

PRINCIPIA EDUCATIONIS

6

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# PRINCIPIA EDUCATIONIS



Le radici di ogni pianta cercano, tra le molte sostanze che il suolo contiene, solo quelle di cui la pianta ha bisogno.

Maria MONTESSORI

La collana nasce con l'intento di approfondire tematiche relative all'educazione come paradigma di crescita e di sviluppo delle caratteristiche e peculiarità più autentiche della persona nelle diverse stagioni della vita. La pedagogia, in particolare secondo l'approccio critico e dialogico delle "scienze dell'educazione", si presenta come scienza in costante confronto con la vita, che nasce nel concreto agire educativo conferendogli significato. In quest'ottica essa genera un sapere dotato di senso, capace di dialogare con l'effettivo divenire umano e di orientarlo in modo critico, progettuale e teleologico.

La rapidità evolutiva con la quale la società si è trasformata nel corso degli ultimi decenni, i cambiamenti demografici, economici e culturali che hanno segnato e continuano a connotare il nostro tempo, rendono sempre più tangibili i limiti del sistema sociale all'interno del quale il confronto interculturale rappresenta una delle realtà più difficili e delicate da indagare e conoscere. Lo sviluppo armonico del soggetto, l'itinerario che lo porta alla scoperta, alla coltivazione e alla piena realizzazione delle sue potenzialità, si esplica attraverso una serie di passaggi sostanziali che avvengono necessariamente all'interno di un determinato contesto, che influenzerà in maniera determinante l'esito di queste processualità. L'incontro tra l'identità tendenziale della persona e il suo sviluppo nella storia — il trovarsi al centro di tutta quella serie di eventi, esperienze, incontri, relazioni, emozioni che popolano l'esistente — è continuo, dinamico e inscindibile. Il rapporto tra la struttura sociale e il processo formativo, a lungo indagato all'interno della ricerca pedagogica, è ancora oggi la chiave di volta per comprendere i problemi dell'educazione contemporanea e, ancor più, per costruire ipotesi teoriche e operative finalizzate alla loro risoluzione. L'obiettivo della collana è costruire un ambito di studi e ricerche composito e variegato, così da restituire ai lettori la complessità del lavoro di indagine in ambito nazionale e internazionale, intercettando — sia sul piano teorico che su quello empirico — i diversi contesti educativi.

I volumi della collana sono sottoposti a *peer review* da parte di due *referee* anonimi.



Mauro Bonali  
Lina Stefanini

# The pedagogy of the operative self

From theory to method

*Translation by*  
Stefano Iannozzi





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*To my parents,  
my mother Elsa and my dad Remo  
with love and gratitude*

Mauro Bonali

*To all children  
so they can play,  
learn and be happy*

Lina Stefanini



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Lina Stefanini



# Introduction

Education demands that we  
must look far ahead!

J. DEWEY, *Experience and education*

Education requires a continuous rethinking of the pedagogical paradigm. The key words are research, experimentation, change and innovation. Terms and proposals designed in relation to the needs of a child in a changing society. Programs, didactics, teaching methods, structures, instruments, and materials, must be able to encourage the maximum realization of the potential that the subject has.

The school has the responsibility of an educational assortment offer that puts the people and his evolutionary path at the center of pedagogical attention.

The unitary character of the education system within cultural, territorial and social pluralism must be guaranteed. To modernize the school system, we need a concrete dialogue between school and the outside world, an effective relationship between teacher and student and an alliance between school, family, and society. It is necessary to requalify and update the environments, to make them safe, comfortable, vital, to respond to the social demands of reconciling family life and work times. Investing in renewal allows us to think of a better future, the result of sometimes strenuous choices, changes in practices and cultural images, to guarantee a change of identity that, while preserving the memory of the past, is aware of a future-oriented present. However, it is indispensable that everyone's participation in changes; only through the comparison between the subjects of the pedagogical project, the school can redefine the mandate. Although this can generate anxiety, fear, un-

certainty, in people and in social groups, the transformation is necessary. We need to promote the movement, invest and reorganize the synergies between school, society and territory. Is important to find consistency and continuity between school, sports, and society.

The School must:

- adapt to the socio-cultural transformations;
- reflect on ethical and emotional behaviors;
- activate the potential of acting with regard to body thinking and action.

In order for the student to acquire a critical/reflective thought that allows him to make autonomous, personal and social sharing choices, it is necessary, in the early period of developmental age, to plan, prepare and carry out educational/didactic processes that tend to a better management of himself and sense of responsibility.

The child must be the protagonist of his own growth:

- motivated to learn;
- active in seeking information, connecting it, developing incompetence expendable in different moments of everyday life;
- aware of his being an active player within a regulated community.

In the developmental age, sport is also an educational resource, so it must participate in change. Scientific research on physical education emphasizes the relationships between the different variables involved in school and sports contexts. Scientific studies confirm the potential of sporting activity. The motor system is essential for our life and understanding of the world.

The new theories in the field of neuro-science recognize the “motor sciences” as keys to understanding and application implications in support of school and sports disciplines. This opens up new perspectives: cognitive-motor learning is fundamental for the acquisition of not only sports skills but also general scholastic com-

petences, on relational and operational levels. If pedagogy studies the processes of human education and training, the contribution of other sciences has seemed fundamental to complete its interpretation. The acronym “B.M.F.” defines the new association that studies, experiments and researches in the school / sports field. B.M.F<sup>1</sup>. means “compass of the functional mind”.

A metaphor that recalls the orientation of attention through the solicitation of mental functionality.

It takes shape in a pedagogical project that generates from the desire to understand how it works in the relationship between learning and situational adaptation. At the work table a group of authoritative experts in different sciences reconsider neurofunctionality in the developmental age for their own pedagogical proposal. The various contributions converge in a theory that considers action essential for any learning, whether it be executive or cognitive. Let's briefly summarize their thinking.

The contribution of Leonardo Fogassi underlines how we have been accustomed to thinking that the sensory system builds knowledge or is essential to our knowledge. As a matter of fact, even neurophysiology and psychology thought that a subject initially carried out a process of sensory elaboration of the world and then built the percept, while the motor part of the brain took charge of performing the actions in accordance with what was perceived. In this way, the information processing flow is unidirectional: posteriorly (parietal lobe, temporal lobe) we have the brain “that knows”, anteriorly (frontal lobe) the brain “that does”. But things are not exactly like that. The primary function of our motor system is not to command the execution of movements. Knowing the world means relating to the world, exploring it spatially, touching objects, through direct contact. In other words, our motor heritage allows us to interpret the world and it is the way we learn. We learn by acting, we learn in the first person; there are other possible strategies but they have nothing to do with first-person motor learning.