

Mobilities, Transitions, Transformations

Intercultural Education at the Crossroads

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Building social skills to ‘*learn together*’ in the intercultural primary school

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ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on the effectiveness of the *Learning Together* model in building social skills in multicultural contexts; a process directly related to the academic success of all the pupils involved. A troubled multicultural classroom in Northern Italy was observed for six years, from the first primary school year to the first middle school year. Using the *Grounded Theory Method*, all the gradually collected data led to the emergence of a pedagogical model of social skills building. The *Learning Together* model has many benefits, among which I will highlight the real social skills that have been directly perceived and experienced by pupils, parents and teachers on this path. Some possible differences between native participants and those with an immigrant background are also discussed. The transformation of *problems* or *risks* into *resources*, and thus the building of an inclusive and intercultural learning community, will not come about through an a priori taxonomy of social skills, but as the result of an experiential and situated learning process, which understands social competences – the core category of this process – as the product of interactions between teachers’ ethical choices, effective teaching strategies and constructively lived multicultural experiences.

Keywords: *Learning Together* model; social skills; multicultural contexts; primary school; *Grounded Theory Method*

HETEROGENEOUS CONTEXTS AND EMERGING EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

One of the most urgent problems faced by our complex society is learning to live

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together and to see difference as a growth opportunity for everyone (Delors 1996, Tawil and Cougoureux 2013).

According to the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in 2015 31.2% of the world's 243.7 million international migrants (i.e. people living in a country other than that of their original nationality) lived in Europe^b.

The movement of migrants - both between the countries of the EU, and in and out of the Union – has profoundly changed the size and composition of Europe's population: in 2014 Spain, Italy, the UK, Germany and France were the countries whose populations saw the biggest increases in percentages of new citizens (Caritas-Migrantes 2016, 3).

Alongside their relatively established, and large, populations of foreign citizens, Europe is now facing rapidly increasing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers, for whom solutions urgently need to be found, at both the European and the national level (Caritas-Migrantes 2016, 2). This humanitarian emergency has not actually greatly affected Italy (notwithstanding waves of local alarmism, often exacerbated by the media), since many of the people who arrive here from North Africa move on to other European countries as quickly as they can.

In the current climate of economic and political uncertainty, marked by the complexity of cultural pluralism, increasingly multi-ethnic contexts and the ongoing globalization of markets, economies, social customs and cultural models (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2009, 63), education systems are also faced with new challenges in terms of combating inequality and social injustice (Gundara and Portera 2008, Banks 2008).

^b Source: Eurostat, April 2016.

Recently, the Education Ministers of the EU member states again emphasized the role of education in creating harmonious coexistence in Europe and in preventing further violence and intolerance (EU 2015). Most OECD countries acknowledge the need to develop students' social and emotional skills (OECD 2015), which play a key role in promoting active citizenship and social progress.

In the Italian school system, in particular, the numbers of non-Italian citizen students are increasing steadily, these students are here to stay (ISMU-MIUR 2016), and it is therefore vital that state schools are able to welcome, respect and support the diversity of their students, and can afford them the education to which they are entitled (Malusà and Tarozzi, forthcoming), “*ensuring that difference does not become inequality*” (MIUR 2012, 5), to quote the Italian Education Ministry's *Guidelines* (MIUR 2014).

A “*normal diversity*” (ISMU-MIUR 2015, 131) is emerging in the newly heterogeneous environments of many Italian schools, where recent years have brought profound changes: second generation immigrant students have, since 2013, outnumbered their first generation immigrant peers, making up 55.3% of the total number of children born to immigrants resident in Italy (ISMU-MIUR 2016, 8).

The shift to a “*different normality*” desired by the Ministry (ISMU-MIUR 2015, 133) requires knowledge of the specific needs – rooted in their diverse life experiences – of the students from immigrant backgrounds, and the ability to understand and respond to those needs (Catarci 2015, 18).

Italian law unequivocally encourages the use of collaborative learning to transform the classroom into a space for communication and cooperation (MPI 2007, MIUR 2012). Extensive research also testifies to the contribution of Cooperative Learning to building social skills and a sense of community (Sharan 2013).

This is the background of the present paper, which reports some results of a longitudinal study that followed a multicultural class from the first grade of primary school (2005-06) to the first grade of middle school (2010-11) in a primary school in Trentino (Italy). The propose was to identify meaningful directions to provide all pupils, whatever their home background, with the opportunity to learn in a supportive, stimulating atmosphere, with the ambitious aim of constructing a social justice education model, whose main focus would be the inclusion and academic success of migrant students.

