

EDITORIAL

Cognitive Sciences. Intercultural Perspective

Ciencias Cognitivas. Perspectiva intercultural

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Abstract

In this editorial of the monograph in *Cognitive Sciences: Towards a Cross-cultural Perspective*, a thematic review is presented, which accounts for the object of study, disciplines that underpin the interdisciplinary field of problems, and some current lines of research emerging in the field of study, among which four lines of work stand out. Firstly, studies linking cognitive or neurocognitive variables to the challenge of social diversity; secondly, studies examining the effect of cognition and neurophysiology on the formation of social stereotypes, gender; as well as on processes of discrimination or social and cultural inclusion; thirdly, works on the relationship between cognition and rurality; and finally, research that, from educational and social spheres, seeks to reconfigure the personal experience of social processes such as violence and territorial

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uprooting, towards new narratives of personal and social experience, which contribute to the sense of life of the individual and their community, as experiences that, although painful, can contribute to the relationship between memory and history.

Keywords: Cognitive sciences; cognition; emotion; culture; rurality; violence; personal experience.

Resumen

En la presente editorial del monográfico en *Ciencias cognitivas: hacia una perspectiva intercultural*, se presenta una revisión del tema que da cuenta del objeto de estudio, disciplinas que fundamentan el campo interdisciplinario de problemas, y de algunas líneas actuales de investigación que emergen en el campo de estudio; entre las que se destacan cuatro líneas de trabajo. Una primera, con estudios que vinculan variables cognitivas o neurocognitivas frente al reto de la diversidad social; en una segunda línea están los estudios que presenta el efecto de cognición y de la neurofisiología sobre la configuración de estereotipos sociales de género; así como sobre procesos de discriminación o inclusión social y cultural. En una tercera línea de trabajo, se ubican los trabajos sobre la relación entre cognición y ruralidad; y, finalmente, en una cuarta línea de estudio estarían investigaciones que, desde los ámbitos educativos y sociales, buscan reconfigurar la experiencia personal de procesos sociales como la violencia y el desarraigo del territorio, hacia nuevas narrativas de la experiencia personal y social, las cuales sumen al sentido de vida de la persona y de su comunidad como experiencias que, aunque dolorosas, puedan contribuir a la relación entre memoria e historia.

Palabras clave: Ciencias cognitivas; cognición; emoción; cultura; ruralidad, violencia, experiencia personal.

Resumo

Nesta editorial do monográfico em *Ciências cognitivas: rumo a uma perspectiva transcultural*, é apresentada uma revisão temática que aborda o objeto de estudo, disciplinas que fundamentam o campo interdisciplinar de problemas e algumas linhas de pesquisa atuais que emergem no campo de estudo, entre as quais se destacam quatro linhas de trabalho. Primeiramente, estudos que relacionam variáveis cognitivas ou neurocognitivas ao desafio da diversidade social; em segundo lugar, estudos que

examinam o efeito da cognição e da neurofisiologia na formação de estereótipos sociais, de gênero; assim como em processos de discriminação ou inclusão social e cultural; em terceiro lugar, trabalhos sobre a relação entre cognição e ruralidade; e, finalmente, pesquisas que, das esferas educacionais e sociais, buscam reconfigurar a experiência pessoal de processos sociais como a violência e o desenraizamento territorial, rumo a novas narrativas de experiência pessoal e social, que contribuem para o sentido de vida do indivíduo e de sua comunidade, como experiências que, embora dolorosas, podem contribuir para a relação entre memória e história.

Palavras-chave: Ciências cognitivas; cognição; emoção; cultura; ruralidade; violência; experiência pessoal.

Presentation Overview

One of the most significant current challenges for humans is probably the enormous challenge of knowing, regulating, and making processes of introspection and reflection. This allows them to have a greater awareness of themselves, others, and the world around them. In the context of an era in which cognitive diversity is beginning to be recognized in terms of learning preferences and beyond that, in terms of a knowing subject —mediating by its social, cultural, anthropological diversities, etc.— it is from the impact that it is recognized that all these variables can have in the face of their possible structural and functional configurations at the brain, cognitive and emotional levels. For this reason, the approach to the mind-brain relationship, brain cognition, or, more recently, brain emotion seems to take the form of a multi-causal and, in essence, multidisciplinary problem.

Thus, sciences that by tradition have studied the problem of the mind and consciousness, such as psychology, understood as the Science of the spirit, or philosophy, understood as the Science of love for wisdom (knowledge), cease to be some of the fields of expertise that address the problem of the mind in isolation, as, given the complexity of this object of study, a more interdisciplinary and intercultural approach seems necessary; context in which the contributions of cognitive sciences arise.

From this perspective, cognitive sciences can be considered the sum of the developments generated in different disciplines, including psychology, artificial intelligence, linguistics, neuroscience, anthropology, and philosophy, which have

led to unifying ideas around the concepts of 'mind' and 'intelligence' (García, 1991; Gardner, 1987; Medina, 2008; Thagar, 2010).

