the meanings socially accepted in their environment: What is beauty; what type of creations are considering valuable in the environment. However, children don't have the refined abilities of artisans, in the case of Gyujiin Takamura project, the contextualization of the artist artworks reinterpreted by the children through their own experience.

### 6.2.1. Motivation day

During the first session the children should feel an impulse for the learning that may not appear intrinsically if only we present the subject. As seen in Villalba y Aguilera (1998:17), “*variety produces motivation and this turns in learning*” the teacher's previous work consist in selecting the artworks that can be interesting or amazed their children. Just 3 or 4 can be enough for kindergarten and lower grades of elementary school. And also learn about the basic life of the artist and those artworks. The rest of the knowledge will rise up with the pupils, and it will be related to the contents teachers need to teach for other subjects and the intrinsic interest of children. The success of the project depends on the motivation to the children. Barbe Gall 2009, claims that children have not any basic interest on arts beyond other stimuli, but the way the teacher introduces it to them is essential for letting them feel the challenge of discover more about it.



**Figure 1: Children playing freely with the materials in Takamura's suitcase on the motivation day.**

In the case of kindergarten children we showed them the elements of a suitcase supposed lost by the artist. Inside there were family pictures, brushes, ink, washi, and some artworks. (Figure 1) The children wanted to find out who was the owner and why did he carry all that different things. They interacted and played with all the materials and decided by themselves, under the guide of the teacher, the questions they wanted to find about the artist (Table 3).

**Table 3: What do we want to learn about Gyujiin Takamura (5 years old children)**

What we want to know about Gyujiin Takamura.
Where is his house?
In which country did he live?
When is his birthday?
What did he studied?
When is his wife's birthday?
What was the brand of his car?
How old is his wife?
Does he has children?
What is the name of his children?
What is his telephone number?
How old is Mr. Takamura?
What is the address of his house?
Which is the flag of his country?
What is his postal code?
When is his children's birthday?
What is his email?
Where did he live?
How small is his house?
Which is his ID number?
What is the job of his wife?
What did he use for painting?
How old his children are?
How many children does he has?
What color is his house?
What is the favorite food of his children?
What is the favorite food of his wife?
When is Mr. Takamura's birthday?
What is the favorite food of Mr. Takamura?
Why did he paint with black color?
How big is the house?
What is the name of his wife?
What kind of things do his children like?
Where is his house in his country?

During the process the teacher provided to the children different information about the artist, such as the name of the family members, his job, -which has connection with some parent’s jobs-, his history, the way he draw and created artworks, etc. And the artworks made by Gyujin Takamura were introduced to the children in meetings where each child could express their feelings and perceptions about it.

Each artwork we appreciated was also connected with an expressive activity and let the opportunity to the children for learn more about the artist. And their interest about him also changed as seen in table 4.

### 6.3. Phase 2: Going to the Museum

As previously seen, going to the museum to see the genuine artworks is important for human beings. How to talk to children about art can be a challenge for the teachers but there are different books and articles about the different methodologies to follow in front of the artworks. In this case we learnt the social rules to follow at the museum the previous days and before departure at the school.



**Figure 2: Children at Gyujin Takamura Memorial Art Museum.**

Following the model for children from 5 to 7 years written by Barbe-Gall, F. (2009) in his book *How to talk to children about arts*, our objectives at the museum were let the children make connections between the cognoscible scenes of the paintings with their daily life, make relationships between the artworks and their everyday life, use the whole body to

<sup>1</sup> Punkki: indian flute.

express oneself and appreciate the artwork, let the children to imagine what happened beyond the story told by the artwork (read the images) and speak and share their questions, ideas and feelings. During one hour approx. we visited 4 artworks in 4 teams. Each team was leaded by a volunteer student of the University of Toyama, who also was in charge of record in the video camera the interventions of the children. Added to the curator of the museum, 2 teachers, 4 college student’s volunteers and one researcher, were the adults in the museum because of the needs of the research. But in the Spanish model has been proved that two teachers per group is enough.