I first present the methodological approach adopted, then briefly^c sketch the model constructed, defining its essential features as steps toward an effective way to promote quality schooling for all, in particular focusing on the real social skills directly perceived and experienced by pupils, parents and teachers on this path, and also some possible differences between native participants and those from immigrant backgrounds.

METHOD

A critical *Grounded Theory Method* (Charmaz 2014) from a constructivist approach, oriented towards *Social Justice Education* (Denzin 2007, Levy 2015) was used to guide this inquiry, which involved 19 students^d, 36 parents, 26 teachers.

^c For a complete report of the analysis and the findings, see: Malusà 2011; Malusà and Tarozzi, forthcoming. This research was conducted under the supervision of Massimiliano Tarozzi, University of Bologna, Italy.

^d Regarding ethnicity, 6 students came from a migrant background (1 from Algeria, 2 from Morocco, 2 from Tunisia, and 1 from India).

Context

A troubled multicultural classroom in Northern Italy was observed for six years, from the first primary school year to the first middle school year. In the first grade, the observed class was full of conflict: it was difficult to manage the problematic relationships between pupils, and the situation was exacerbated by serious divisions between native and migrant parents.

These 19 students and their 36 parents participated in a wide range of interdisciplinary projects on intercultural education, using the cooperative learning model *Learning Together*, shared by the teachers on the team.

Analysis

The data (gradually collected) included: 62 focused interviews with key informants^e; participant observation over four school years; pupil questionnaires and documentary research. All the data were transcribed and coded according to the *Grounded Theory* procedures (Tarozzi 2008), using the support of the *Qualitative Data Analysis Software QSRNVivo9* (Bhattacharya 2015). 20 themes were identified inductively, and grouped into 9 categories. The definition of the categories was refined, according to their properties and relationships within theoretical coding, and then reduced to 7 (Fig. 1), before finally being integrated into an interpretative scheme, i.e. a general pedagogical model of social skills building (Fig. 2).

^e The participants were selected according to the *theoretical sampling* technique (Charmaz 2014).

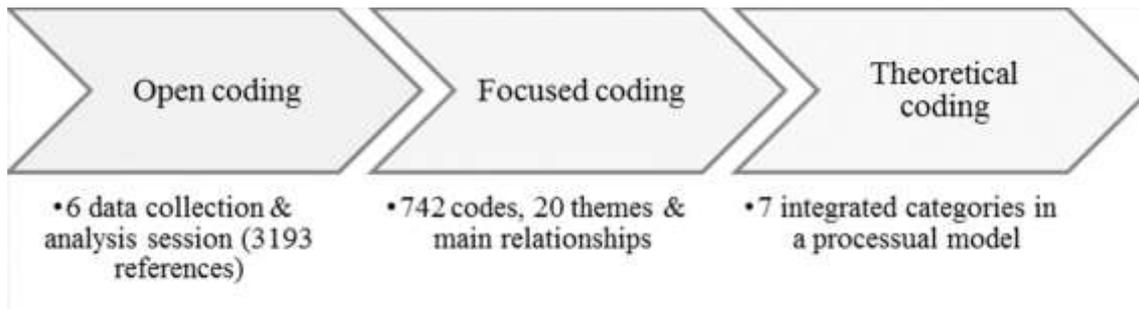


Figure 1. Three coding steps

THE EMERGING PEDAGOGICAL MODEL^F

Seven main categories emerged from the data. Developing the conceptual relations between the different built categories from a systemic perspective, four stages of the process were identified; these stages, in a progressive temporal circularity, enhance the system's capacity to construct effective paths to promote quality education for all in complex contexts:

- (52) *choosing ethically*, an essential precondition;
- (53) *facilitating the experience with effective strategies*, a condition for effective process;
- (54) *constructing social skills*, the central hub of the process (core category);
- (55) *quality of learning for all*, ultimate goal of the teaching/learning process.

^f This article reports some of the results of research that I partially presented, as a poster, to the national congress “*Psychology, science, society*” (AIP), Chieti (Italy), September 2012; at a conference “*Intercultural Counseling and education in the Global World*”, Verona (Italy), April 2013; and at the 4th Global Congress for Qualitative Health Research “*Dialogues and Bridges for Intercultural Health*”, Mérida, Yucatán (Mexico), March 2015.

