

ALLA RICERCA DEL BENESSERE CORPOREO NELLA DIDATTICA A DISTANZA: PERCORSI DI RIFLESSIONE E RICERCA DI SENSO NELLA PRATICA DI UNA DANZA DI RELAZIONE

IN SEARCH OF BODY WELL-BEING IN DISTANCE TEACHING: PATHS OF REFLECTION AND SEARCH FOR MEANING IN THE PRACTICE OF A DANCE OF RELATIONSHIP

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Abstract

In a culture that leads strongly to sedentariness and to ignore the need for movement, there are serious risks compared to the need to consolidate, in children, dynamic and healthy lifestyles. Before the health aspect, however, we must emphasize the powerful educational contribution that the free and expressive movement has always made to the educational process of children. Moving means “putting yourself in the game”, putting your person in a troubled situation, lived within more or less complex contexts. The question we ask ourselves is: what happens within virtual contexts and Distance Teaching, in particular? It is necessary to rethink teaching practices, especially if we want to create a truly inclusive school for all (Aiello, 2018).

To determine inclusion in emotion and creativity, it is necessary to mediate through art, as it exceeds the technological dimension determined by the current formal and informal educational processes.

In una cultura che conduce fortemente alla sedentarietà e ad ignorare il bisogno di movimento, si corrono rischi seri rispetto alla necessità di consolidare, nei bambini, stili di vita dinamici e salutari.

Prima ancora dell’aspetto sanitario, però, dobbiamo porre enfasi al potente contributo educativo che il movimento libero ed espressivo ha sempre fornito al processo formativo dei bambini. Muoversi significa “mettersi in gioco”, porre la propria persona in situazione agita, vissuta all’interno di contesti più o meno complessi. La domanda che ci poniamo è: cosa succede all’interno dei contesti virtuali e della Didattica a Distanza, in particolare? Si rende necessario ripensare alle pratiche didattiche, soprattutto se si intende creare una scuola davvero inclusiva per tutti (Aiello, 2018).

Per determinare l’inclusione nell’emozione e nella creatività è necessario mediare attraverso l’arte, poiché essa supera la dimensione tecnologica determinata dagli attuali processi didattici educativi formali e informali.

Keywords

Benessere corporeo; Danza; Corporeità; Dad
Body wellness; Dance; Corporeity; Dad

1 Lucia Pallonetto specifically dealt with the design framework that outlines the research and she edits paragraph 2. “*The metamorphosis of the didactic space*” and 3. “*Presence/absence in distance learning*” and Carmen Palumbo is Scientific Coordinator of Research and she edits the paragraph 1. “*Introducion*” and 4. “*Conclusion*”

Introduction

Over time the notion of health has gradually changed, to become synonymous with the overall well-being of the person, although it is not easy to define the concept of “well-being”, which is often used inappropriately and generically.

In fact, it «has many dimensions, both material and non-material, ranging from those relating to primary needs (health, nutrition, etc.), to those psychological (feel good in terms of moods and subjective satisfaction), to those cultural (capacity of meaning and sense), to social ones (having positive human relationships)» (D. Secondulfo, 2000). «In relatively recent years, this idea has found its widest diffusion, especially in relation to the field of body care, movement, psychophysical health». In other words, «the idea of well-being, as a multidimensional and complex category, opens us to multiple meanings» (P. de Mennato, 2006).

In more recent times the idea of well-being is linked to new human needs, that is, to those of individual self-realization, which range from the need for expressiveness of the body, to the care of the individual and the search for pleasure up to the aestheticization of their bodily life.

All this leads to an assumption of personal and conscious responsibility on the part of the individual towards his own physical, mental and social well-being. In the light of all this it is clear that the vision of well-being has changed over time: we can define it as a dynamic vision, because it expresses the search for a balance of the self and the relationship with the other by itself, between body and mind and between individual and environment.

In other words, to achieve well-being does not mean to acquire a state, but to acquire a dynamic and perfectly complex balance. «The idea of complexity related to well-being takes us beyond a reductionist vision of corporeity as expressed by the biological model of the body-machine and beyond the idea of the perfect body. (...)» (P. de Mennato, 2006).

