UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Final Exam - Turno A - L'incorporamento della cultura

2324-2-F8701N033-TA

Learning objectives

The workshop aims to generate a reflection for participants about the necessary conditions for an effective intercultural and interpersonal communication which can be summed as:
• Self Awareness
• Body self awareness and consciousness
• Awareness on one's own acquisition of knowledge about people and contexts
• Ability to change perspective
• Ability to practice cognitive, emotional and somatic empathy

Contents

Themes will be dealt with in a seminar like way, therefore participants will be asked to share experience and reflections as a starting point to develop awareness and self observational competence in working and relational contexts.
Reflection will be based upon:

• Development of the concept of embodiment
• cultural awareness in the everyday experience of the body
• Resistance to perception
• Representation of experience through language
• Understanding of other people's embodiment of culture
• Interpersonal and intercultural communication from organism to organism

Detailed program

Cultural perceptual awareness is not a new concept. Gehlen (1942, 1983) has documented in contemporary times what many other philosophers, from Plato to Thomas Aquinas to Kant, to Herder and Schopenauer, had postulated in the past: the human being, is nothing without the Téchne[1]. The biological deficiency of human beings to survive instinctually, finds its remedy in action -- in the creation of techniques that allow humans to survive, select and culturally stabilize patterns(Galimberti, 1999).Culture is the context created by man through téchne. Moreover, different cultural contexts are different arrangements of perceptions that take on different meanings[2]. Hall (1959, p. 119) says, “there is no such thing as ‘experience’ in the abstract, as a mode separate and distinct from culture. Culture is neither derived from experience nor held up to the mirror of experience. Moreover, it cannot be tested against some mystical thing thought of as experience. Experience is something man projects upon the outside world as he gains it in its culturally determined form.”
The treatment of the embodiment of culture undertaken here starts with the level that Johnson (1999) calls Cognitive unconscious and Phenomenological. The contribution is the direct pedagogical connection of “reframing” through physical movements that, coupled with cognitive re-symbolization, aims at dealing with the expansion of the repertoire of assumptions. The acquisition of this capacity leads to owning the ethnorelative perspective not only cognitively, but organismically, ending in a feeling of appropriateness which is physical, psychological and moral. This implies mediation among different internal cognitive frames embedded in body frames, and mediation between oneself and the social context.

Prerequisites

Participants are encouraged to bring an open disposition, a suspension of judgement on one's self and others. Discretion is required when sharing experience outside of the workshop's context

Teaching methods

The workshops is made of a series of guided reflections requiring individual and group engagement. There will be some physical (somatic) experience based on deep breathing and on some exercise derived from bioenergetics.
It is advised to wear comfortable clothes and cotton socks, and to bring along a yoga mat or a big towel.

Assessment methods

Assessment is through active participation to the whole workshop (24 hrs).

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Bennett, M. J., Castiglioni, I. 2004. Embodied ethnocentrism and the feeling of culture: a key to training for intercultural competence, in Landis D., Bennett J. M., Bennett M.J., Handbook of intercultural training, 3rdedition. Thousand Oaks: Sage

Csordas T.J., 1999. Embodiment and cultural phenomenology. In Weiss G. & Haber H.F. (eds.) Perspectives on embodiment. New York: Routledge

Lakoff, G., Johnson M. 1998. Metafora e vita quotidiana, Milano: Bompiani

Reyna S. P., 2002. Connections. Brain, mind and culture in a social anthropology. New York: Routledge

Further readings will be assigned to participants during the workshop

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS