

1st Specialist Seminar on Embodied Education

The 1st Specialist Seminar on Embodied Education will be hosted by the MultiLab Group of the Faculty of Education, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Bressanone Campus, Italy, from **26 to 28 September 2024**.

With this seminar, we aim to bring together researchers and educators who are working in different areas of Embodied Education (EE). We would like to create a setting where participants can learn from each other for furthering research on the foundations of EE, and for developing innovative approaches to EE, particularly for educating primary and secondary school teachers (i.e., teacher training).

Four keynote speakers will provide inspiration and suggestions. The invited speakers are:

- **Shaun Gallagher**
Department of Philosophy, The University of Memphis, USA
- **Magdalena Kersting**
Department of Science Education, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
- **Athanasios Papaioannou**
Department of Physical Education and Sport Science, University of Thessaly, Greece
- **Jordan Zlatev**
Division for Cognitive Semiotics, Lund University, Sweden

To facilitate productive theoretical and practical activities during the seminar, we want to work on the following four concepts:

- (1) Balancing the body.
- (2) Conceptual blending.
- (3) Emotions, motivation, and the body.
- (4) The body and energy.

[For more information on these concepts, see the short descriptions further below.]

Participants will be invited to work on one of these subjects during the seminar. To facilitate the creation of four study groups, we kindly ask prospective participants to provide a short outline of their expertise and to share ideas and questions related to the concept(s) they would like to be engaged with during the specialist seminar. These notes will be available on the seminar website to all participants in July 2024.

There will be ample time to share individual perspectives and work on the concept of choice—we encourage participants to make use of embodied practices during group work, whenever possible. The results of reflections, suggestions, and practice will be shared between the study groups at the end of the seminar.

We are planning to publish the results of the seminar either in a book or in a special issue of a journal; after the seminar, we will invite participants to contribute to this endeavor.

The short outlines should be sent to multilab@unibz.it by June 15, 2024; please state your preference for one of the four concepts listed above and add what would be your second choice.

Notices of acceptance will be sent by June 30, 2024.

Conference fees are 150 €.

More details will be available on the conference website:

<https://www.unibz.it/en/events/1st-specialist-seminar-on-embodied-education>

Email: multilab@unibz.it

Short descriptions of the four concepts

(1) The direct embodied experiencing of balance, including practicing it willfully in physical engagement in general and in sports in particular, leads to a schematic-abstract structure in our mind. This schema (called the image-schema of balance in cognitive linguistics) is used imaginatively (by metaphoric projection) for a great many different examples of human activity in realms ranging from the psychological, artistic, and social (political and economic) all the way to our encounters with natural phenomena.

(2) Through the development of the theory of conceptual blending, Fauconnier and Turner argue that “all our learning and thinking consists of blends of metaphors based on simple bodily experiences”. By drawing from and integrating structures from different conceptual spaces, we form novel features that did not exist in the original spaces.

(3) Emotions find expression in the body, *moving* the body. Certain emotional situations influence the tense state of the body and the quality of its movement, breathing and thinking. So, body awareness is an irreplaceable resource for *sensing* (discerning, feeling) the emotional process as a flow of energy and information and can be a resource to consciously *regulate* and *guide* them. This means that the body has a mind, and the mind has a heart: all these dimensions find their healthiest condition in integration.

(4) Energy, or, more colloquially, force or power, is a broad concept that arises from embodied experiences of (causative or “forceful”) encounters we have with nature, with other people in social situations, and with our personal emotions and feelings. It makes its way into academic fields such as physics, biology, ecology, economy, geopolitics, and policy, where its meaning is formalized, restricted, and therefore changed, at least to some degree. However, in all these fields, it pays off to rediscover the embodied meaning of the concept.

MultiLab is a Faculty Laboratory committed to promoting active, participatory, and generative learning for future teachers, in-service teachers, and pupils (pre-school and primary school, but not only). Conceived as an educational space and multidisciplinary research center on embodiment and imaginative education, MultiLab brings together academics, researchers, internship service managers in a wide range of fields.