The right perspective, therefore, is to inhabit one's own body with fullness and awareness, but also as a critical capacity for the self as a body. One's own bodily experiences and experiences must serve to socialize and tell about oneself externally. «The individual becomes aware of his own body through the relationship with the world and, at the same time, becomes aware of the world through his own body» (M. Merleau Ponty, 1965). It is precisely the body that guides or diverts the subject towards the conscious acquisition of a lifestyle respectful of their own body and well-being. The body must be followed by the individual to adapt to the bodily image expressed by the social group to which the subject belongs and which allows him to orient himself in the context in which he interacts and communicates.

So there seems to be, on the part of the subject, the search for a continuous balance between bodily experience understood as private experience on the one hand, in which the bodily experience as a subjective experience is recorded and on the other hand as a socially constructed bodily experience, that emphasizes the relationship with the environment through the space that the latter reserves to the individual in the course of his daily life and through the image that return to him those around him (P. de Mennato, 2006).

Through the construction of his bodily identity the subject is confronted with cultural codes of behavior, or rejects them if they do not correspond to his design making the body space in which take space the “knowledge not formalized” (P. de Mennato, 2006).

«Thus individuals move between the desire to develop their own intimate and personal bodily experience, which always corresponds to an image of themselves that is ideally projected before us, and the desire to emulate, imitate and make their own bodily cultural models towards which one feels affinity, towards that “body culture” and towards that specific social group with respect to which to conform one's own need of belonging and recognition» (R. Sassatelli, 2004).

The individual, therefore, is increasingly tending towards the search for a well-being to be understood as a balance between «being and being in the world» (P. de Mennato, 2006), that is, as a condition not passively suffered but, on the contrary, actively pursued and lived, in order to develop models of body culture capable of promoting well-being as a new responsible lifestyle.

1. The metamorphosis of the didactic space

Compared to the field of motor and sports education, in this historical moment, society seems instead to induce the child to the conviction that he can do without the bodily well-being, to the expressiveness of the body in movement.

As denounced by contemporary literature, spaces and times to motor activity have been significantly reduced (Dunnet et al., 2002; Greenfield et al., 2000; Herrington et al., 1998; Dahlgren et al., 1998), which led to a metamorphosis of the didactic space, induced by the pandemic scenario, and which has been termed didactically “Corona teaching”.

This phenomenon has distorted teaching models and transformed the context of action and relationship of didactic action based on play and spontaneous motor expression (Rosenfeld, 2001; Davis, 1999).

The mind and the human body are endowed with motor functions designed to move and interact with the environment from birth and throughout life. These functions allow the individual to coordinate, through a learning process that lasts throughout the entire evolutionary age, the movements big motors and those of fine coordination (writing, verbal language and manual skills) and therefore to interact and know how to move in the environment. They are formed at first spontaneously or through the instinct of imitation then, growing, they are increased through educational intervention.

From this it is understood how much the didactic and in particular that of the motor activity play a determining role for the acquisition of socio-cognitive competences.

For its part, the future teacher must learn how to plan motor objectives with comprehensive training of the person, even in unusual or even adverse conditions as in today’s health emergency. Spaces, movement and contact must be reworked in a new dimension, which is the distance, never faced before and therefore involves continuous experimentation.

The French physiologist Alain Berthoz asserts that some manifestations of our organism respond to the theory of simplicity, whose characteristic is not that of simplifying the processes of solving problems or decoding the social complexities, but to intuit and creatively elaborate the most suitable mental circuits (Berthoz, 2011).

Movement is like a sixth sense, «perception is not only an interpretation of sensory messages: it is conditioned by action, it is its internal simulation, it is judgment, it is anticipation of the consequences of action».

«Corporeity in its natural forms such as gesture, mimicry and more generally movement, expresses a strong capacity to manifest requests, needs, expected according to a personal and at the same time universal code that reaches others in its effectiveness giving the true meaning to every form of communication».

