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Italian Teachers' Intercultural Pedagogical Strategies in Multicultural Classroom

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

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by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family:

My parents Adele Milozzi e Silvano Pierfederici,

My brother Claudio

In loving memory of my dearest grandparents

And to my beloved Ira, for his unending love and support

And especially to my beloved grandfather Gaetano (*nonno* Nino) for teaching me to seek social justice and that no one is ever too old to study and learn.

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ABSTRACT

Italian Teachers' Intercultural Pedagogical Strategies in Multicultural Classroom

by

Monica Pierfederici-Leifer

Italian socio-cultural landscape has changed dramatically in a relatively short time (since the early 1990s). Due to the influx of immigrants and the changing demographics of classrooms, teachers are faced with pressure to adapt to the classroom environment and the pressures from the Italian educational bureaucracy. The pressures generated by these environmental factors have been particularly acute due to the absence of adequate resources. This research study focuses on the classroom changes in the context of the regional and larger Italian societal changes, addressing the increasingly significant problem of teaching in a multicultural classroom environment.

This study employed ethnographic methods of data collection and analysis employing qualitative, open-ended interviews to examine teachers' perspectives on their everyday practices, actions, and reactions to multicultural changes in classroom environments in central Marche Region. Regional, national, and European policy documents were collected for the analysis. Analysis of policy documents revealed complexity and changeability in mandates under conditions of inadequate resources and additional demands on their time.

Faced with the realities in their classrooms, teachers adapted to the rapid changes by drawing on their own creativity, developing various methodologies to approach the cultural other, such as songs and personal stories. These pedagogical tools were multi-dimensional in terms of their positive effects on the students, which included reducing stereotypes - beyond ethnocentricity – and strengthening student empathy, among others. Other important meta-themes were improved sense of self, students as researchers, and students as resources. These meta-themes support important over-arching themes related to intercultural pedagogy, the valorization of diversity and student engagement. A common unifying theme was identified that teachers who were involved in successfully engaging students were themselves strongly engaged.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY: GLOBAL MOVEMENTS AND THE NEW EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES

Figure 1.1. With the beginning of the immigration wave into Italy massive people flows began arriving on Italian Shores. Photo from Bari, August 8, 1991 (Wikipedia, 2012).

1.1. Introduction to the Research Problem

My reasons for choosing to study the problem of teachers' responses to multicultural education in Italy are grounded in two historical situation contexts. Firstly, are the remarkable changes in Italian society that began in the early 1990s leading to an

increasingly complex society that became culturally diverse and stratified (Alberti, 1990; Piazza & Ianes, 1999). The second reason is rooted in my own experience as a newly qualified teacher who also was confronting the challenges of multicultural classroom environments.

Recent changes in other countries at the time have affected Italy, including the radical political, economical, and social changes in Central and Eastern Europe, such as the war in the Balkans after the collapse of communism. Most recently the problem of social changes in migration has greatly intensified. These created new and significant immigration channels to Italy (Collicelli & Salvatori, 1994). Still vivid in people's memories are the scenes of vessels overflowing with people coming from Albania to Italy. Previously, Italy was a former country of emigration; however, recently has been transformed into a country of immigration and immigrant transition (Barbagli, 1995; Bonifazi, 1998; Bonifazi, Heins, Strozza, & Vitiello, 2009; Di Maio, 2001; Sciortino, 1999).

In the face of the evolution of Italian society in a relatively short time (since the early 1990s), understanding educator's living experiences is important including their challenges, and adaptations to the classroom environment also the pressures from the Italian educational bureaucracy. The pressures generated by these environmental factors have been particularly acute due to the absence of adequate resources, during the initial phases of new bureaucratic initiatives.

My intent is to show that such a personal inquiry is useful to uncover ways in which teacher stories are telling cases that may enable others to respond and make meaning out of their own experiences. It is important for both the teaching communities and academic communities to bridge the gap existing between theories and practices. It is essential if we

can see through their lenses while managing, balancing, improvising, and reflecting on their own life experiences, while "composing their lives" as teachers and building a representation of themselves in relationship to the world around them (*Skukauskaite*, 2006).

This research study focuses on the classroom changes in the context of the regional and larger Italian societal changes, addressing the increasingly significant problem of teaching in a multicultural classroom environment. This problem has arisen from the rapidly changing sociocultural landscape of Italian classrooms, which shifted from a *mono-cultural* all Italian in a *multi-cultural* one where resources to address and support teaching with immigrant students were often inadequate. Driving these problems were policies addressing multicultural classroom environments that were crafted based on initiatives developed at the European level and adapted to applications in the Italian classroom. These adaptations often were inadequately funded and considered, without input from the local level, i.e., teachers, principals, etc. Additionally, policies continually were in a state of flux and often reactive to past conditions and changes, while the classroom environment had already changed further.

To study these problems I conducted interviews, collected documents, and analyzed these data to answer the following research questions:

1. How have educational policies changed over time? And how have situations in the classroom adapted?

2 How do teachers perceive, and adapt to a changing multicultural classroom environment in the face of 1) policy directives and 2) inadequate resources?

To answer to these questions, I conducted ethnographic interviews collected in the central Marche Region, which has the fourth largest number of immigrants in Italy. In Marche Region, unlike other regions of Italy, recent arrivals live in small towns, rather than big

urban centers. As a result, the schools in these small towns found it difficult to adapt to the new and changing linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom due to having less resources at many levels than could be available in large cities. These lacking resources were as simple as linguistic mediators in a students' native language for students with minimal to no Italian language skills. Larger, urban school districts can pool resources in a manner that the smaller Marche Region districts could not. Similarly, major cities can and typically do support larger numbers of immigrant communities, providing a larger informal network for immigrants to draw upon.

The qualitative open-ended interviews were designed and conducted within the ethnographic methodological framework (Patton, 1990). These qualitative open-ended interviews were formulated with a broad question that followed a *grand tour/mini tour* approach to more detailed questions (Spradley, 1979). These were followed by "probing" questions (Patton, 1990). The theoretical framework of the interview design, methods of analysis, and relevant literature review, are provided in chapter 3.

This dissertation begins by describing the historical context underlying the in-migration into Italy and the Marche Region, and the dramatic Italian historical socio-cultural changes in chapter 2. Analysis of policies as revealed by documents relevant to the Marche Region and analysis of teachers' interviews regarding classroom practices are presented in chapter 4. Analyses of the interview themes that addressed my research questions are discussed in chapter 5. Specifically, I found that teachers used multiple methodologies to approach the cultural other in the classroom, such as songs and personal stories. Synthesis of the themes and findings and future research directions are presented in chapter 6.

My personal journey that led me to conduct this research began with a personal interest in intercultural education. My journey began as a student of modern European languages (English, French and Spanish) and their cultures, who was also working on a degree in order to teach foreign languages at a K-12 level. Upon receiving my degree and teaching credentials, I became concerned that my training no longer reflected the increasingly multicultural reality of Italy. Policies were being implemented from the top-down but did not appear to reflect teachers' local realities and their needs.

How to best teach children from several different countries in the same classroom was of great concern to me – these children often spoke different languages and came from cultural backgrounds, sometime with little or no knowledge of Italian and Italian culture, yet each deserved an opportunity for a future that only education can open. As a result, the questions and research that developed into this dissertation evolved out of my interest to learn about teachers' viewpoints on intercultural education, and what were their experiences as active agents in bridging the diverse cultures in their classrooms, the various educational policies, and their daily practices.

> *My literature review revealed the voices of Italian teachers seldom were heard. Through my research I wanted to give them their voices.*

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CHAPTER II

SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGES AND IMMIGRATION IN ITALY: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the dramatic socio-cultural changes that have transformed Italy over the past century at a national and at a local level, particularly from a country of out-migration to one, over the past few years, to one of in-migration. The recent immigration has resulted in Italy becoming a multicultural society years, the immigration flow has resulted in Italy becoming a multicultural society in just two decades, in which perception of immigrants has resulted in government policy changes at many levels. This chapter summarizes the educational policies and will focus both in general and the specific to the Marche Region.

The chapter begins with an historical overview of Italy, as a country of emigration until recently. It proceeds with an overview of policy changes that lead to the country socio-cultural changes with intense immigration waves. A discussion of the educational changes related to these socio-cultural changes is provided in Chapter 3.

2.2. Italian emigration: An Overview

2.2.1 From Early Records to Pre-Unification Italy

Italy, a peninsula parting the waters of the Mediterranean into about equal halves, and as the historical center of the papacy, has had its populations traveling in large numbers and multiple directions, searching work, influence, and fortune. Even though most of the scholarship on Italian migrations has focused on the post Italian unification period, relatively recent studies pointed out that prior to the 15th century and the discovery of the New World, Italians emigrated primarily in two directions. Italian migrant populations first went through the Mediterranean towards the Middle East and then towards Asia who were mostly clerics and merchants, and second towards the north, across the Alps and Europe including scholars, soldiers, diplomats, artists, and artisans (Gabaccia, 1997, 2006; Pizzorusso & Sanfilippo, 1990; Sanfilippo, 1990). At that time, most long-range migrants were from the northern and central regions of the peninsula, and most of them, eventually returned to their homeland (Gabaccia, 1997; Imperatori, 1956). After 1500, through Genoa and its connections to the Spanish empire, emigration from the Italian peninsula began to flow across the Atlantic to the Spanish, Portuguese, British, and French-American empires as well (Franzina, 1995; Gabaccia, 1997).

During the period between the French Revolution and the Italian Risorgimento, political conflicts within the Italian peninsula generated recurring migrations of

Italian populations due to exile. The majority of the exiled Italians resided at least transiently around the Mediterranean Sea; some went to France and Switzerland, while others went to Spain and England and from there to the Americas, where they often created communities of Italians abroad (Ciuffoletti, 1978, 1992; Gabaccia, 1997; Garrone, 1954; Mastellone, 1965).

2.2.2. Post-Unification

Between 1861, the year of Italian unification, and 1985 ten of millions of people left the Italian territory to work and live abroad, in search of a better future. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the 27 million Italians who left their motherland equaled the Italian population at the time of Unification, in 1861 (Gabaccia, 1998). After the Italian unification in 1861, the new Italian state, ruled by the House of Savoy, was very much interested in making "Italians," as a leader of the Risorgimento movement, Massimo D'Azeglio stated, and that by doing so, the state began to document the migration of its new citizen, to consider its national significance, and to establish and regulate relations with Italians abroad, through laws, consuls, and shared state/church initiatives (Gabaccia, 1998).

Thus during the years of post-Unification, the Italian state underwent a "[…] tripartite period of migrations […]" (Gabaccia, 1997). The first migration period began with the Italian state consolidating power, international capitalist expansion and liberal migration policies and crisis, 1870-1914. The second period refers to the interwar years (between World War I and World War II) and was marked by

international immigration restrictions, the economic collapse, anti-Fascist exile, and culminated with World War II. The third period refers to the post-World War II years and the institutionalization of the Italian Republic, when northern European countries' economic miracles, necessitated "guest workers" supplied by the southern regions of Europe (Assante, 1978; Ciuffoletti, 1978; De Felice, 1979; Gabaccia, 1997; Rosoli, 1976, 1990).

The most studied period of Italian migration has been the period between 1870 and 1914 (see Figure 2.1) also called by many the period of the *Great Emigration*. During this time fourteen million Italians left the peninsula in search of *pane e lavoro* (bread and work). Six million worked in other European nations (France, Switzerland, Austria, Germany), while four million went to the USA and Canada. Three million went to South America (Argentina, Brazil, and other Latin American countries). At the end of the 19th century, there was also a constant emigration towards Africa (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco,) while during the first half of 20th century South Africa and the Italian colonies of Eritrea and Somalia, became new destinations. A few also went to Asia (Bertonha, 2003; Gabaccia, 1997; Natili, 2008; Podesta, 2004).

Figure 2.1 Italian emigration in millions 1870-1915 (icfanelli, 2014).

Although between 1876 and 1900 the northern regions had the highest numbers of emigrants, these flows shifted during the following two decades to the southern regions, which had the highest emigration flows. Historically, half of the Italian migrant population returned to Italy, with a large and unknown proportion emigrating repeatedly, over several decades of their working lives. For many of these Italians, with ties of friendship and connection to Italians abroad that continued for decades in places of severe emigration, migration abroad and then return became a way of life, part of the ordinary social and economic life (Gabaccia, 1997, 1998, 2006).

2.2.3 Interwar Years

Migrations of Italians to other European countries continued into the interwar period reaching 4.1 million between 1916 and 1935, even though the numbers of emigrants decreased, given the hostility to emigration and immigration in both Italy and the Americas. The majority of Italy's migrants chose to migrate to other

European countries (over half of the migrants population). The most important destinations were France and Belgium, surpassing South America (in particular Argentina), and the United States, which had "quotas" and still limited the number of immigration visas granted to Italians, as well as Australia. Amongst the Italian migrants who chose the northern European countries, many chose Switzerland, Germany, and Austria (De Clementi, 2002; Gabaccia, 1998, 2006; Sciortino, 1999).

2.2.4. Post World-War II

During the 30 years after World War II, heavy emigration continued for economic reasons, reaching more than 7 million departures (Gabaccia, 2006; Rosoli, 1976). Internal migration also was important, forcing many southern Italians to move to the industrially more developed regions in the Italian North. Throughout the 1950's migrations were mostly towards the Northern European countries (France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria), United States, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, but also Australia (Cavallaro, 2003; Gabaccia, 2006; Sciortino, 1999; Sciortino, 2004). Thus, from the post-war period throughout the 1960's the emigration waves mostly shifted their direction towards the Northern European countries. Encouraging the trend was recruiting by most Northern European countries of temporary labor migrants under bilateral agreements with Southern European countries, mainly Italy. These *Gasterbeiter*, guest workers programs supplied workers to Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland in exchange of raw materials to sustain the post war economic boom (Appleyard, 2001; Castles, 1986, 2001; De

Haas, 2006; Gabaccia, 1998; Maltoni, 2003). Furthermore, many Italians moved to Great Britain, where the British Government also set up a European Voluntary Worker (EVW) program to recruit guest workers. Similarly the French Government established the *Office National d'Immigration-ONI* [National Office of Immigration] and made recruitment agreements with Southern European countries to resolve post war labor shortage with Italy one of the first countries from which workers were sought (Castles, 1986).

The *Gasterbeiter* programs stopped in most of the northern European countries that adopted these programs after 1974, due mainly to the Oil Crisis. Even though the original intentions of most Italian guest workers were to return to their motherland, the dynamics of the migratory process let to the reunification of families and therefore their settlement in the hosting countries (Barsky & Kilian, 2004; Castles, 1986). The Italian population remained stable in the 1970s through the end of the century, beginning to grow again recently. Immigration flows have played a role in these demographic trends.

2.3. Immigration in Italy

The presence of foreign residents in the Italian territory long has been a feature of the Italian society (Colombo & Sciortino, 2004). Foreigners in the post-unification period (1861) were less homogeneous than led to believe. The foreign presence was represented by refugees, entrepreneurs, affluent individuals,

professionals, landowners, industrialists, and members of the ecclesiastical orders (Colombo & Sciortino, 2004).

During the fascist period, centralized control of immigration was first instituted, which persisted into the postwar period, when emigration dominated societal concerns. The first Act to address immigrant flows was Statute no. 943/1986 (Colombo & Sciortino, 2004; Pugliese, 2002; Zincone & Caponio, 2007), which

> "[…] regarded immigrants as workers and was designed to protect Italians against potentially 'unfair' competition on the labour market […]" (Zincone & Caponio, 2007).

This Act introduced residency and amnesty to illegal immigrants in Italy, who at the time numbered 118,349 people. It also granted basic civil and social rights to foreign workers with legal status, establishing equal access to health care, public housing, and education for children. An explicit right to the protection of immigrants' cultural traditions and background was also acknowledged. Financial resources were not made available for these policies, resulting in a notable discrepancy between the principles underlying the act and its actual implementation. Furthermore, entry and work permits were only issued if there were insufficient Italians available to fill the work positions. Additionally, non EU-citizen (citizen outside of the European Union) were precluded from easily changing jobs (Zincone & Caponio, 2007).

From 1945 until the mid 1970s, the idea that immigration was a concern to Italy was considered "bizarre" (Sciortino, 1999). The few legislative innovations regarding immigration were, at least until the mid 1980s, the result of international treaties Italy had signed in order to protect its own emigrants (Barsky & Kilian, 2004; Castles, 1986; Maltoni, 2003; Messina, 1996; Sciortino, 1999).