Cognitive sciences are interested in the study of the effect of different factors or variables on the performance of cognitive processes since it has been considered that this set of disciplines, which are grouped under the category of Cognitive Sciences, are defined as fields of knowledge and problem areas that are nourished, in an interdisciplinary perspective, by all the branches above of knowledge, and that attempt to determine how brain functioning gives rise to mental activity.

Certain types of problems are of interest to researchers who work with the cognitive sciences: issues about the mind, thinking, and mental representation (García, 1991), consciousness, mental operations, learning strategies, and problem-solving (Thagar, 2010). As well as the effort to explain human knowledge and the type of means people use to embark on projects that allow them to achieve their goals, represent, organize, and outline action plans and provisional outlines in light of the feedback offered by others to determine if their course of action has come to fruition or if they should start a new line of work (Gardner, 1987).

In general, it is recognized that the development of Cognitive Sciences becomes a double tension, first, between a representationalist tendency, oriented to study the problems of information processing at the level of biological and computational systems in a connectionist perspective, and second, in an emerging interdisciplinary trend, according to which cognitive scientists are interested in examining knowledge problems that involve the integrated work of several disciplines in a multidisciplinary perspective. This approach has led to unifying ideas about constructs such as the mind, consciousness, intelligence, and executive functions (Thagar, 2005, 2012) and the ability of the human being to plan, monitor, and evaluate objectives and, if necessary, establish a new course of action (Gardner, 1987; Varela, 2005).

According to Estany (2013), the effort of some of the researchers in the fields of study of cognitive sciences has focused on a double line of work: first, on the development of the theory of knowledge, the formation, representation, storage, and retrieval of information, in its condition of the representational character of knowledge, in general, and of science in particular; while, in a second sense, cognitive sciences have been interested in studying the unity of cognition related to the problem of agency capacity, in the sense of addressing the study of a cognitive agent capable of being self-descriptive and/or self-evaluating (Estany, 2013; Proust, 2010).

The monograph presented in this issue of *Ánfora* seeks to integrate the efforts of some researchers in Cognitive Sciences from an intercultural perspective. Its purpose is to offer the journal's readers and the academic community

an updated view of the study problem and new research trends, with particular emphasis on comparing cultural and social differences.

This monographic issue includes 13 articles addressing different cognitive science problems.

In the first line of work, some articles report on the challenge of addressing cognitive or neurocognitive variables in the face of social, cultural, and ethnographic diversity and their inclusion in educational and social contexts. Among these are works such as Restrepo, Niño, and Robledo's proposal on the naturalization of basic philosophical concepts of interculturality and the proposal of the neurocognitive model 'Elemental Intercultural Footprint' for the analysis of different cognitive variables, which included elements of analysis such as consciousness, self-control, identity, social mind, alterity, and morality. Partial epistemological trespass and methodological asymmetry were found to be the most common mechanisms for the naturalization of intercultural components.

In this same line of approach, the work of Gil, Herrera, and Guerrero on "Perceptions of Typhology in Colombia in the Context of Inclusive Education: Insights from Blind Individuals and Typhlogists" is presented, in which it is pointed out that there is no official profile for a country like Colombia that from the Ministry of National Education establishes the field of action, characteristics, and specific functions, nor a professionalization of the work of the typhlogist. This means that any professional with a minimum of experience in the educational process accompanies the visually impaired population, accompaniment that is sometimes carried out without having the minimum skills to provide a higher quality inclusive education.

In this same perspective is the work presented by Ramírez and Restrepo on "Inclusive Higher Education. A Review with Tree of Science", in which, through a systematic review methodology, three emerging subfields were found: 1) the factors that influence the consolidation of more inclusive education, 2) the inclusion of students with disabilities between barriers and opportunities, and 3) the implications for the consolidation of more inclusive higher education practices. To this end, it is recommended that training spaces be created on the understanding of inclusive education and the practices that derive from it.

This same line of interest includes the work provided by Granados and Alvarez on "Task Regulation and Communication of High and Low-performing Groups during the Execution of Collaborative Tasks", which addressed how social regulation processes, peer interaction, collaboration, and mutual support can affect students' academic performance. High-performing groups at the graduate level were found to have task regulation and communication characteristics that could aid in understanding academic success and developing genuinely collaborative tasks.

Likewise, a second line of analysis includes other studies that address the effect of cognition and neurophysiology on the configuration of social stereotypes, gender, and processes of discrimination or social and cultural inclusion. Among these are the contributions of Gómez, Amézquita, and Pineda, who addressed the “Face Recognition and Cultural Variability: Analysis of Empirical Evidence and Evaluation Measures”. A study confirmed that both neurophysiology and cultural factors play a crucial role in facial recognition and suggests that the “other-race effect” (ORE) may be a product of the interaction between these factors.

Likewise, in this same group of works, the contributions of authors such as Safranoff and Tiravassi can be found in their study on “Diversity in Adversity: Exploring the Differential Impact of Gender in the Contexts of Incarceration in Argentina”. In this article, the effects that the experiences of incarceration manifest in women within prison contexts in Argentina were addressed, and it was found that there are gender differences in the impact of confinement *inside*, which are crystallized mainly in the behavior of nearby containment networks.

As another of the lines of approach in the monograph, some studies address the relationship between cognition and rurality, among which Suárez and Tobón's research on “Bio-learning Based on Community Experiences in a Rural Territory of Colombia” is presented. The importance of learning experiences is recognized, where bio-learning emerges from community participation. This study thus recognizes that community training processes support the learning community, focused on vital training in, from, and for life, and having as a starting point the autochthonous, the cultural, the customs; what is shared from the territory and has been called ‘learning community spirit’.

In this same line of study are works such as that of García, “Conceptions of Childhood in the Initial Training of Teachers: A Phenomenological Research Conducted in the Higher Normal Schools of the Department of Caldas, Colombia”. It delves into the meaning of these conceptions from the life experiences of teachers, who reflect the reduction of childhood to a developmental stage in their professional practice. The sense of experiences linked to constructing specific conceptions in teachers' cognition is built from their childhood. This highlights the theoretical gaps in teacher training regarding the cultural shift of contemporary childhoods.

In this perspective, there is also the study by López, Durango, León, and Delgado, “Public Policies as Mechanisms for Peacebuilding in Territories”, which investigates how political capacities are developed for transitions in the territories based on democratic mediations of social conflicts oriented towards reconciliation and the construction of stable and lasting peace. From this, it was found that public policies acquire a peaceful nature, as they involve nonviolent forms of social

interaction. With them, those involved seek to achieve the highest possible level of well-being depending on the resources and contexts in which they are found.

A fourth line of study is the effort made by the educational and social fields to work together to reconfigure the personal experience of social processes, such as violence and the uprooting of the territory, towards new narratives of individual and social experience. These add to the meaning of life of the person and their community as experiences that, although painful, can contribute to the relationship between memory and history to enhance the possibilities of human development and, especially, the process of self-construction from pain. In addition to how, from their condition as social beings, they contributed to the development of their community, among which works such as Pradilla and Méndez “Fables from Memory: Reconstruction of Collective Memory through Literary Creation”, in which authors found that spaces for reading, dialogue, writing, and creation, such as “the creative writing workshop”, are indispensable for the reconstruction of a collective memory that seeks truth, forgiveness, and peace.

In this same sense, there is the work carried out by Rodríguez-Ávila, Barboza, Hernández, and Klimenko on the “Social Representations of the *Corralejas* Tragedy of January 20, 1980, Sincelejo, Colombia”, in which the tragedy was approached from categories that emerged in the analysis: premonitions or presentiments, popular stories and legends, selective rain, human-animal interaction, funerary aspects and cemeteries; and, finally, the central image associated with death, pain and trauma. The study revealed a social analysis of tragedy based on the concretion of magical thinking, which sought non-rational and less stigmatizing explanations of a tradition that clashes with Modernity.

In the same perspective, there is the work contributed by Carmona, Vanegas, and Jiménez on “Creative Writing as a Form of Psychosocial Mediation: A Bet from the Sociocultural Vision of Human Cognition”, in which creative writing is recognized as a tool for psychosocial mediation and as a space to enhance cognitive skills. From these, the realities experienced by young people are interpreted through the stories created in “the writing workshop”, oriented within the framework of the project “Weaving political capacities for transitions in the territories”, in Ovejas, Sucre. It was found that creative writing is assumed to boost the cognitive resources that make social interaction possible and is configured as a space to find in the meeting a possibility to transcend conflicts.

In this line is also the work contributed by Busquier on “Methodological Reflections from the Souths: Contributions to a Feminist and Decolonial Methodology”. Work in which the methodological work is reflected, especially around the research that takes as “subjects of study” subaltern, racialized, and colonized groups, which historically were invisible and hidden in academic

research, the product of acts of epistemic violence, epistemic extractivism and discursive colonialism; which leads to having to rethink how knowledge is constructed in the Latin American and Caribbean academic field.

Thus, it can be considered that this monograph constitutes a solid compilation of research efforts, which, from the approach to a common problem, such as the relationship between brain-cognition-emotion seeks to provide its contributions, different perspectives from the individual and social dimension, and beyond, in an intercultural perspective; different contributions in the process of recognizing that human cognition is not a uniform and homogenizing process and that on the contrary, multiple interdisciplinary, and multicultural approaches are identified in it, which allow more comprehensive approaches about the nature and implications of cognition in general, and of cognitive processes, in particular, within the framework of concrete and changing social and historical context, following the developments of the time and the emergence of the new millennium.

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