In conclusion, experience and knowledge through the pedagogy of practices on the body are nothing but modes of interaction with reality itself, between action and perception.

2. Presence/absence in distance learning

In contrast to “Corona teaching”, the most important studies on educational contexts (Iannaccone, 2010; Perret-Clermont, 2004) indicate of fundamental importance the institutional framework of teaching. It gives shape to social interactions and influences cognitive activity because it determines the way and space to carry out the different actions in which one is called to participate.

The context in which the teaching takes place would constitute a symbolic scaffolding, legitimizing a system of meanings to which the actors “lean” to see recognized part of the characteristics of their relationship (Iannaccone and Perret-Clermont, 2014; Perret-Clermont, 2004; Iannaccone, 2010).

It is spontaneous to wonder whether distance teaching does not involve the transmission of a sense of lack of solidity, due to the context forcibly virtual and not firmly anchored to a real frame. The need arises to reorganize and give new content to the idea that in the distance the bodies are really absent: in reality the body is differently mediated by digital technology.

On the other hand, it should be considered that the advancement of technological levels will lead to shorten the distance between real and virtual probably to zero and the relationships will develop on platforms increasingly more evolved and less oriented to physical contact, generating more and more difficulties in managing relationships in self-awareness. What would be lacking in essence is, as Gardner would say, regarding the description of the use of the body as a form of intelligence, the dialogue between bodies, as a rapid discussion between two sets of intelligences.

The reflections continue on the construct of inter-corporeality, based on the wide aspects of visual contact, gestural gestures, mind care, synchrony, rhythm, what “passes” beyond visual contact, voice, gestural gestures and the rhythm of activities; the same actions that can be switched on, off, interrupted by pauses. Hence the idea of conducting a reflection that allows us to understand whether these characterizing aspects can and to what extent they are also valid in relationships mediated by the screen and in relations with technological devices in learning contexts (Damiani, Gomez Paloma, 2020).

Digital communication has also affected the structural construction of cognitive processes, since it has implemented a digital re-mediation of presence, reconfiguring human actions in terms of a new relationship between body and simulated world: images and sounds make credible - not real, of course - participation in the digital worlds.

The incarnate simulation becomes a condition for which an inter-individual resonance is established thanks to which «the observation of an action induces in the observer the automatic internal simulation of the action itself, allowing the implicit and direct understanding of the movement of others» (Catellani, 2015, p. 527).

For its part, online interaction, developing a multitasking dimension of subjective presence, distributed in multiple digital contexts, implements not only individual reflexivity, but also and above all connected reflexivity, allowing telematic interlocutors to develop their metacommunicative skills as much as possible in their own interactions (Salzano 2008; 2016; Boccia Artieri 2012).

Conclusions

Since emotion is a determining factor in the evolution of human behavior (Goleman, 1996, Ekman 1994), given by the result of numerous experiences (perceptions, memory, intelligence, actions) and emotional intelligence, common to all individuals, although with personal differences, it is necessary to complete rational intelligence, both can be trained or re-educated, but in particular emotional intelligence is neither static nor genetically transmitted, but it is based on the emotions collected over time through experience. For a correct personal and professional evolution of the individual, the experiences that arise from emotions and feelings have been connected through learning and have made it possible to predict the future outcomes of certain scenarios (Damasio A., Damasio H. 1994).

Therefore, it is necessary to educate emotionally to build a world rich in emotional experiences that connect people and enrich them internally.

Looks, postures, voices, intonations, the “silence” itself in the distance take on different meanings and interpretations, but always constitute as determinant variables of learning processes. Therefore, to speak of an “absent” body does not provide a truthful or plausible perspective: it is necessary to discuss the immaterial dimensions of the body, the so-called “senses of distance” (Aristotle, 1998), as well as those elements that, although escaping tactile perception - olfactory “senses of closeness” (ibid., 1998), contribute significantly to the process of involvement, carrying out a function of “towing” and “approaching”, precisely, the learner in a tautological logic.