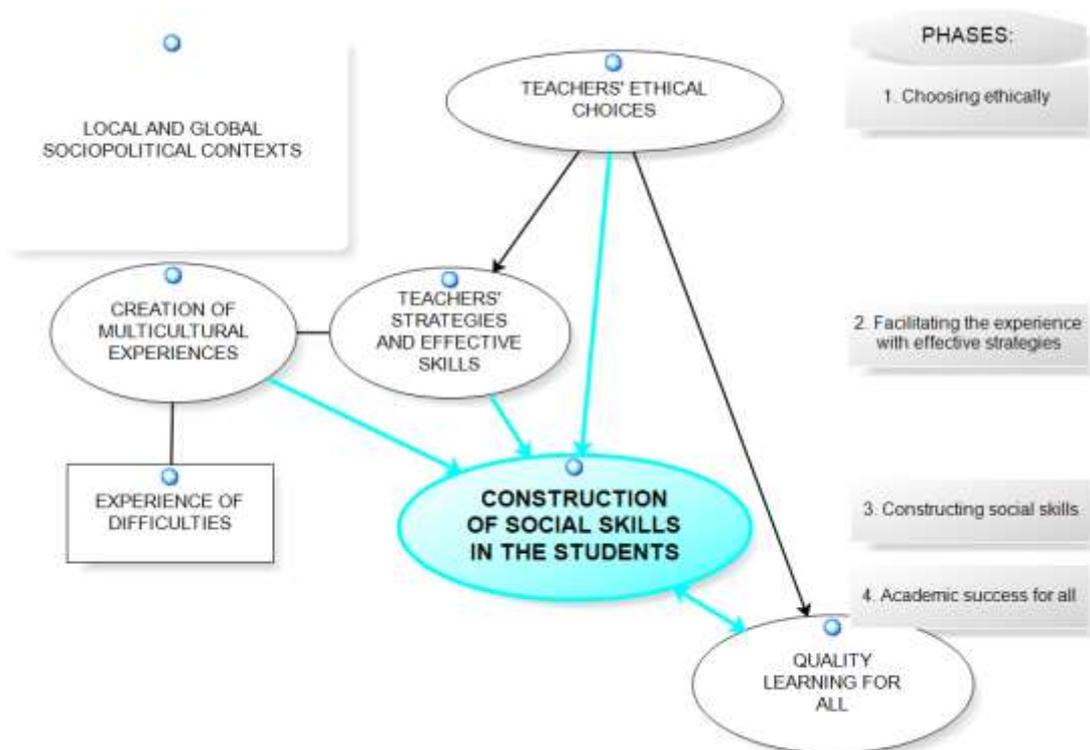


Figure 2. Constructing social skills: the emerging pedagogical model

What are the benefits of the *Learning Together* model in multicultural and troubled classrooms? Through the Cooperative Learning Model, teachers promote the construction of learning environments in the school space where the multicultural experience becomes an added value, facilitating social skills directly related to achievement in education for all students.

Constructing students' social skills

The social competences – the *core category* of this process – are the product of interactions between teachers' ethical choices, effective teaching strategies and constructively lived multicultural experiences.

In both native and migrant pupils, it emerges that the relational skills can be divided into 6 different thematic areas related to the management of self and the group,

including socio-affective growth, the development of communication, mediation and decision-making skills:

- *the socio-affective level*, linked to the relational emotions (trust, empathy, loyalty, openness to help);
- *self-management*, linked to attitudes about the self (self-control, managing emotions, self-confidence and autonomy);
- *communication level*, linked to the basic skills needed for effective communication;
- *group management*, linked to the capacity to work in small groups;
- *conflict mediation* linked to the ability to intervene in problematic situations;
- *decisional level*, linked to the students' ability to take the initiative, make decisions and choices, and think critically and creatively.

The numerous references – both frequent and dense – to the area of decisional competences and group management (linked to mediation capacity) highlight their relevance: an overall picture emerges of a group which, through frequent conflicts, has been able to grow cognitively, i.e. in terms of critical and creative thought, within an intense relational context, and including all the students (Fig. 3).

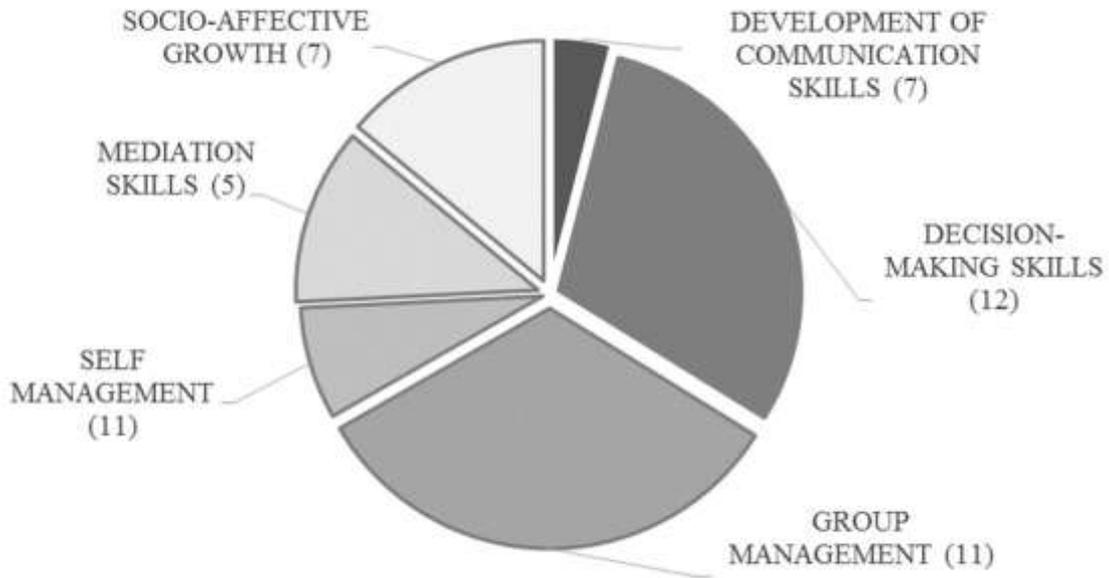


Figure 3. Social skills in the students. Percentage number of references (in brackets the number of codes)

Which social skills are directly perceived and experienced by these pupils, parents and teachers, on their cooperative learning path?

The analysis reveals the different levels of awareness of social competences found among the participants (students, parents and teachers) in the study. See Fig. 4, below, and the appendix, for greater detail.

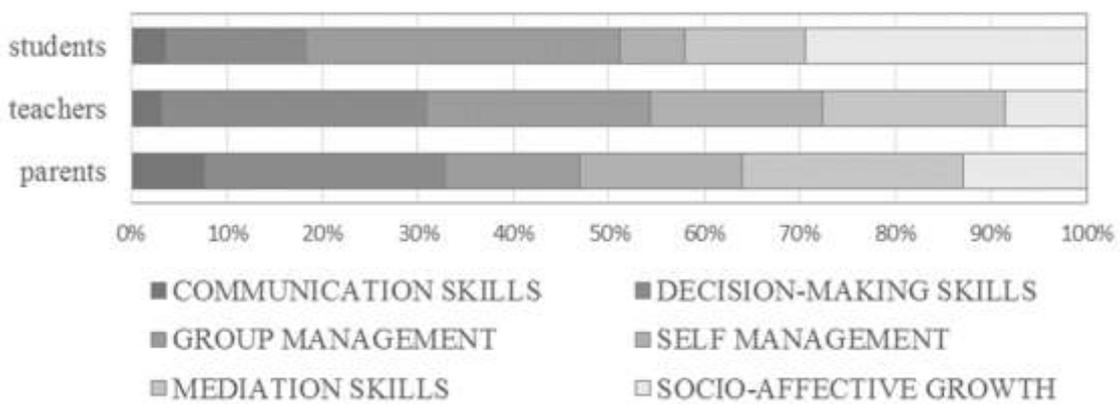


Figure 4. Social skills perceived by students, teachers and parents. Percentage frequency

What the students experience

The social competences that the students have been enabled to develop range across all the thematic areas that make up self- and group management, including socio-affective growth, and the development of communication, mediation and decisional skills.

Both native and migrant pupils experience the growth of these competences directly in their daily school activities: the analysis reveals that they are aware of their ability to support each other, to work in a team, to cooperate, to respect roles and people, to accept conflict as an integral part of friendship, and to use or even invent mediation strategies.

Everyone's different in some way[...] When I fight with someone, like with my best friend, whose called Anna, when we fight we make it up straightaway because we understand, we both understand that we've done something wrong and we go and say sorry to each other! (Italian student)

The students from migrant backgrounds say that they are *capable* in all of the thematic spheres (Fig. 5), but above all they feel themselves to be actively involved when finding strategies to mediate conflict, in which they are often involved, and when engaging their socio-affective competences; the importance of being helped and of sometimes also being able to help classmates is often mentioned.