In this kind of visit, the children should be familiar to the rules of the museum. Hence they will see the artworks freely. In front of the studied artworks the group sat down (Figure 2), and the researcher, as guide teacher, ask to the children what do they see. The children shared with the big group their feelings, perceptions and questions about the artworks developing communicative skills and critical thinking, active listening, and also generating conversations with other children. The teacher should be neutral in its affirmations and let the children discover the original artworks as an encounter with the artists itself. The curator, in this case, didn’t introduce the artworks to the children. If the children had any question the teacher couldn’t answer, (because teacher doesn’t have to learn everything at all about the artist) they asked to the curator, who as specialist in the museum artworks, answered it with simple words and short explanations. The children’s questions are exposed in the next table. After the visit each children selected a postcard by itself as remember of the excursion.

**Table 4: Questions made by the children at Gyujin Takamura Memorial Museum. Based on 4 artworks selected by the teachers and appreciated previously at the classroom.**

Mother and son playing a <i>punki</i> <sup>1</sup>	Last leaf of Autumn
Why did he draw the hairstyle like this?	Why did he draw it in black?
Why are the Indian people in this shape?	Why there are a lot of places where the color is getting disappear?
What was written there?	Why the color is darker at the beginning and soft at the end?

When did he saw that scene?	Why did he draw a bird?
	Why there is a bird in the picture?
Mont Tateyama <sup>2</sup>	The forest witch and Kintoki
Why is this in brown?	Why did the witch raise Kintoki up?
What is written there?	Why did he draw the bear at sleeping time?
How could he put color so good?	Why Kintoki is speaking to the animals in that fierce face?
	Why is the feather of the bird so long?
	Why Kintoki became friend with a bear?
	Why is Kintoki so strong?

#### 6.4. Phase 3: After visiting the Museum

Back in the school we collected the memorabilia, spoke in group about the experience and some of the children draw their most impact work feeling about the museum.

All the products created during the activities made during the project were included in each's child portfolio.

1. Project portfolio cover
2. Information studied about the artist's life
3. Activity 1: (Figure 4) Black and white experience. Children drew for the first time only with black color and different every day's materials for experience the difficulties of the style of the artist. They painted what they think it was around the artist artwork in his interpretation of the last leaf of autumn.



**Figure 3:**  
B/N experience based in Takamura's artwork.

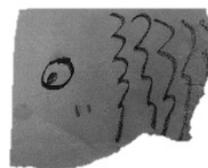


**Figure 4:**  
Family portray draw by a participant based on the importance given by Takamura to the family relationships.

4. Activity 2: (Figure 5) as one of the themes and essential works of the artist, we talk about the work of art "Mother and son playing the punki" and each child, after sharing it in an assemble, drew the moments they spend as a family doing a common activity. This girl draws her mother and herself playing the piano together.

5. Story telling based in the main artwork of Mr. Takamura. Which is a traditional Japanese story called Yamamba to Kintoki.

6. Activity 3: (Figure 6) since one of the exhibited works exhibited in the museum was a wood that the artist found and his forms inspired him to decorate it with the colors of one of the mountains of the city. Emulating the artist we perform a *mitate* activity.



**Figure 5:**  
Mitate activity.



**Figure 6:**  
Museum remember worksheet.

7. On returning from the museum we made a souvenir page with a drawing of the part of the Museum that interested those most or liked and the entrance to the museum with its date. The rules set for going to the museum, the stamped seals at the museum, the pamphlet of the exhibition and the selected postcard bought when finished the visit.

8. At the end, the answers about the questions related with what they wanted to learn and what they had learned were also added to the portfolio as a means of assessment.

Once on the return of the museum, the time was insufficient to debate the activity for a long time and the last day simply gave us time to say goodbye. It would have been advisable to carry out the activity for at least three more hours.

The motivation of the children and their intrinsic interests is essential for the development of this activity, as well as a modification of the interests as they acquire knowledge on the subject. If we look at the

<sup>2</sup> Mont Tateyama is the most significate scenery of the city of Toyama.