The Oil Crisis of 1973 has been identified as the beginning of the immigration phenomenon towards Italy (Colombo & Sciortino, 2004) in part due to the economic recession that developed. This led the northern West European governments (mainly England, Germany, Belgium, and France) to apply increasingly restrictive immigration policies. This redirected migratory flows somewhat towards southern Europe, with Italy functioning as a "transit country" towards other more traditional destinations (Barsky & Kilian, 2004; Castles, 1986; Colombo & Sciortino, 2004; De Haas & Plug, 2006; Golini, Gerano, & Heins, 1991; Maltoni, 2003).

During the 1980's both Italy and Germany were the European countries with the largest immigration flows. Between the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s the immigrant population doubled. As the cold war conflict between capitalism and communism ended in the 1990s, local conflicts erupted in many areas, leading to separatist movements, the creation of new nations, and migration–for example, the ex-USSR, ex-Yugoslavia, and Albania (Morozzo Della Rocca, 1997; Piperno, 2002). Even though internal and external control of labor migrants was introduced

in Italy in the early 1990s, the immigration policies failed because millions of immigrants, both legal and illegal, enter the country every year (Appleyard, 2001; Golini et al., 1991; Maltoni, 2003; Morozzo Della Rocca, 1997).

2.3.1. Immigration Policy: The Italian Context

The beginning of a system of immigration control was developed only after 1919, particularly during the fascist period, with the establishment of a centralized alien bureau (1929), the collection of statistics on resident foreigners (1930), the establishment of a visa policy targeted to avoid the entry of politically subversive or "immoral" individuals (1930), and the introduction of a residence permit to be issued by the Home Office (1931). Even after the Italian Constitution in 1948, the control system established in the 1930s was left intact. In fact, the prevailing lack of interest towards immigration was because the country was more concerned with emigration than immigration (Finotelli & Sciortino, 2008; Gabaccia, 1998; Sciortino, 1999).

Immigration flows for economic reasons begun to acquire importance and increased significantly since the early 1980s, becoming a major political issue in the 1990s (Bozzini & Fella, 2008). At that time immigrants mainly had distinct characteristics: people from North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa illegally working as fishermen, carpenters, street vendors, and on the tomato harvest. There also were women from Eritrea, Somalia, and the Philippines; and

entrepreneurs from China, who were running restaurants, or cottage industries and employing fellow national (Ambrosini, 2001; Zincone & Caponio, 2007).

A few years later in 1989, dramatic events in southern Italian agricultural areas in Calabria, where a group of young right-wing youth murdered an African worker who had repaired into an empty building, with other immigrant workers, led to a second Immigration Act: Law 39/1990. This Act reconsidered immigration at the forefront of the political agenda, and re-conceptualized as an emergency issue, needed to confront and regulated. The new guiding principles were to give the immigrants living in Italy the opportunity to lead a decent life, and drastically reduce immigration flows (Zincone & Caponio, 2007). This Immigration Act also allocated funds to the construction of "initial reception centers" designed to provide illegal immigrants already present in Italy with temporary lodgings, while in search of more permanent accommodations. To address the immigration flows a *Flow Committee* was established to set the number of workers from non-EU countries legally permitted to enter Italy annually. Under this Act, 234,841 illegal immigrants were given normal resident status (Zincone & Caponio, 2007).

Researchers have described the early 1990s as years of emergency policy adoptions to face new flows of refugees fleeting collapsing Communist regimes as in the case of Albania, or civil wars, as in the case of Yugoslavia (1991-1995), and Somalia for whom the Italian government issued temporary stay permits for "humanitarian reasons." In 1995, the Italian government passed new laws and legalizations in order to attempt to regulate and regularize the affluence of

foreigners (Finotelli & Sciortino, 2008; Zincone & Caponio, 2007). These involved a number of *sanatoria* – amnesties that allowed illegal immigrants to become legal residents.