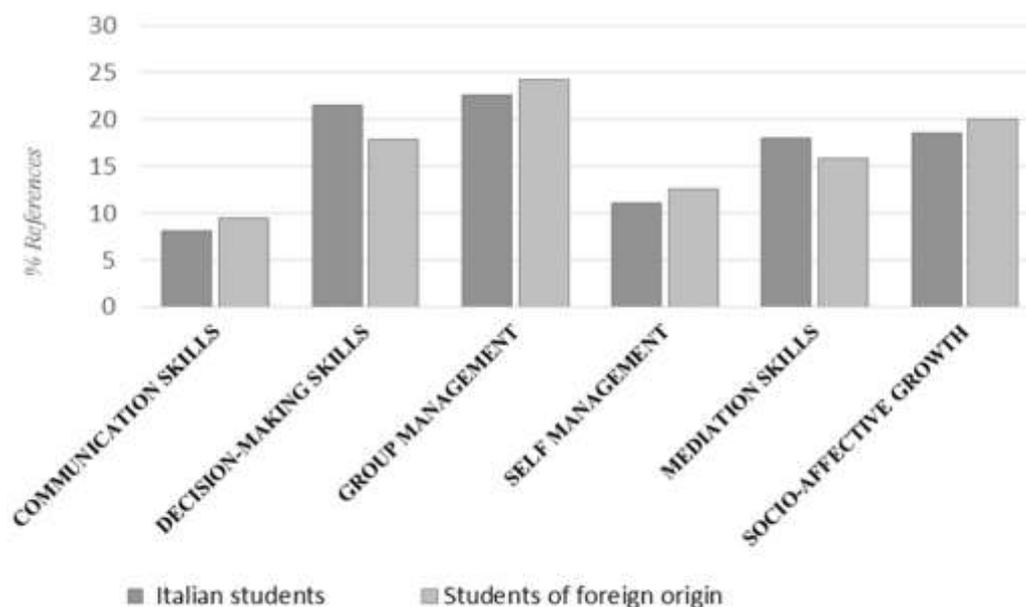


Figure 5. Percentage frequency of social skills declared by Italian and immigrant students

Helping/being helped, among the students does not have the connotation of a kind of *we-all-love-each-other* solidarity, but it carries that particular meaningfulness of the interdependence of all constructive relationships, aimed at the understanding of the learning task and at the facilitating of a *competent* attitude in all the activities. These factors are referred to at all the levels of learning indicated by the teachers in the students' reports.

Sometimes my classmates helped me to improve... and after that I understood that there were things that I just hadn't been able to learn to do, like put my hand up in class... in my group Erica said to me: - Put up your hand before you speak! And after she'd said it to me a few times I realized that you have to raise your hand in the group [...] Now sometimes I'm able to help some of my classmates if they're behind! (migrant student)

However, the perceived relationship between the educational significance of peer support and effective academic success progressively decreases longitudinally from the first class of primary school to the first class of middle school. In the first

interviews almost all the students – to varying extents – connected the two phenomena, but in the interviews at the end of the fifth class (of primary school) only some students (Italian and migrant) perceived the educational value of peer support^g.

And finally, in the interviews with the immigrant students at the end of the first class of middle school, no correlation is made at all.

The case of one particular student is indicative: a recent immigrant with no knowledge of Italian language, he sees the help of his classmates as important to his feeling comfortable at school, but not as a factor which supports him in making real academic progress.

We can say that, over time, the students experience school as increasingly supportive, and encouraging of mutual help, but this is not their perception of academic assessment: the many obligatory acontextual tests require the school to make largely *summative* (rather than *formative*) assessments, which do not reflect the actual educational path of each child (Tarozzi and Torres 2016, 3).

On the other hand, a stronger relationship is revealed between intra-group collaboration and perceived academic success. In this case, the subjects probably associate success with the cooperative model adopted in the primary classroom, which involves many tasks in which collaboration between members of the group is required to obtain a positive evaluation.

At secondary school, however, academic success is not perceived to have any connection with collaborative attitudes.

^g At the end of April, students are given standardized tests which are part of a local monitoring run by IPRASE (the provincial institute of research and experiment); in May they have internal end of year tests and also have to do national tests (INVALSI).

These results are also confirmed by the data from the self-assessment questionnaires on “*competence levels*” which small groups of students filled out during their school activities. The replies are unanimously agreed after an – often very heated – group discussion, coordinated by an appointed leader, which is part of the daily/weekly teaching routine^h.

The results (Fig. 6) of the individual self-assessment questionnaires, which the students filled out monthly, are also interesting: they demonstrate their preferred roles (*leader, speaker, reporter, observer*), all of which have specific functionsⁱ, developed through teacher-student mediation. The database analysed includes a total of 167 questionnaires, filled out individually over three years, independently of school assessment, as part of the cooperative learning routine^j.

^h Consulting each other quietly, knowing how to work together, to work hard and to encourage each other are the themes upon which the small groups have to assess themselves as good, fair or bad. The students’ perception of their group collaboration is average to high in 21 of the questionnaires that were collected at the end of the fourth class and at 4 different stages during the fifth class.

ⁱ The following are the tasks of each role: the *leader* distributes and collects teaching materials, “chairs” the group’s discussions and helps it to come to agreement; the *reporter* writes down the tasks given to the group; the *speaker* tells the class what his/her group has been discussing or studying; the *observer* assesses the social competences demonstrated during each activity by the whole group and assigns a score on a big poster that hangs in the classroom (Malusà 2014).

