

## **THE ITALIAN SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF COVID-19. BETWEEN TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND THE RECOVERY OF INDIVIDUALITY AND SOCIALITY**

### **LA SCUOLA ITALIANA AI TEMPI DEL COVID-19. FRA INNOVAZIONE TECNOLOGICA E RECUPERO DELLE INDIVIDUALITÀ E DELLA SOCIALITÀ**

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#### **Abstract**

The methodologies of didactics have evolved over the years and, recently, they have made use of technologies to support quality teaching and learning approaches.

Due to the Covid-19 emergency, the need to activate distance learning has forced all teachers all over the world to use technological means and tools to implement a new teaching method and to identify remote educational strategies, capable to support the educational course of study of all pupils, in virtual classrooms with an inclusive approach.

Considering the body, corporeity, and emotions as fundamental mediators in the learning process, we thus intend with this work to face some essential aspects of distance learning that involve each and every one.

L'importanza della corporeità nei processi di crescita e di sviluppo della persona, in una dimensione olistica, mette d'accordo studiosi provenienti da aree disciplinari anche molto diverse e ambiti epistemologici differenti; d'altro canto, le metodologie didattiche si sono evolute negli anni e soprattutto recentemente hanno registrato un forte impulso che le ha orientate all'uso mirato delle tecnologie per supportare un processo didattico di qualità. A causa dell'emergenza Covid-19, la necessità di attivare la didattica a distanza ha obbligato tutti i docenti del mondo ad utilizzare mezzi e strumenti tecnologici per implementare una nuova didattica e individuare strategie educative a distanza, capaci di sostenere il percorso educativo e formativo di tutti gli alunni, in classi virtuali con approccio inclusivo.

Con questo contributo si intende porre l'attenzione su alcune tematiche imprescindibili per una didattica a distanza che giunga a tutti e a ciascuno per le proprie esigenze e bisogni, capace di rendere l'esperienza educativa e di apprendimento, parimenti significativa e gratificante per ogni persona coinvolta nel processo, attivando processi cognitivi, metacognitivi, affettivi, relazionali sia a livello individuale sia a livello sociale, con uno sguardo ultimo non solo all'azione didattica in senso stretto quanto ad una promozione di benessere e di una qualità della vita sostenibile per ciascuno nella propria personale condizione.

Si vuole, dunque porre l'accento sulla centralità del corpo e del movimento nel processo educativo e, nello specifico, in quello inclusivo per la promozione del benessere della persona cercando di mettere in luce possibili percorsi, capaci di coniugare tali evidenze educative con le esigenze didattiche emerse durante il periodo della pandemia.

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<sup>1</sup> Il contributo è frutto di un lavoro a più mani; i paragrafi 1 e 4 sono stati scritti da Alessandra Lo Piccolo, il paragrafo 2 da Viviana Maria Passaniti, il paragrafo 3 da Marta Mingrino

## Keywords

Body, corporeity, technology, inclusion, emotions.

Corpo, corporeità, tecnologia, inclusione, emozioni.

### 1. Being fragile at the time of COVID: some educational effects

The paradigm of fragility intersects, today, several different scientific and applicative fields and is studied and defined by numerous disciplines; for these reasons, it was deemed appropriate to choose and propose a pedagogical reading that takes into account the multidimensionality of fragility, which makes the latter a field of interest for the Human Sciences and not only by involving disciplinary fields that differ in nature and epistemological statutes (Milani, 2019). Today, a time in which we live the fear due to the new virus - COVID 19- more than ever we feel the need to build a shared project, to establish supportive relationships, which give confidence and strengthen identity, values and actions of the individual and the community; today, when all relationships and interpersonal connections seem to have broken down, distanced, reduced to mediated messages and where a handshake or a hug are no longer allowed even among the most intimate ones; today, in which the need to build a shared project, to establish supportive relationships, which give confidence and strengthen identity, values and actions of the individual and the community; today, when all relationships and interpersonal relationships seem to have broken down, distanced and reduced to mediated messages and where a handshake or a hug are no longer allowed even among the most intimate ones. Today, when the sense of fragility and vulnerability permeates the lives of all of us, each one in his or her own personal conditions and occupations, it is necessary to stop and think carefully about the human person, his or her values, his or her needs, and first of all to address an act of concrete responsibility to the new and future generations, trying to make all this usable, accessible and comprehensible to them. How can we achieve a targeted educational action capable of promoting positive messages, constructive, concrete and effective actions when even the modality of transmission of knowledge and values as well as feelings seems limited and, in some ways, distorted?

In this perspective, it is necessary to review the position of the body and corporeity in current educational processes: numerous studies have shown the positive effects of both short and long term movement on the cognitive functioning of children, adolescents, young people and adults (Fedewa & Ahn, 2011).

Thus, these studies have foregrounded the importance of the physical body in cognitive processes: “whereby cognition is embodied and also depends on bodily characteristics” (Gomez Paloma, 2013, p. 31); at the same time, the irreplaceable bodily pretence in different educational care treatments, often necessary in certain circumstances of special need and fragility, has been highlighted.

This has highlighted the need to reinterpret and reconfigure didactic practices, even those consolidated over time, repositioning disciplinary content, methodologies and strategies that question the body as a crucial element for an effective and meaningful educational and didactic intervention.

This is even more necessary when we deal with interventions aimed at the youngest or the most fragile, where the body represents a fundamental dimension to be promoted and taken care of with respect to targeted and differentiated paths. We have to ask ourselves how, in times of COVID 19, it will be possible to guarantee this primacy to the body during learning processes and how, above all, it will be possible to make it a right for everyone in every personal physical, psychic, etc. condition.

School has always been a place of collectivity, sociality, confrontation and experiential discovery; classmates and benchmates have represented a strong point in the learning process

and until the beginning of the health emergency, due to Covid-19, *cooperative learning*, *collaborative learning* and *peer-tutoring* were just some of the most effective methodologies used successfully by all teachers of all levels of school.

Frontal and traditional teaching was slowly being replaced by a more contemporary one; schools were beginning to change their structures, classrooms were becoming larger and more flexible, desks and chairs were being equipped with casters, technology was integrating the classic paper book and teaching was taking on an increasingly workshop-like and inclusive aspect.

But also the Italian education system, since March 2020, had to face one of the greatest challenges of all time: to guarantee the right to study and the educational success of each and every one, even in a lockdown regime, finding in technology and in the digital world the only solution to face this challenge. “Technology, to be understood as a fruitful combination of science and technology, already an integral part of people’s lives since a long time, has shown an almost “salvific” implication with respect to some essential services: it cannot be doubted that in a situation of pandemic emergency and net of the many difficulties - first of all of access, then technical and content - it is only thanks to technology that it has been possible to ensure a certain continuity of educational service, while paying - this is also a fact - a cost, even high, in terms of full performance” (Laneve, 2020, p. 411).

From the need to reorganize the physical school space according to the newest pedagogical indications, we moved suddenly to the need to organize a virtual space that would ensure learning in all its dimensions, such as: sociality, relationality, emotionality, corporeity. It is necessary to (re)organize and (re)structure an educational action in a virtual environment, in the case of “Distance Learning” (Italian acronym: DAD) or semi-virtual, in the case of “Integrated Digital Didactics” (in Italian: DDI), that does not neglect the fundamental aspects of the learning process and that has as its objective the promotion of the person in its entirety and with all its needs, not limiting itself to the rational cognitive level only, but also integrating the emotional, social and bodily.

All of this, however, cannot and must not obscure the educational purpose and, therefore, the didactic purpose of which the school must be the guarantor and promoter. Education is called upon to support the person in his or her journey of self-realization (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993) in the perspective of the *Capability Approach*, for which the path to happiness is pursued through the discovery and development of one’s own potential, and speaking of personalized education does not mean referring to an “isolated” person, but rather belonging to a community and interacting with it (Lo Piccolo, 2012).

It is time, therefore, to look with new eyes at the possibility of elaborating new educational paths that respond to the most important pedagogical principles, which do not neglect the most delicate task of educational planning and that is to help the youngest to discover their own peculiar excellences in personal fields, in which a student can choose his or her own individual goals: school subjects, cultural and current topics, productive activities, entertainment and hobbies, artistic activities (García Hoz, 2005, p. 27-28).

Every personalized educational program is effective when, in addition to guaranteeing the promotion of the ability to know and transform the world, it also strengthens social relationships, enhances the ability to communicate, to express oneself, to understand through the different forms of language; today more than ever we must insist on this and learn to know how to use in an appropriate - we could even say virtuous - way all the channels and means available in order to implement it, renegotiating with one’s own prejudices and limitations.