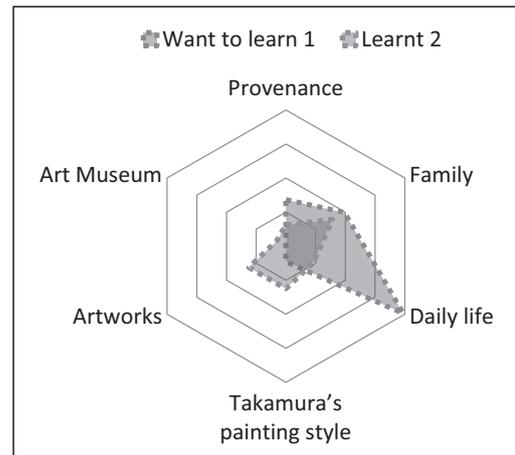
table that indicates those who want to learn about the artist, and compare it with the final lessons, we can analyze that the children have not been able to answer 100% of their questions. (Table 5) However, they have been interested in fields, which only aesthetic appreciation can enlighten.

**Table 5: What we have learnt about Gyujin Takamura. (5 years old children)**

What we have learnt about Gyujin Takamura.
I know the name of his family.
The name of the mother is Tsune.
His name was Gyujin. He is the father.
The name one of his sons is Tatsundo
The name of the older brother is Ryuuji.
The name of one artwork was “Yamanba to Kintoki” (The Witch of the mountain and Kintoki)
The name of one artwork was “The last leaf of autumn”
The name of one artwork is “Punki no Oyako” (Mother and son with Indian flute)
There is an artwork called “Ko Shuu no Su”
He painted with Japanese black ink.
He liked the children’s way of playing
He draw big women without neck
When painting an Artwork he draw a line and later rubbed the color with a brush.
He was born in Japan
He lived in Toyama
His Art Museum is near the kindergarten.

As we can see in Graphic 1, during the motivation day questions made for the children as interests about the artist, a 60 percent of the answers were related to perceptions on children’s daily life. For example, birthdays, email and telephone number. The next important themes were the family and the place we he was leaving. Also there are a 6% of questions about Gyujin Takamura artworks.

After we asked to the children what did they learn, we can notice the order of interest changing on this stage. Even if the interests about family are still in first place, this is followed by the techniques to create artworks and questions about the art museum. A 5% of the children talked about the artworks, and a 10% was focused on the place where he was living. The interest in children’s daily life decreased only a 13%. Accordingly with the results, the interest of the children in the artist and its artworks increased during the learning process.



**Graph 1: Difference of interest before and after the project.**

### 6.5. Interview to parents

After the project, the parents of the children in the kindergarten answered the questionnaire about the interest in aesthetic appreciation in their daily life and how the project changed it. The 100% of the surveyed people answered.

The 37 families surveyed returned the survey. Of which 38 surveys result in total, since one of the families had twins. To begin, we asked about the experience that each family had in particular with going to museums. Since 50% of families often go to the museum, only 5% of families usually do so with their children.

After the project, the parents of the children in the kindergarten answered a questionnaire about the interest in aesthetic appreciation in their daily life and how the project changed it. The 100% of the surveyed people answered it at the rate of one survey per child. 38 in total. 50% of the survey sample, sent written messages and opinions about their own child’s experience. These will be discussed below.

A 50% of the surveyed people use to go to the museum as a habitual activity in their lives. Also, a 63% extra of the families have been there with their children, at least once. Of them, the 75% had make special activities in the museum destined to children. Just an 8% of the families think that a museum is not a place where children can have fun while 11% believe there is potential for children to enjoy themselves in a museum, and an 81% of the total of the families thinks it will be a good place for children to

have fun.

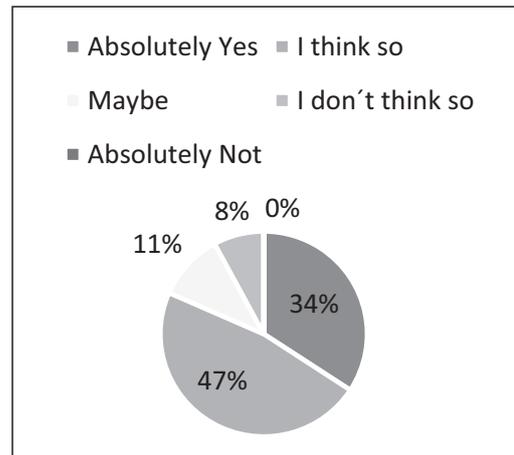
But museums are not the only place where children can emotionally have an encounter with the artist’s original artworks. 26 of the surveyed families claim their children have seen an original artwork. Of them, 6 never did an activity in the Art Center while the rest had some kind of workshop. 4 of those families went to see the artworks before the activities. But the same 26 families using the “Museum Kid’s Corner” with their children.