^j In the primary school, the teaching activities are shared at different levels by all the teachers of a module, the students mainly work cooperatively in small (3-4 children) heterogeneous groups. The roles (*leader, speaker, reporter, observer*) are rotated weekly, designed according to the approach found in *Learning Together* (Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec 1994). The arrangement of the students’ desks, always placed in groups of 4-5 islands, supports this methodological choice. (The positioning is only changed for some formal tests, when the desks are placed at a distance from each other; or when the whole class is involved in important discussions, for which the students set the desks out in a big square).

Taking on the role of an *observer* is difficult for children, but it was the one that they most aspired to in the period during which it was associated with the job of keeping the groups' scores.

The children from migrant backgrounds/of foreign origin feel actively involved in the life of the class when their space for participation has the extra protection of a particular assigned role, whether that of the *speaker* (oral participation), or the *reporter* (written). They are also keen to take on the role of *leader*, the status of which is recognised by their peers.

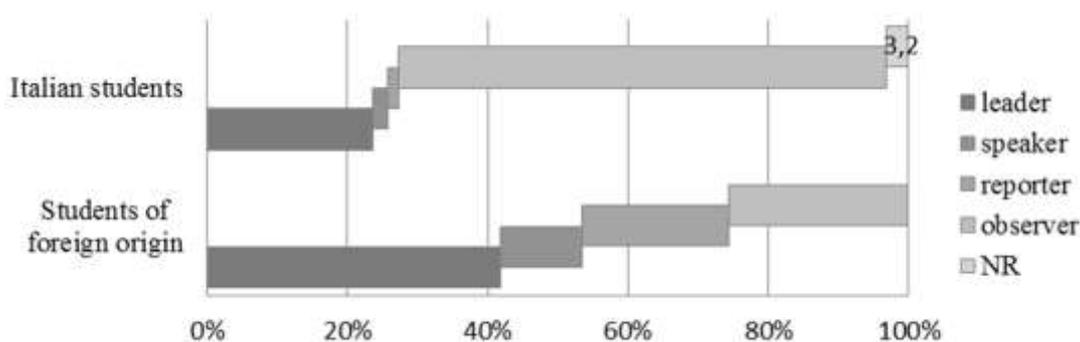


Figure 6. What is your favourite role?

Each group has its own name, logo, group photo and a “*pact*” of collaborative commitment: the groups usually change each month. The interdisciplinary projects involve step by step targeted activities to develop certain social competences in the children (calling each other by name, speaking quietly, taking it in turns to speak, checking that their companions understand what is going on, collaborating, encouraging each other); a monthly test for the students (a self-assessment questionnaire on the competences they themselves have acquired, those acquired by the group and by the class as a whole), and for the teachers (self-analysis during the weekly planning periods); meetings with parents during class assemblies, by individual appointment, and in periodic meetings with class representatives (Malusà 2014).

What the parents say

With a naturally greater awareness, the parents – as emerged in the focussed interviews – recognise their children’s increased capacities to explain their own ideas, take the initiative and make determined, autonomous choices.

He has opened up so much, my little boy. It’s been step by step, but Simone really wasn’t like this at the start... (mother of an Italian student)

The parents also feel that their children continued to exhibit these behaviours and attitudes in middle school:

When he wants to express an idea... he expresses it and he isn’t afraid! Probably because he has had a chance to do it in class, in a group, to say what he thinks without being scared. He is able to say what he thinks! (mother of an Italian student)

Parents made important points about increased mental receptivity, emotional security and openness towards others, with children demonstrating joy, acceptance, tolerance and empathy.

For her... it’s like she feels... that she belongs here, already! (father of a migrant student)

The parents speak of their children’s abilities to get involved in new situations, demonstrating new levels of autonomy and increased self-esteem.

What has he learnt? Well... self-esteem, at the beginning definitely, more confidence... happiness, because there were moments of happiness in class, some occasions when he felt uncomfortable, but there were also those moments... Respect for his classmates, collaboration, because he’s learnt to collaborate and respect other people; he’s also learnt about other cultures, because with lots of other ways [of doing things]... having classmates from different cultures has given them a lot (mother of an Italian student)

The parents of foreign origin have also noticed, and approve of, their children's personal growth, but they are more focussed on academic achievement, which is generally more problematic: yes to social competences, but only if the final aim is academic success!

But... she really likes this way of working, she wants to learn, she wants to know how to do things! (father of a migrant student)

The interviews also reveal extra-curricular moments, rich in the competences experienced among their peers, as the children learned to resolve conflict – often autonomously – communicating with each other rather than “*beating each other up*”^k.