It is certainly necessary, for this purpose, to hypothesize and implement a training project that is flexible and open, which is, namely, able to outline strategies capable of relating and adapting the training intervention to the personal characteristics and needs of each individual. Hence the need for an articulated and flexible didactic planning, able to enhance all the preliminary cognitive elements of the educational process in order to ensure equivalence and equality of training results.

In such a complex<sup>2</sup> context, a significant aspect emerges: if education requires a harmonious, integral and integrated development of the person, the school curriculum must be oriented to involve all aspects of the person in its integrity, thus taking into account its cultural, social, gender and age characteristics, but also recognizing and enhancing all the potential that the person possesses in terms of cognitive, expressive and character.

Gardner (2005) writes: “Scholastic successes are based on a very static and generic concept of intelligence, but, in everyday reality, it is possible to observe so many different forms of intelligence that it is unthinkable to unify them into a single monolithic block, nor to measure them using the same instruments” (Gardner, 2005). According to the author, a *plural* declination of the school is advisable with respect and, above all, for the enhancement of all the intelligences in which talents, potentialities and individual perspectives are revealed. In *Five Keys to the Future*, Gardner (2007) describes the intelligences useful for contemporary society, that is, those *mindsets* that individuals will need if they are to progress in future eras. Among them we find the creative intelligence: “The aim of the creative personality is to extend knowledge, to disrupt gender boundaries, to guide a set of practices towards new and unforeseen directions. He who aspires to synthesis seeks order, balance, closure; he who aspires to creation is driven by uncertainty, amazement, continuous challenge, disequilibrium [...] he who synthesizes is Apollonian: of controlled temperament, he proceeds with balance and harmony; he who creates, on the other hand, is Dionysian: of stormy nature, he has what it takes to fight with the gods” (Gardner, 2007).

It is legitimate the urgency to plan adequate methodological and didactic actions, moving from the deep conviction that through an adequate education to creativity can be accomplished the full realization of human potential. Hence, the need for a didactic, at a distance as in presence, which aims at an integrated knowledge of knowledge, and the formation of a critical consciousness, functional to the search for new paths.

## **2. Body and corporeality in the learning process**

By studying the pedagogical thought of the greats of Western culture, from Rousseau to Piaget, from Wallon to Gardner, from Arnold to Goleman, we arrive at educational models that make the body and corporeity, as a methodological approach, a “must” aimed at promoting successful cognitive processes. Body mediation, as a matter of fact, is considered an indispensable approach to teaching and a fundamental vehicle for learning.

“The body is the first means by which the individual experiences the environment, it is the first channel of communication between themselves and others and will continue to be the privileged intermediary in relationships with others, between the internal world and the world outside himself” (Federici, 2008), is a means of knowledge of self and others because it is through it that emotions, feelings emerge, and it is thanks to these elements that we experience the world.

Jean Jacques Rousseau considers the body and corporeality to play an important role “since corporeality represents a privileged channel for the education of man, because of its ability to strengthen the body and forge character, precluding the dominion of the self, of instincts, manifesting the strength of the body in bearing discomfort and spiritual strength in sustaining adversity”. The philosopher writes in *Emile*: “Exercising the senses is not only making use of them, it is learning to judge well by their means, it is learning, so to speak, to feel ... Therefore, do not only exercise your strengths, exercise all the senses that direct them, draw from each of them all possible profit” (Rousseau, 1972). If the “human person” is, according to Pestalozzi’s words, an indissoluble unity of “hands” (motricity, corporeity, materiality, manuality, physicality), of “heart” (affectivity, feelings, passions), and of “mind” (theoretical, practical, and technical ra-

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2 Si pensi alle Intelligenze multiple e agli Studi sulle emozioni di matrice neurobiologica

tionality), it is not possible to imagine anywhere, least of all in schools, an education that is not simultaneously attentive to all these dimensions” (Bertagna, 2006, p.30). Interdisciplinary studies agree in considering the body and corporeality as a source and bridge of knowledge, as the main subjects of the processes of teaching, education and learning. Therefore, one cannot “have” a body but must “be” a body (Iori, 2002, p.5).

