

The Reflexive Interaction in Group Formal Practices: The Question of Criteria and Instruments for the Character-Skills Evaluation

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Abstract : In the research field on adult education, the learning development project followed different itineraries: recently it has promoted adult transformation by practices focused on the reflexive oriented interaction. This perspective, that connects life stories and life-based methods, characterizes a transformative space between formal and informal education. Within this framework, in the Nursing Degree Courses of Turin University, it has been discussed and realized a formal reflexive path on the care work professional identity through group practices. This path compared the future care professionals with possible experiences staged by texts used with the function of a pre-tests: these texts, setting up real or believable professional situations, had the task to start a reflection on the different 'elements' of care work professional life (relationship, educational character of relationship, relationship between different care roles; or even human identity, aims and ultimate aim of care, ...). The learning transformative aspect of this kind of experience-test is that it is impossible to anticipate the process or the conclusion of reflexion because they depend on two main conditions: the personal sensitivity and the specific situation. The narrated experience is not a device, it does not include any tricks to understand the answering advance; the text is not aimed at deepening the knowledge, but at being an active and creative force which takes the group to compare with problematic figures. In fact, the experience-text does not have the purpose to explain but to problematize: it creates a space of suspension to live for questioning, for discussing, for researching, for deciding. It creates a space 'open' and 'in connection' where each one, in comparing with others, has the possibility to build his/her position. In this space, everyone has to possibility to expose his/her own argumentations and to be aware of the others emerged points of view, aiming to research and find the own personal position. However, to define his/her position, it is necessary to learn to exercise character skills (conscientiousness, motivation, creativity, critical thinking, ...): if these not-cognitive skills have an undisputed evidence, less evident is how to value them. The paper will reflect on the epistemological limits and possibility to 'measure' character skills, suggesting some evaluation criteria.

Keywords : transformative learning, educational role, formal/informal education, character-skills

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