

PATHS OF ENCOUNTER AND COOPERATION BETWEEN CLINICAL PEDAGOGY AND CORPOREALITY: REFLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

PERCORSI DI INCONTRO E COOPERAZIONE TRA PEDAGOGIA CLINICA E CORPOREITÀ: RIFLESSIONI ED ESPERIENZE

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we have tried to explore the possibility of a mutually enriching dialogue between pedagogical-educational and psychomotor knowledge. It is starting from this epistemological background that we propose a critical problematization of the cognitive, methodological, and procedural paradigm that underlies most of the training projects aimed at care professionals, according to an instrumental and technical logic. The paths of encounter and cooperation between Clinical Pedagogy and Corporeality analyzed in this work offer, therefore, a ground of connection and dialogue between the bodily and mental dimensions of the individual, recognizing in bodily experiences a precious resource of relationship and learning.

In questo contributo abbiamo cercato di esplorare la possibilità di un dialogo reciprocamente arricchente tra il sapere pedagogico-educativo e il sapere psico-motorio. È a partire da questo antefatto epistemologico che proponiamo una problematizzazione critica del paradigma conoscitivo, metodologico e procedurale che sottende la maggior parte dei progetti di formazione rivolti ai professionisti della cura, secondo una logica strumentale e tecnicistica.

I percorsi di incontro e cooperazione tra Pedagogia Clinica e Corporeità analizzati nel presente lavoro offrono, pertanto, un terreno di connessione e dialogo tra le dimensioni corporee e mentali dell'individuo, riconoscendo nelle esperienze corporee una risorsa preziosa di relazione e apprendimento.

KEYWORDS

Learning; Clinical pedagogy; Education.

Apprendimento; Pedagogia clinica; Formazione.

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Introduction¹

In the last twenty years, training in the field of personal care professions has been oriented not only on technical skills but also on human ones (Burns, & Badiali, 2018). Hence the decision to reserve a part of the curricula of the training courses oriented to personal care for psycho-pedagogical disciplines. This choice arises both from the indispensable human formation to which professionals are called to fully perform the holistic function of care (Mlyniec, 2011) and from the educational task that is proper to them and that is outlined in the professional profiles of the various operators. The definition of the educational role of the professional who deals with personal care makes it necessary to train these professional figures in the field of educational sciences. The training of the professional must aim at achieving the knowledge necessary for educational purposes, such as the interview that serves to establish a dialogical relationship with the person (Wu et al., 2020) and allows the establishment of an authentic communicative relationship through which to guide him (Katz, 2005). In the exercise of the educational act, in fact, an important element becomes the construction of a meaningful interpersonal and educational human relationship.

This relationship, understood as an element of co-construction of knowledge (Wu et al., 2022), involves entering into the experience of the person and his emotional needs. In this perspective, the proposal put forward here is that of a formation that makes its own the paradigm of narrativity and narration in the self-reflective and autobiographical direction. All within the interpretative channel of existentialist phenomenology, and narrativist constructivism: two conceptual and practical-methodological looks attentive to the representations and experiences of the subjects. Professionals must urge the person to reflect by narrating the events he is experiencing (Siah, Lim, Lau, & Tam, 2021). Through dialogue, it is possible to help reconstruct and understand oneself, one's own history and personal experience.

Within this theoretical framework, the adult education cannot elude with respect to themes and motives such as therapeutic education which in turn cannot be resolved only in purely informative and training action, since its effectiveness and relapse in the life of the subject require important and crucial pedagogical-educational attention. Therefore, Clinical Pedagogy provides the professions oriented to personal care contributions of conceptual and operational tools, capable of testifying that the relationship, although understandably unequal, can be full and reciprocal and has prospects for development. Also, for this purpose, as a professional subject in continuous training, the professional who deals with

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personal care must be equipped with those tools that allow to optimize the learning process and application to the study (Reilly, Beran-Shepler, & Paschal, 2020).

Clinical Pedagogy is a branch of General Pedagogy whose main purpose is to educate the person of any age to overcome his states of discomfort and to take care of himself. His maieutic action consists in providing, through the use of a wide range of methods, a valid aid to the person in the process of exploring the "hidden" and "latent" rooms of his own body, in view of achieving a state of health understood as psychophysical balance. The present work is configured as a set of reflections aimed at recovering the human body in its systemic uniqueness, as a point of arrival of the person's life story and a starting point for a path of meditation that allows every human being to be constantly engaged in an endless process of self-formation (Francombe, 2013).

Starting from the recovery of the human being in its holistic globality, whose constitutive corporeality turns out to be the propulsive center for the structuring of personalized educational paths and aid interventions aimed at the person in a situation of discomfort, it is possible, assuming the body as an active and dialoguing entity in the helping relationship, to proceed to educate the person to self-knowledge and continuous transformation of oneself.

1. Clinical Pedagogy and Corporeality: a mutually enriching dialogue

The attention to the dimension of corporeality and to the communication of the body, as a relational place that involves us integrally, offers the possibility of understanding it as a mediator between our interiority and what is outside of us. From here comes attention to the person and to that reciprocal cohabitation and interpenetration between "inside and outside", which makes every communication authentic and achievable. Clinical Pedagogy has the task of "restoring a total, personal and authentic language, the possibility of becoming aware of one's own body, emotions, sensations and expressions" and of communicating them freely (Vlieghe, 2014). It is able to "rediscover" the body in its most qualifying humanistic values, enhancing its aspects linked to encounter, relationship, sharing, living concrete experiences rich and meaningful: the educational relationship is seen as a relationship of "reciprocity" and encounter between "otherness" in which a "being body" intersects, is intertwined in the unique history of other "being body".

The attention, the reflection, and the listening to oneself and communicative openness towards others, allow Clinical Pedagogy to build a relationship that has as its foundation the centrality of the person. A relationship in which welcoming, taking care of the person means recognizing and valuing the body as a "place" to explore, know, respect. The body becomes a vehicle and an opportunity for reflection. Therefore, the clinical pedagogical approach values the body of experience, the "lived" body. It is according to this interpretation that Clinical

Pedagogy takes on a new point of view, the one that, starting from a physical intelligence, makes the person aware not of possessing a body, but of recognizing himself as a psychophysical subject, in which body, mind and spirit are an indissoluble part of each other.

Clinical Pedagogy, with its holistic approach, can make the possibilities of creative and expressive development more articulated, which guarantee the person to use different types of language. In fact, every mode of expression, every language leads to the integration of the person as a unit.

The body thus represents the child's peculiar way of inhabiting reality, experiencing it and knowing it. The sensorimotor physical activity courses provide intervention methods that support the evolutionary processes of childhood. They are activities full of games where boys and girls are the protagonists of their development and growth. Through sensory, motor, symbolic and cognitive games, body and mind are involved in multisensory stimulation and on multiple evolutionary dimensions to increase and strengthen domain-specific abilities and make the process of neurodevelopment more harmonious (Martínez-Bello, Bernabé-Villodre, Lahuerta-Contell, Vega-Perona, & Giménez-Calvo, 2021). Intervention settings were thus elaborated that stood out for their different epistemological options. Clinical pedagogy aims to offer the educational professional a theoretical sensitivity that knows how to recognize the different styles. Each educator defines his intervention within a framework that sees in the sensorimotor, symbolic and representative game the objectives to be pursued. Every educational practice can be traced back to pedagogy, provided that in it the awareness proper to the body educator lives. Pedagogy is a framework that implies a systemic gaze, an interdisciplinary and transversal attitude, the reflective and operational ability to make the body the key with which to reread our thinking and education (Martínez-Moreno, Imbernon Gimenez, & Diaz Suarez, 2020).

The approach of clinical pedagogy has, in fact, as a specific field of intervention the relationship between the body and psychic processes in the construction of identity through the bodily way, as well as the relationship between body and expressiveness, whatever the level of motor skills of the person (Jucan, Stan, & Stan, 2021). It attempts to reunify the human being in a body-mind, in dialectical relationship, through a global approach to the bodily dimension and its communicative and relational values, "through a pedagogy of discovery that puts into activity not only the physical part of the body, but the psychic one, from which the trace of the significant presence of intelligence results (Vitale, & Iacomino, 1992).

Body and movement constitute, in fact, a fundamental nucleus in the evolutionary and formative process, as they contribute to the growth and global maturation of the subject, promoting awareness of the value of the body and the

achievement of important goals such as the conquest of autonomy, the construction of personal identity and the acquisition of skills.

Using the knowledge of these relationships and the peculiar ability to read non-verbal communication (movement, tone, posture, gesture, gaze, use of objects, space, etc.) the educator intervenes in the relationship with sensorimotor methodologies (perceptual, cognitive, playful expressive activities, relaxation, non-verbal communication, etc.) with the aim of favoring in the first place the process of integration between the different expressive and cognitive levels that are to the base of that complex phenomenon that is the construction of identity (Luminița, & Marin, 2020). The didactic paths of sensorimotor physical activity represent, therefore, a teaching method based on the use of a non-verbal language, where the body in motion, the sensations and emotions that emerge, represent the fulcrum of human relationships and determine an educational and inclusive reality that can be defined as a real-life experience. In consideration of the fact that these motor paths can represent an interesting educational proposal, it is appropriate to take into account the importance of psychomotor activities and more generally all those activities of education of and with the body that are aimed at all students in order to promote their psychophysical growth and improve behavioral processes, relational and cognitive in an inclusive perspective (Di Palma, & Belfiore, 2020).

This objective is achieved not in a path of teaching-learning skills, but in communicative contexts, where the network of exchanges makes it possible to recognize the other, the stimulus and recognition of his resources.

Clinical pedagogy intends, therefore, to offer itself as a framework in which to inscribe and connect together transversally knowledge and experiences that find their point of application and interest in the body.