Also, parents wrote about Gyujin Takamura Project and the importance of learning culture through Art. The 97, 36% of the families estimate the importance of this objective of the project. At home, the 100% of the parents asked their children about the project during the process and only one family didn’t get a reply about it.

The acquired knowledge perception by the parents is centered in 3 principal themes. 26 of the children shared with their families’ information about the life of the artist and his family as main theme. 21 of them talked at home about Gyujin Takamura’s city and country and a 10% about his artworks. Also other a 7, 89% of them spoke about other different information beyond that. But focusing on the general knowledge gotten by the children, one family thinks that their kid learnt nothing about Gyujin Takamura and his artworks, 2 family are very satisfied with the great learning of their children and the average of the group perception fluctuate between an intermediate learning. Therefore the families score the learning of their children like from “a basic understanding” (23, 68%), “a good understanding” (39,47%), and “a wide understanding” (28, 94%).

The survey had a space to make free comments, which was filled by 50% of families.

Only one family indicated being not interested in art in absolute. Everyone who commented on the project Gyujin Takamura, was very grateful to participate in this pioneering activity. All families emphasize that at first they thought it was too complicated an activity for the children, but in observing the success of the Gyujin Takamura project, they plan to go to museums as a family. Here there are some of the reflections of the families:



**Graphic 2: Interview to parents about Gyujin Takamura Art Project after their children’s experience. Are Museums a place for enjoyment of children?**

**Table 6: Selection of parents comments to the questionnaire after Gyujin Takamura project.**

I’ve been living in Toyama for a long time. But I never knew anything about Gyujin Takamura before. My child talked about the artist a lot with me, and he said that he wanted to go to the museum with me. Before, I was worried that he would behave badly and did not follow the rules properly. Therefore, this workshop has become a possibility to share art between parents and children.
At first we thought our son had no interest in the arts. And compared to his brother, we never took him to museums. This time the child has told us directly that he wants to go to see the artworks with the family. So we decided to go all together next week. He has shown an interest in seeing works of art that he had not previously shown. Thank you very much.
I always want to go to museums, but I thought it was not a place where kids could enjoy. So we had never gone before. But this time, when my son came home, he spent a lot of time talking about the things he had learned in the museum. If he is enjoying it so much, I think that in henceforth he will take him to museums more often. Thank you very much.

The comments of the parents were divided by categories as they appeared.

Parents gave the utmost importance to the activity because of the fact that the children told the experience when they came home. The most outstanding response was the decision of 7 parents in the fact of going to visit the museum as a family, and a mother who was interested in going to see the works of the museum. The parents emphasized the importance of the encounter between the original works of art and the children as receptors of the message. In general, the activity is highlighted as a good experience in which the children have awakened their interest in the

**Table 7: Parents comments devided by categories.**

Categories	Mention times
Good experience	4
Didn't know about Takamura previously	2
Go to the museum	1
Common topic interest for talking about in family	1
New experience	3
Black and white paintings	1
Talking at home	7
Having fun/ Happiness	6
Encounter with original artworks	5
Difficult going to museum with children	2
Learning about the artist before going to the museum	3
Growing interest in environment/ museums	3
Growing interest in drawing	1
The project was short3	1
Understand the feelings / thoughts of the artist	2
Style of the artworks	2
Parents also wanted to come	1
Go to the museum in family	7
Awaking the interest in arts	3
Activities children-parents	3
Parents surprised because preschoolers can understand	1
Children acquire knowledge about the artist	1
Afraid of behavior	1
The importance of the feeling of create	1
Child impress about the knowledge	1
The need for a guide specialized in children	1

arts and the environment. They see this social learning as an opportunity to go with children to artistic institutions.