The parents clearly perceive the importance of the socio-emotive competences connected with mediation and decision making, but they are less aware of those related to group management; the latter are less easily discerned and are possibly less valued (the educational value of collaboration was only recognised by 3 parents). A parent, who was actually a class representative for three years, said, in a focussed interview when their child had finished primary school:

I think they have got a lot better at interacting in a group: I mean, they've found it really difficult to build the group and... but I feel they've learnt a lot! From a human point of view, their personal growth: these children here, in my opinion, now have more tools [...] I mean, that if they have been having to deal with complicated situations, where they've had to ask questions, they've had to face those questions, they've had to find their own solutions... and they've also had to... trust the teacher, maybe more... because maybe sometimes they've had to... there was something wrong and... the fact that they... could trust a teacher was important, because you feel that you can do it... and you don't feel isolated with your problem!..... All in all, I think they have learnt to get to know each other well,

^k Some occurrences between double quotation marks have been coded *in vivo*.

and to appreciate the positive things that they have... together, and to deal with situations a bit [better?]. (mother of an Italian student)

Similarly, the codes connected with helping-being helped (part of the socio-affective sphere), were only noted/appreciated by 4 parents, none of whom, however, linked them with cognitive learning. These codes are never mentioned in the interviews with parents from foreign backgrounds.

To sum up, the social competences which their children gradually acquire are seen as necessary for the creation of a good learning environment, in which the children need to know how to “*interact while surrounded by problems*”, or “*to open themselves up to difference*” with an attitude of positive curiosity, but the link between these competences and academic success is less clearly perceived.

What the teachers say

The teachers recognise the importance of these competences in their official assessments of the children (report cards and final tests). The report cards, in particular, take a student’s ability to cooperate and participate positively into account when awarding a final mark. Comments such as: “*willing to work in a group and to support some classmates*”, “*makes original contributions*”, “*participates actively*” or “*contributes with critical awareness*” appear on the report cards.

Much tangible evidence of this process of constructing competences has been generated – documents, photographs and videos, the central focus of *Cooperative Learning*, which was adopted by most of the teachers in the five primary school years.

The teachers refer, above all, to the importance of conflict mediation and/or the way in which conflict is tolerated when friendship is understood, observing (sometimes implicitly) the presence of relational situations which are difficult for the adults to

manage, but which are experienced by the children without distress, since they have found a group equilibrium.

Still, they have always managed to reflect on the things that happened... although the children's immediate reactions were not always ideal, they have begun to learn to calm down, work together – it is, at any rate, definitely a path of personal growth. And now I notice that they are almost always able to resolve conflicts among themselves – they somehow manage – however it might be – to find a balance, even though it often involves a lot of quarrelling. (teacher)

However, a gap between theory and practice does appear, particularly in the middle school. Meaningful codes are only mentioned in the interviews with the teachers who have adopted a predominantly active teaching method, in contrast to the “unsaid” meanings (which are not revealed) of those teachers whose approach to teaching is different. Thus we have empirical confirmation of the widespread difference in teaching perspectives between the primary and secondary school levels, with a clear divergence between constructed and verified competences, in line with the teaching method pursued by the teachers.

A longitudinal view of the path

The fostering of the construction of social competences at school is not an easy process, nor does it bring immediate results. The example investigated here demonstrates a dynamic, fluid progression, influenced by many other variables, beyond the scope of our study, including all the aspects of the children's development upon which the adopted methodology has no bearing: the different socio-economic and cultural circumstances of the actors; geographical considerations and the impact of both local and global policies (Malusà 2014, 2015).

At the beginning of the path, the teachers obviously had a greater awareness of what the process would involve that did the children or their parents: the data clearly reveal the extent to which they worked together to produce a shared vision of their proposed methodology. The parents, on the other hand, who were still uncertain, had a critical relationship with the intercultural projects, in which they nevertheless developed a growing trust. The students experienced the process as their school routine, and were only partly aware of the relational competences which they were gradually acquiring.

Over the course of the last years of primary school, the students actually became the main actors in the process: their day to day experiences in the classroom naturally shaped their attitudes and abilities, which were also then more clearly recognised by their parents, who were sometimes involved in shared workshops, and were attentive to the social progress of their children and actively engaged in the process. However, it was only the teachers who were actually fostering the cooperative journey who systematically collected any data; the others, interviewed at the end of the school year, appeared to focus less on these aspects than on the superficial transmission of the cognitive competences required by the curriculum, and on the assessment of those competences in standardized tests.

In middle school the question of social competences tends to remain in the background, either ignored, or, when it is considered, only in relation to its impact on the educational climate.

