

RESPIRE: Reconnecting with Experience and Sensitive for instructional Practices fostering Inclusivity, Resilience and Equity.

The RESPIRE project investigates the question of the resilience of university instruction. It is born from the shock of physical and mental isolation into which teachers and learners were thrust during the COVID-19 pandemic. It defends the idea that the resilience of university environments, and of society, depends on a new balance between the inevitable use of digital tools and the place for sensitive experience and embodiment. The main aim of the project is to explore how to reconcile the use of digital tools in teaching with the essential need to preserve personal and collective sensitivity in order to maintain the quality of the pedagogical and didactic relationship. We hypothesized that this balance requires an awareness of embodiment, the relationship with our own bodies, the bodies of others around us and our environment (Emond, 2018; Johnson, 2000). About 40 University teachers were invited to join communities of practice in three different countries, following the same somatic thread, we explored the shared experience of embodiment as a space for dialogue between teachers, learners and knowledge. These communities aimed to help university teachers consider embodiment as a dimension of their professional action. Co-modal sessions allowed participants from the three geographical contexts to meet and share their experiences. We gathered participants' feedback through two interviews (pre and post), one self-confrontation interview, and the diaries kept throughout the project.

Summary of the key findings

1. Isolation and loneliness of university teachers

The project highlighted the relative isolation of university teachers and the lack of opportunity for reflective analysis on their teaching practices. Academic institutions often take teaching skills for granted. Opportunities to learn, share and reflect are rare. Participating teachers have in common a desire to diversify their practices and to find alternatives to lecture-based teaching, both face-to-face and remotely. Such practices have a sensitive and physical grounding that is often denied or discredited by institutional circles, yet key to authenticity in the pedagogical relationship.

2. Place of tacit knowledge

To establish a meaningful teaching-learning relationship, three key points are revealed in the whole data: authenticity, time and space management and taking into account tacit knowledge linked to embodiment. This included the relation to oneself, to others and to the institution and to virtual spaces and technological artifacts. Tacit knowledge is one of the characteristics of practical or experiential knowledge in the sense of Foray (2009) and Polanyi (1967). Our results shed light on how theoretical concepts can be constructed by exploring the links between tacit knowledge (*what I don't know I know*), implicit knowledge (*what I know I know, without being able to express it*), and explicit knowledge (*what I can tell I know*). The question arising is one of semiotic mediation: how can a teacher draw on this tacit - embodied knowledge - to guide students 'learning? This underpins a vision of nonlinear learning in which conceptualization and abstraction are not superior processes, alien from perception and motor activity. On the contrary, they are the fruit of continuous navigation in the realm of the sensible, mediated by artifacts, including semiotic representations, and the body itself.

3. Place and role of technologies tools

The project explored the place and role of technological tools and online learning/remote learning. The types of activities they enable are limited in terms of interactivity and manipulation and therefore do not promote meaningful experience and inclusion. The search

for interaction and the lack of feedback and student engagement is exhausting and energy-consuming for the teacher. These tools can create didactic confusion by negating the physical and temporal transition between personal and educational spaces. Some teachers, however, manage to use students' private worlds to create greater proximity. The project enabled participants not only to become aware of these limitations, but also to propose resilient practices in the remote modality. These practices also require a high level of self-awareness from the teacher, like listening to both the personal rhythms of the teacher and students. They push to rethink the relationship between the teacher, the learner and the knowledge, using both technological and somatic tools. The awareness of the body led to new ways of interacting in remote learning. Students' needs could be considered in a more inclusive way.

4. Resonance between embodiment and contexts

Our initial hypothesis was that bringing together communities of practice formed in three socially, culturally, and historically different territories through hybrid sessions could generate contextual effects. These effects are described as micro-situations of misunderstanding each other's conceptions, which are resolved through a phenomenon of grounding, generating intercultural skills. Each dimension of embodiment – the participant's relationship to their own body, to the others, to the physical environment - has a corresponding contextual dimension and vice versa. The paradigm of the RESPIRE project asserts that "the body is not at the service of the mind, it is part of it, just as the mind is part of the body." There is a clear resonance between "thinking bodies" and the contexts in which they live, as highlighted by the models chosen for the project.

Conclusion

Somatic support such as the one offered by the RESPIRE project explores the physical roots of knowledge construction and its intersubjective, collective, cultural and historical nature (Martin-Juchat, 2020). The successful experiments it proposes allow participants to become aware of different dimensions of embodiment. Over time, this work leads to a change in professional attitudes (Venant & Passaro, 2024). Researchers and teachers are led to redefine their relationship with the objects of knowledge and research. This change takes place at different levels, from internal effects on feelings to a more assertive epistemological positioning. Bringing the sensible back to the heart of the intelligible challenges defends a vision of the activity of abstraction as navigation on a plane of sensorimotor qualities (Nemirovsky et al., 2020). More generally, tacit knowledge themes have enabled teachers to make clearer connections between embodiment, learning, and teaching (Emond, 2021). Embodiment underpins an emergent (Nemirovsky, 2018) and resonant (Rosa, 2019) approach, that is, one that drifts and moves along unforeseen learning flows, leaving room for the individual within the collective, but also, and above all, for pleasure and beauty. Such an approach can only be conceived in a collaborative mode, in co-construction within a caring community. It naturally promotes more inclusive practices, while respecting the relationships between the various actors, whatever their role. Giving more space to sensitivity in teaching, training and research should become a central issue in our societies, which are caught up in a spiral of performance and more and more dominated by technology

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