In teaching, body and corporeity must be considered in their deepest dimensions, they must be seen as pedagogical tools through which it is possible to mediate knowledge and make learning efficient over time because “our senses are the first masters of knowledge” along with the body, which is a tool to promote “memory as a function of learning (Milani, 2010).

The body becomes fertile ground on which individuals aware of their own identity can grow in the broadest sense. In the educational process “the most significant and incisive mediators are ... the educational climate and tone, created by the quality of interpersonal relationships. Gestures and gaze, postures and use of space, facial expressions and mimicry, modulations of vocal tone, are all mediators of communication, which refer to emotional significance and to possible symbolic elaborations”. So “the body in its entirety is the first mediator of learning and knowledge” (De Anna, 2009).

“A study of the seventies shows that, in human interactions, communication occurs for over 90% through non-verbal signals, the clues that emerge from postures and gestures of the body, but also from the way in which vocal messages are pronounced (vocal language) and only 7% by the words actually articulated (verbal language)” (Borg, 2009);

It is easy to understand how we mostly communicate with the body: posture, gestures, mimicry, looks, in general proxemic, paralinguistic and kinaesthetic aspects, in every moment of daily life, but especially in the educational field, have a primary role over verbal communication. “The body through silent communication is capable of bringing subjects closer in inter-subjective, uplifting relationships, capable of leading them or leading them back to an authentic existence” (Bellingreri, 2005). Therefore, if didactics mediated exclusively by hardware and software is not properly designed and structured, it risks forcing non-verbal communication, which accounts for 90% of the learning process.

The right to study, equal opportunities, the enhancement of individuality and diversity and educational success are the main objectives of the current school system. A vast amount of literature highlights the important role of the body as well as technology in learning processes, especially in the case of specific learning disorders or more generally of all special educational needs. «Una didattica dell’integrazione vede il corpo come ambiente privilegiato dei processi formativi, ponte intelligente tra le diverse capacità, forma intellettuale autonoma, ma capace di interagire per tracciare nuove vie per i percorsi dell’apprendimento umano» (Fraunfelder, 2000); ed è proprio da questo pensiero che bisogna partire, purché la didattica a distanza sia realmente funzionale all’apprendimento.

It is necessary to identify an educational model that takes into account the bodily and kinaesthetic dimensions and that is aimed at enhancing them through the wise and creative use of technology, a model that can be reflected in this “new school”, which, overwhelmed by the Pandemic, is trying to come up with new solutions and strategies to ensure the right to study and growth of all students.

In the didactic field, in daily practice, it is also thanks to technology that it is possible to integrate different methodologies, use different strategies and apply multiple techniques in a wise *mélange* and with an attitude respectful of multiple intelligences and of the different development times of students. With this we want to emphasize how the difficulty, linked to the current historical moment that spreads like wildfire in all social environments, can be addressed with a positive and innovative approach aimed at enhancing transversal skills.

Think then of the relationship between teaching and learning as a subliminal game aimed at stimulating suggestions of psychological and therefore physical well-being, where learning is the result of that activity in which the student is the protagonist as in a film where emotion is already knowledge.

Emotions are the basis of the relationship with the world, they put man in communication with himself and with others. In a sense, they are the “window on the world” that allows access to some dimensions of experience that otherwise would be lost [...]. Emotions influence cognitive abilities and, vice versa, certain emotional experiences give rise to cognitive representations and certain “ways of thinking”. Emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2005) consists, in fact, in the harmonious balance between reason and emotion, because every thought, in a certain sense, is “emotional” and every emotion is “intelligent” (Buccolo, Ferro Allodola, Mongili, 2020, p. 375).

Instead of the body and corporeality, in “Dad” – distance learning – therefore, a reassuring tone of voice aimed at instilling serenity and verbal dialogue takes on a particular value in this case. Therefore, it will be care of the teacher to use a particularly delicate language, comforting and multimedia. The student will then perceive that indirect invitation to participate in the educational dialogue without fear or reticence.

As well as “in presence”, also in virtual contexts, the inclusive teacher is the one who supports the heterogeneity of the class group as a learning resource. The group of students, as a matter of fact, if properly oriented and managed by the teacher, becomes a promoter of self-esteem and motivation, as well as of learning and skills.

“Research in the educational field has actually noted the existence of what, in technical terms, is called the *context effect* or group composition, whereby a student’s learning is not only influenced by his or her personal characteristics, but also to some extent, by those of the classmates with whom he or she interacts” (Invalsi, 2019).

So, even if “school is done” in a virtual context, it is very important that the class group is perceived as such and, therefore, that even the student with special educational needs feels an integral part of it.

It is clear that, at the basis of inclusion, there is a causal link with emotions and, therefore, it is inconceivable to structure a teaching action based on an education to emotions and emotionality. It is no coincidence, as a matter of fact, that the World Health Organization has identified among the *life skills* to be strengthened in schools, empathy and emotion management, as fundamental skills for the promotion of well-being and prevention of dysfunctional behaviour, including school dropout.

Perceiving an empathetic climate, even in a virtual context, where positive emotions emerge, means guaranteeing motivation, a sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem, fundamental aspects in the process of learning and inclusion.

Therefore, it is not necessary to have a physical space where school is held, but it is essential that each student is aware that he/she is immersed in a shared educational path where he/she can express his/her abilities to the fullest and enhance them together with others, so that he/she does not feel alone in the classroom.

### **3. Classi 2.0 (o virtuali) ai tempi del Covid-19e aspetti di didattica della corporeità**

The school at the time of Covid-19 is witnessing a strong methodological change in the teaching practices of each subject area. Pedagogical theories combined with the use of advanced technological systems are applied in the educational field with the intent to produce a quality standard, in terms of learning and therefore skills. One wonders, then, how from a methodological point of view the process of inclusion can be guaranteed for all students.

From the earliest days of the lockdown, school leaders and teachers have attempted to give continuous learning and development to children and young people, using technology and distance learning. As a matter of fact, right from the start, the Ministry of Education, University and Research offered virtual classrooms and online platforms to all schools in order to guarantee the right to education for everybody.

In this circumstance, the first issue on which it seems important to reflect is the concept of the body within distance learning.

Man is born and develops in contexts of aggregation, of belonging and of ties, and it is



precisely through corporeality that one develops one's cultural and bodily sense (Mollo, 1996). Yet, at this time, for the first time in history, we are forced into social isolation for our own protection and health.

Breaking these bonds through social isolation seems to be an unnatural law. What is actually making us suffer the most in this period is being forced to an immobility of our lives emptied by commitments and the effort to feel useful only if we are socially 'useless', by remaining still in our homes.

And it is real that a stationary body also feels the effects on the mental level because as stated by Lowen "Every lived experience is structured in the body of the subject as it is structured in his mind" (Lowen, 2003).

Living with this virus (COVID 19) is depriving us of a handshake, of hugs, of kisses, of physical closeness, of that affective dimension characterized by a many-dimensional corporeality, which has now been de-materialized through a two-dimensional screen.

Moreover, the school as a physical space has suddenly become an imposed distance, a complex of technologies, to be reinterpreted in the room of one's own home.

Those same technologies that until some time ago we tried to keep away from children have now become an unavoidable necessity, for families and for the school itself.

In these months, the lack with respect to the body that we have experienced in teaching is precisely the absence and deprivation of a body understood as a subject. It is clear that it is impossible to totally replace the real presence of the body, but at least we have tried and we continue to try to make it bearable.

Distance learning, in these weeks, had to and attempted to compensate in some way the perception of lack of this body and made it present, almost by materializing, in a different way, through the image and especially through the voice, that of the teachers, an embodied voice that made them "present", in a different way for their students (Rivoltella, 2020).

A second major issue that distance learning has again brought to light is the issue of exclusion and inclusion.

As the provision of distance education began, our teachers realized that not all families had a device and a connection.

Through this experience we realized that in our country many people still suffer from a digital divide, which obviously results in not being able to access information and therefore experiencing social exclusion, even with respect to the recognition of their rights in the community to which they belong.

In this regard, within the report of Save the Children (2020) entitled "Rewriting the future: The impact of the coronavirus on educational poverty" it is highlighted that the educational and cultural deprivation of children and adolescents, due to the prolonged closure of schools and educational spaces in the community and isolation at home, is likely to have long-term effects on learning and, in general, on school dropout, which already showed negative trends before the crisis.

This deprivation is likely to weigh more heavily on minors who live in families in a condition of socio-economic disadvantage.