In fact, it is precisely the disembodied dimension of communication that activates and implements alternative communication strategies, designed to substitute and re-serve the presence of the body. If we consider the paradigm of embodiment, “mind-body-environment”, which declines within transdisciplinarity, which is the boundary between pedagogy and other education-

al sciences, such as neuroscience, the body must be able to assume its priority dimension, as a primary vector of learning in real contexts, whether concretely lived or mediated and applied at a distance within virtual contexts and DAD in particular arises the need to give a new meaning to epistemologies, because the idea that bodies in the teaching corona are absent is an idea that needs to be reconceptualized.

If the educational relationship can be safeguarded through mediatization, it is worth trying to explore the abilities of the body and especially the corporeity, understood as a hub of multiple knowledge. (Gamelli, 2011).

Consequently, it is the case to introduce a pedagogy of corporeity, which can transfer in the various educational fields those basic principles an education to the motor movement in its different forms, which lead to a body culture conceived as bodily awareness. «We are body. We look at the world with our own eyes, we touch with our own hands, we listen with our ears, we are ashamed of our emotions, we resound with the voice we produce. Education passes exclusively through a knowledge that knows how to incorporate itself, act to know, measure itself with the limit. And since the body is the measure of the limit, its awareness is also the essential condition of every possible transformation» (Gamelli, 2017).

Motor education and the conscious use of the body is training for the presence of the body even in its apparent absence, thus acquiring a competence aimed at bringing out an educational style that is attentive to the completeness of the human being, considering the individual in his physical and mental qualities. At this point, why not generate educational practices that provide new bodily experiences, and that allow the birth of new languages, why not, of “bodily” languages, gestural, words and not words.

Pedagogy must do precisely this: propose transdisciplinary epistemological combinations and propose itself as the pedagogy of corporeity. In the search for an expressive medium of a reality that transcends the present time and the surrounding space, dance is configured as the bearer of a reality that is called “symbol” and that constitutes the primary mediated form of communication.

The dance is the effective demonstration of how the movement must necessarily create the coordination of different actions in an apparently simple form (as fluid), but in reality surprisingly complex, to reach the harmonic perfection of the chain of gestures that makes the flow of the execution unique and perfect the result.

There is no better example of this premeditated harmony to demonstrate the dynamic complexity of the person and the union mind-body, emotion-action, thought-gesture, which allows to reduce to a single simple result a whole series of connections, selections, choices and creative solutions of intelligence (Berthoz, 2011).

Therefore, in the dimensions of corporeity and movement the psycho-corporeal unity of the human being is rediscovered as unique and unrepeatable, in search of harmony with the human and natural context, in listening to the inner experiences. Epistemologically it is a matter of analyzing, both in the educational and clinical field, the perception of the body, providing tools for re-appropriation of the body through motor activities. The input of multidimensional stimuli, provided by dance, can be more inclusive of more cognitive styles that can then define more relationships and interactions able to implement the teaching-learning process.

However, if you really want to create a truly inclusive school for everyone, (Aiello, 2018) or «to place inclusion at the centre of educational policies and practices, it is necessary to focus attention on the diversified needs of all pupils, without exception, in compliance with the principle of equal opportunities and active participation of everyone». (Cottini, 2017, p 5).

With dance, the inclusion between emotion and creativity is, therefore, mediated by art that, through the technological dimension, actualizes the educational-educational, formal and informal processes. Emotional intelligence and empathy, as well as creativity and divergent thinking, are aspects listed in the life skills of the WHO as skills for the promotion of well-being and inclusion.

These skills are divided into three areas: Emotional - self-awareness, emotional manage-

ment, stress management. Relational - empathy, effective communication, effective relationships. Cognitive - solving problems, making decisions, critical thinking, creative thinking. If the competence to make a choice is the result of awareness, management of one's emotions, ability to solve a problem, make decisions independently, then provide educational paths through experiences also of artistic practices of life skills in the school, is a very important tool.

Nothing more than a classroom of children can serve as a laboratory to promote creativity initiatives, encourage the use of divergent thinking, to learn to share different points of view in an inclusive perspective and to promote body well-being in a constantly changing reality.

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