As a last point of interest, I would like to report the results of the *Word Frequency Query*, based on interviews with the students, parents and teachers, on the 5 most frequent verbs:

- for the students: *to work, to know, to learn, to function, to discover;*

- for the parents: *to talk (about experiences), to think, to change, to learn, to work;*
- for the teachers: *to work, to succeed, to learn, to participate, to change.*

FINAL REMARKS

These observations frame social skills within the dynamic interaction between individual and context, in the concept of situated social learning based on the dynamic-constructivist theoretical models and, particularly, Vygotsky's cultural psychology. Understood thus, these skills manifest when a subject chooses the *knowledge, skills* and *attitudes* that are effective responses to specific demands in a given moment and situation, in a dialogic, autopoietic process with the experience (s)he has generated.

In the model discussed here, in fact, the competences develop in response to the students' needs for harmonious interaction with their multicultural surroundings, and are facilitated by the careful mediation of the teachers, who, with a shared vision and their own particular competences, accompany the children in their creation of appropriate, creative responses to concrete situations, linked to real contexts within their daily school lives.

A close link between intercultural education and cooperative learning emerges, and this link is an effective tool for fostering equality and social justice at school (Gobbo, 2008) within a vision of a global education for humankind.

The educational strategy of *Cooperative Learning*, in fact, based on the direct teaching of social skills from a perspective of positive interdependence, cooperation and social mediation, can make an important contribution to intercultural education. It sees the school as a learning community; it recognises and valorizes difference (*alterity in education*), gives ample space to plural competences; places the group at the centre of

educational activities, supporting mutually beneficial (*win-win*) relationships between participants; it encourages a sense of belonging to the social context: the construction of an aware “*I*” who feels part of a “*we*” (Malusà 2014, Pavan 1999).

The efficacy of the process is undoubtedly affected by the issues which arise in complex situations, since the difficulties experienced in multicultural classrooms are only the tip of the iceberg, and reflect far wider social processes and problems, which cannot be resolved by the education system alone.

Nevertheless, as educators it is our duty to do something, especially in our own field – our “*seat of power*”, the school – in order to support a process of social cohesion, using all the appropriate tools we can find. Schools could become truly open, discovering the strengths inherent in their very vulnerability and contradictions, they could welcome conflict as opportunity and open up constructive spaces in which to explore and express difference and tension, both for students and their families: such a plurality of ideas would thus enable mutual enrichment (Torres and Noguera 2008).

I believe that the most important aspect of this study is not so much the results achieved by the project, but the journey which all its participants have embarked upon; they all engaged with courage in a process which involves meeting not only “*the other*” but also one’s own shadow side, recognising the “*stranger*” who is ultimately within – and not without - each of us.

Thus this process becomes a challenge. It is long, and difficult, progressing step by step, its successes are fragile and the moments of feeling “*on the right track*” inevitably alternate with feelings of failure. The dedicated educator, however, can only respond to this challenge by trying all the harder to help to create a Utopia in which social justice and peaceful intercultural relations prevail.

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APPENDIX

GROUP MANAGEMENT	PARENTS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS
agreeing amongst themselves			
cooperation rather than competition			
taking responsibility			
collaborating			
looking after groups of small children			
mutual encouragement			
leadership			
creating/working in a group			
putting themselves to the test			
the active participation of all			
respect - for classroom and for particular roles			
SELF MANAGEMENT	PARENTS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS
adaptability			
self control			
autonomy			
self esteem			
concentration			
structure			
managing emotions			
awareness of limits and boundaries			
finding grown up			
sense of security			
ability to cope with frustration			
MEDIATION SKILLS	PARENTS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS
accepting others and being accepted			
conflict as an element of friendship			
objectivity/impartiality			
tolerance			
strategizing			
SOCIO-AFFECTIVE GROWTH	PARENTS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS
being warm and welcoming			
helping each other			
creating routines			
sharing			
trusting themselves and others			
sensitivity and empathy			
sincerity and loyalty			
DECISION-MAKING SKILLS	PARENTS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS
open mindedness			
changes in friendship preferences			
determination			
expressing judgement/self-evaluation			
intervening in conflicts			
committing to do one's best			
taking the initiative			
thinking about social relationships and values			
making autonomous choices			
ability to think critically			
development of creativity			
peace making strategies			
COMMUNICATION SKILLS	PARENTS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS
active listening			
the capacity to overcome linguistic barriers in communicating			
expressing feelings			
expressing their own opinions			
learning to relax			
speaking clearly			
knowing how to ask questions			

Table 1. Social skills, properties and codes declared by parents, teachers and students

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTOR

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