The data provided by ISTAT show that efforts to reach students through distance learning have sometimes been thwarted by the housing conditions of minors. Forty-two percent of them live in overcrowded houses, thus lacking adequate space for effective and meaningful study. In addition to this problem, there is a substantial number, 12.3% of 6-17 year olds, who, last year, lived in homes without devices such as computers or tablets, and in Southern Italy, the percentage reaches almost 20%. In addition, 57% of those who own them, must still share them with other family members for various needs, whether for study or work.

For the use of online platforms it is necessary to master digital skills, and the data collected shows that only 30.2% of children engaged in distance learning have high digital skills, while two-thirds have low or basic skills (and 3% none) (Istat 2019, 2020).

In addition to the difficulties due to the emergency, there are the historical deficiencies of

our school and education system, which still has many “basins” of exclusion. It seems clear that the school has landed unprepared within this crisis, both as regards the preparation of teachers and the possibility for students to take advantage of this opportunity of distance learning.

This is confirmed and highlighted in various ways by the data collected in the first issue of the 2020 Transition Diary, where Censis gave voice to the opinions of school leaders. They were asked about some aspects of this emergency period and its effects on the Italian school system, with particular reference to the activation and tools of distance learning.

2,812 school leaders participated in the survey and it was conducted between April 10 and 27, 2020. 61.1% of the managers interviewed are convinced that the school, faced with the emergency, has found itself culturally ill-equipped for distance learning and has proceeded in a haphazard manner. All this notwithstanding the many projects, initiatives, teacher training and experimentation of new school models and innovative teaching methodologies developed in recent years.

Yet, for all, according to the school leaders interviewed, it has been an opportunity for real learning and deep reflection on the future of the school: in fact, 95.9% of those interviewed agree very much (60%) or fairly much that the widespread use of the DAD has allowed schools and teachers to learn useful concepts for the future and to think about the future of teaching and learning (Censis, 2020).

However, the real problem with distance learning is the exclusion of students with disabilities, a problem that is not new in Italian schools, but is even more evident with this teaching method.

The survey carried out by the Universities of Trento and Bozen, Lumsa and Agnelli Foundation, which between April 7th and 14th involved 3,170 teachers with an online questionnaire, reveals a very worrying fact. 36% of those interviewed declared that students with disabilities had “disappeared”, either because of the ineffectiveness of this tool (26%) or because the activities of the educational plan could not be used at a distance. On the other hand, however, 44% report good integration and individualized distance learning paths have been activated by support teachers in 20% of cases.

A further aspect to highlight is that over 50% of those interviewed state that they know families with a disabled child who do not have the possibility of participating in distance teaching, mainly for technical reasons, linked to equipment or IT skills.

20% of teachers say they have neither material that can be used directly with disabled students, nor adaptable material, and in those few contexts in which this material exists, in 94% of cases it was the support teacher himself who adapted it.

Another fundamental element is that of collaboration: if this is mostly satisfactory (70%) both between teachers and with families, what has failed to hold up is collaboration with external specialists and especially with the Assistants to Communication and Autonomy.

Collaboration between classmates was equally poor and lacking. What clearly emerges is a widespread worsening of the difficulties and that people with disabilities have paid the highest price for what can be defined as emergency distance learning.

From the analyses presented so far, we would like to highlight that online learning requires special attention to the student, in order to foster motivation and attention (Fondazione Agnelli, 2020).

#### **4. In conclusion... Integrated Digital Didactics for students who are not passive listeners but active creators**

What has been considered so far urges the responsibility of the professionals; a personal and political responsibility and a call to radically review our lifestyles including the space of formal education and learning.

We are faced with a reality that has changed from day to day with limits and transformations that expose everyone to the risk of building superficial, emotional forms of relationships, yet on the other hand, the digital world can be useful as a place in which to give a breath of fresh air to



what we actually experience. What is needed, therefore, is a new breath between the body and the virtual that can help us live the dimension of care. Digital technology offers the possibility to expand the spaces of care and to tell the new.

It emerges from many voices, the need to build a society that focuses on the relationship of care and a care attentive to the person in its entirety and complexity, in different stages and circumstances of life, which can live and share experiences and contexts as generative opportunities where you can build new authentic relationships and new forms and possibilities of their own and others' becoming.

It is necessary to focus, even in this context and with these conditions, on the quality of the educational relationship that begins with the awareness that the other person is at the center of attention, whatever format or tool is being used.