2. Pedagogical training and psychomotor practice

Clinical Pedagogy offers the possibility of undertaking new and significant paths in the training of the educators. It is configured as a pedagogy of the concrete, applied, practical, authentic, capable of really affecting people's lives. Its function finds space in the dimension of the laboratory. The clinical pedagogical laboratory is a "place" designed to put in place moments suitable for enhancing the person in his entirety (Jardim, & Guidotti, 2022). A flexible, participatory, and active place, modifiable according to the concrete needs of the activities to be tested. It is a place of practice of knowledge that cannot be marked by the exclusive use of the word, but involves the lived experience and learning of knowledge as a result of acting and reflecting together with others. The laboratory of the Clinical Pedagogist is, therefore, a fundamental educational resource, full of resonances and subjective connotations, which, through precise points of reference, represented by people, objects, and situations offers the subject in formation, an authentic ground for construction and putting into practice personal and professional skills (Gamelli,

2009). Within the laboratory dimension, questions, doubts, reflections emerge spontaneously, in the form of a storm of ideas, thoughts, meditations (Pinheiro, Mello, & Abed, 2021).

The proposals experienced within the clinical pedagogical laboratory offer, to educators in training, opportunities to understand individual processes, personal moods, their educational and communicative styles, to encourage the possibility of expressing themselves and telling themselves freely. They are unique opportunities to create moments of sharing and collaboration, of constructive relationship and exchange, of reflection on educational practice (Constantin, 2020).

But who is the educator who is engaged in sensorimotor physical activities? It is, as educator, is the one who postulates the unity of the person at the base of his intervention, recognizing and favoring the interaction and full integration between the motor, cognitive and affective area. It activates and fosters in the other the progressive knowledge of oneself, starting with the bodily self and the environment, through the motor skills and symbolic capacities of the person (Palumbo, Minghelli, & Pallonetto, 2021). Therefore, it is not a matter of acquiring exclusively techniques, exercises, or mechanically reproducible strategies, but of reflecting on the experience of being in a relationship, on the recognition of the limits and difficulties of expressing the body in a new, free, original way. In the space-time of the laboratory, it is possible to favor: (i) group dynamics, (ii) knowing how to be with others, (iii) the helping relationship, (iv) verbal and non-verbal communication, (v) the narration of experiences. Active and emotional participation allows to feel an integral part of the relationship and favors a climate of trust and non-directivity fundamental to activate and get involved. The communicative dynamic that is realized has a cooperative structure, in which each educator is put in a position to receive, welcome, and listen to the other in his original expressiveness and authenticity of experiences. Being educator is not just about working with children (Bryant, Aldous, & Chambers, 2020). It is not, therefore, a matter of acquiring exclusively operational, educational, and methodological skills, but of becoming aware of the importance of establishing an authentic relationship with the other and, above all, of giving value to the bodily relationship. Clinical Pedagogy may promote the interaction between knowledge, know-how-being, know-how-to do, knowing how to be with others, between body-thought-emotions, between learning and relationship. It is precisely in the co-construction of a meaningful educational relationship that every action, small or large, can take on a value, in which every moment is important to enrich, welcome, create, to achieve a relationship of growth, well-being, happiness. In this context, the Clinical Pedagogue has the difficult role of facilitating the educator in rethinking the way of living the relationship with the persons, offering them the opportunity to reflect on the dimension of feeling, as a sphere that concerns the emotionality and affectivity of the person (Gamelli, 2015). Dwelling on feeling means building

acceptance in reciprocity, listening, opening one's view to the person-child, as a wholeness who lives feeling-thinking-acting as a unitary experience, giving him the time, he needs.

Clinical Pedagogy makes it possible to expand, develop, refine the ability to feel to achieve a meaningful relationship with oneself and with the others, starting from awareness of one's body, emotions and sensations and one's authentic expressive language (Aucouturier, 1995). Therefore, the training course of the educator engaged in sensorimotor physical activity presupposes experiences that start from "living the body" as self-knowledge (movement, rhythms of the body, breathing, voice, etc.), to gradually move to "feeling the body" as an expression of oneself (music, dance, verbal and non-verbal language), up to the "perception of the body" as a channel of communication with others, developing and enhancing the energetic-affective availability of the person, helping him to express his inner world to the other (Marilyn, & Astrid, 2023).

This is why a educator trained in the sensitivity of bodily experiences, will become an attentive listener, an observer willing to look at the child differently, to give importance to how they move and how they seek their own space in the environment.

Conclusions

The importance of relying on psychomotor knowledge in the design of educational interventions derives from the fact that it is typical of educator engaged in sensorimotor physical activity to identify the most appropriate ways to intervene to support a harmonious growth of the child in different possible contexts.

Especially in a historical period that loudly asks for a global and integrated look at the person, and specifically the subject in developmental age, clinical pedagogy applied to corporeality may provide a methodology of body-mind integration, "far from the logic of performance". Clinical pedagogy, in fact, suggests ways to facilitate structuring, through movement in space and spontaneous play, the construction of an ego in relation to the surrounding world.

The idea is to emphasize the importance of including the knowledge and relational tools of the psychomotor approach in the training of educators and in the planning and formulation phase of an educational project.

It is, therefore, possible to conclude that the multiple paths of encounter between Clinical Pedagogy and Corporeality activate an intense dialogue that allows important connections between education and corporeality able to set in motion those educational and training processes that become a possible driving force for a harmonious growth of the individual from a psychic and physical point of view.

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