Beyond what the children have learned from the artist's works, families have observed the possibilities of going to a social site with children, and their ability to respect rules and understand the life of another person. In families, a communicative relationship was created through the project, as the children told their parents what they were doing in class. Relationships in family have been strengthened through these conventions and the interest of learning more to visit the museum together as a family. We have also been able to observe that some parents who have tried it, have observed the need to previously know the works of art to visit, or to have a guide specialized in children to make the visit more joyful.

## 7. Conclusion

For our research we have focused on the benefits that can be obtained by going with the children to the museum to see the original works of art to generate an encounter with art through the identification of children with their own cultural roots. Based on Barbe Gall's book (2009: 16), children under 7, which is the age group in which we focus our research, and more specifically, from 5 to 7 years, are interested in works that have relationship with their daily lives. Therefore, for this field study case based in the Spanish methodology, we have selected Japanese artist whose subjects are related to the daily life of children, such as family, children's stories or landscapes and environments that can be identified with the lived experiences by the students.

To go to the museum with children, teachers need to find an autochthonous artist who was, like Sorolla, interested in themes that motivate the infantile public. Someone with whom children can feel identified in space and interests. Taking into account the similarities between the themes of both artists, and the interests of the participants, we selected Gyujin Takamura. An artist from the city of Toyama, who painted the spaces of the area, family scenes and children's stories traditions of China and Japan. For more information, it is an artist of Chinese ink, a data to add due to tradition of this type of artistic style in Japan. The museum was his old house and was only 10 minutes by bus from the kindergarten of Toyama University.

However, the major challenge appeared in kindergarten. Although in Spain, the project model lasted three months, the maximum time we got in school with the children was 5 days. Considering that one of the days we had to spend the whole day in the museum, and that the rest of the day we had to adapt to the routine of kindergarten, the time of learning before and after school did not seem to be enough.

Therefore, we moved a minimum part of the project Sorolla to the project Takamura suppressing the globalism of the activities and presenting it as a special event, with possibilities of being repeated, in the center for children. However, we maintained the objectives of cultural identification and expansion of

knowledge through artistic appreciation. By the experimentation of the Sorolla-Takamura case studies carried out respectively in Spain and Japan, to demonstrate that it is possible to go with Japanese children to the museum and to carry out an artistic project according to the Spanish methodology in a Japanese kindergarten.

After the experience we can conclude there is scope for introducing the model of Spanish aesthetic appreciation in Japanese kindergarten. Children and their families have welcomed the activities positively. Families have decided to go all together to the museum, so the possibility of a cultural change is anticipated in terms of assistance to museums. This change, though in a small scale can be imported into other schools, until it turns itself into an innovation.

Children can understand how to look at pictures, even if they have little experience, they can reinterpret the information and spread new knowledge not only in appreciation and expression of art but also in various fields. Also, learn how to emotionally interpret your experiences in light of your work's theme.

Although the teaching methods in Spain and Japan are slightly different from the practical research above, by going to the museum and having a direct relationship about the works of the local artists, I felt the possibility of being able to learn art as a culture widely even at Japanese schools.

- Base the teaching plan on children's favorite things.
- Respect for the children's appreciations.
- Designing challenging and fun meaningful activities.
- Respect the expression of children.

Taking children to the museum must not be a

special extraordinary activity far from the reality of the teaching at kindergarten. It should be meaningful by being integrated in the curriculum.

In conclusion, in the field of the visual, it is convenient to teach children to study what is real and what is not related to the images they perceive. As well as helping them to codify from an early age the design tricks used by advertisers and designers to push us to buy certain products. In this way they will be critical of their environment and we will empower them to question whether the image they are shown is reality representation or simply a manipulative art creation.

This critical look will also be positive when it comes to seeing works of art and enjoying them. It is about appreciating art as a space of communication between the emotions and meanings of the artist and the emotions that cause the work of art to each different observer according to their experience. An encounter that goes beyond the representation of reality. A meeting of souls in which the children as collectors of the artistic message have to ask what the artist meant by his work and what the work means for themselves.

To achieve an establishment of artistic appreciation in the Japanese educational system, there is a long way to go but with possibilities for adaptation. At present, the actions that can be carried out simply correspond to the school and to the interest of teachers in appreciation. So this educational innovation can be adopted by a teacher, a school, and even by a specific collaboration between institutions without any problem.

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