Didactics, even in the distance dimension, cannot be left to chance, it must be studied in detail: precise work instructions, materials to be made available in advance, types of synchronous communication (chat and video communication) to refer to.

It becomes essential to encourage cooperation among students, which is one of the great possibilities that digital technology offers for sharing and working in groups.

Thinking of technology as a primary means to facilitate the affirmation of the right to study seems very reductive because, the right to study is not only the right to education, but rather the right to the formation of the person in all its dimensions, with all its needs and interests and as such deserves to be supported in the realization of his individual project.

In this particular historical moment, time and space find new dimensions and it is the task of the educator to identify the best strategies and to give value to this new space and time, so that all his students can perceive well-being.

It is a matter of rethinking educational care at the time of the pandemic, knowing what the peculiarities of care are. Care is declined in accepting the needs and desires of the other, operating a motivational displacement that allows to shift one's attention from oneself, from one's own projects, from one's own personal and didactic goals, from one's own needs and desires to temporarily accept those of the other, considered in his/her individuality and in the concreteness of the situation in which he/she finds him/herself.

Care cannot take place only in the teacher-pupil relationship, even if it cannot be separated from it; it is congruence, coherence, continuity of care actions by a context that practices a policy of care, that succeeds in creating a relational network that is constituted as a community of care.

How can this be achieved when space and time have undergone the transformations we have discussed so far?

Schools continue to play an important role in understanding one's own personal identity, embedded in the complex and variable network of changes that define the experience, preparing the person to be constantly open to possibility and, in this perspective, it seems appropriate to point out with particular attention all the activities that involve students both in the planning phase and in the executive and not least in the evaluation phase; the moments of *peer to peer* activities, *peer tutoring*, workshops intended as a privileged place for the reworking of knowledge, for the comparison of practices that will be necessary to ensure even in the distance learning modality. This connotation of "place of doing" refers to "forms of reflective learning oriented to the construction of skills and competences that put the subject in a position to proceed on his path, engaging in a constant dialogue between general theory and specificity of practice" (Petrucco, De Rossi, 2011, p.123).

It becomes essential, today more than ever, to promote training courses capable of acquiring skills and to set up and create the conditions for the enhancement of every resource and potential of the student. We are moving more and more towards a systemic knowledge, global and spatial, ie organic and systemic, which if, on the one hand, feeds and encourages systematicity, on the other hand implements a synergy between the knowledge itself, understood as knowledge at the theoretical level, the operational knowledge, in which knowledge becomes essential

for student action, and the creative knowledge, in which it is processed, modified, reset and re-invented in a completely new way to give rewarding answers to critical and complex situations.

It is necessary to promote the creation and experimentation of a personalized didactic proposal that puts the student and his needs at the center of the action, also in terms of spendability and transferability of the acquired competences, but in this, the role of the teacher becomes central because it favors the necessary conditions to start the development processes to reach the proposed objectives.

In order to do this, it will be necessary, in turn, to commit oneself to offering programs that are always up-to-date in terms of new educational needs, differentiating and personalizing interventions that, if on the one hand must respond to the need for minimum disciplinary content, on the other hand, must also ensure that the student has an open, flexible and interdisciplinary mind.

At the same time, it will be necessary to pay attention to the activities that the teacher will have to put in place to support the students in reaching the programmed objectives and with respect to the most profitable ways to benefit them in controlling their learning.

The training of teachers becomes central in order to be able to promote the learning of key competencies, to be developed through personal paths of research and lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2015; Weinert, 2001) through channels and methods that are not entirely or at all familiar and proper.

The complex paradigm has become even more complex today and for this reason it will have to become more open to special educational needs, to the instances coming from the world of the most fragile, to the fragility of all of us who are experiencing the limitation of time, space, relationships; therefore, a reformulation of the flexible didactic action is needed, adaptable to in-presence modes, distance modes and in any case to an integrated mode in which the student can experience his creative potential and that sense of belonging to a community that sometimes in presence and through traditional didactics he will not have been able to experience.

Students will no longer be just passive listeners to the words of teachers, but creators of original paths of which the teacher is the proposer and facilitator. It is more necessary than ever that schools strongly feel the need not to consider distance learning as a simple transfer of the lesson from the classroom to the screen. To this end, teachers will have to promote project work even more, they will have to help students meet in microgroups, encourage problem solving and stimulate creativity, but this requires training.

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