Legislative Decree no. 489/1995 allowed 248,501 illegal immigrants to be granted regular residency status, ensuring they received a fair treatment, while also introducing more severe measures against immigrant smuggling and trafficking. In 1998, a new systematic Immigration Act was issued, the Turco-Napolitano Act (after the then social Affairs interior Minister), which reinstated and reinforced the prevention of illegal entry, regulations of flows of foreign workers, promotion of interaction of immigrants holding a valid residence permit, and granted basic individual rights to illegal immigrants. A national fund was established towards regional and local authorities charged to identify priorities and support annual and multi-annual programs towards the integration of foreign citizen under a new Implementing Regulation (DPR, 1999) (Zincone & Caponio, 2007). Furthermore, a new Corrective Decree (Decree no. 380/1998) introduced another amnesty for undocumented immigrants, and allowed 220,000 illegal to stay in the country (Blangiardo & Tanturri, 2004).

The Bossi-Fini Act in 2002 (Statute no. 189/2002), linked residency permits to granted employment requirements, and aimed to combat illegal entry with more stringent measures. This act had two main purposes: first, it more strictly linked the permission of new residence permits to employment requirements, favoring temporary jobs, and discouraging permanent settlement, by abolishing

sponsorship, and reduction of the validity periods of the various residence permits. With this act, the number of legal years for applying for the permanent residency card was increased to six. Additionally, funds allocated for immigrant integration into local communities were reduced, with setting of social policy priorities left to the discretion of Regional Councils. Second this act introduced mandatory imprisonment of foreigners failing to comply with orders to leave the country after having being found without a legal residence permit, or an expired one, and immediate escort to the border following a judge endorsement, without the possibility of a hearing or defense (Zincone & Caponio, 2007).

However, these provisions were found unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court and were corrected by the government with a Corrective Decree, which was converted to Statute no. 271/2004. Despite the restrictions of the Bossi-Fini Act, a new amnesty was introduced, which allowed the regularization of over 634,000 illegal immigrants into Italy, almost equivalent to the number of immigrants legalized in the past four amnesties combined. Despite the attempts to diminish and reduce the flows of immigrants into the Italian territory, pro-immigrant "actors" have continued to put pressure on the government to overcome labor market deficiencies increasing the labor force. Meanwhile the immigrant population growth continued (Figure 2.2), reaching almost 7.5% of the total population (see Table 2.1) (Blangiardo, 2005; Blangiardo & Molina, 2006; Zincone, 2006; Zincone & Caponio, 2007).

Figure 2.2 Countries of origin of immigrant population, numbers in thousands, as of 2009 (Canali, 2009).

During the period between 2006 and 2008 and a brief shift in power by the center-left coalition, policies regarding integration of new minorities received higher priority again. A draft law was introduced to facilitate access to citizenship, introduce *ius soli* (the right to nationality or citizenship for anyone born in the territory of a state) for foreign children born in Italy, and envisage the right for regular immigrants to vote in administrative elections. However, this law was discarded when Berlusconi's right-wing coalition once again won the election in 2008 partly by promising to break down on crime and immigration. After a "security package" approved shortly after the elections, new measures to fight

illegal immigration and crime were introduced through *Law 94/2009*. This law criminalized illegal immigration, increased fees related to immigration (e.g. to obtain the residence permit), and made access to basic social services for legal migrants more difficult.

Table 2.1. Foreign Residents in Italy

Year	Number	%
2001*	1,334,889	
2002*	1,356,590	2.7
2003*	1,549,373	3.4
2004*	1,990,159	4.1
2005*	2,402,157	4.5
2006*	2,670,514	5.0
2007*	2,938,922	5.8
2008*	3,432,651	6.5
2009*	3,891,295	7.0
2010**	4,235,059	7.2
2013***	4,87,721	7.4

***Istat (2009), ** Eurispes (2010), *** Istat (2011)**

One of the last measures adopted by the Berlusconi government against illegal immigration was Law 94/2009, which included a pact signed with Gadhafi to

return migrants intercepted in international waters back to Libya. The policy temporarily worked in reducing the number of boat arrivals in Italy, which decreased from 36,000 illegal arrivals in 2008 to 4,300 in 2010. However, the more recent instability in North African countries reversed the downward trend. The severe measures introduced by Law 94/2009, have been criticized heavily by Italian human rights lobbyists and religious organizations (Bodo & Bodo, 2013).

During the period 2011-2013 the government by Mario Monti adopted a different position towards immigration and integration issues. A new Ministry for International Cooperation and Integration was created (in strict collaboration with and supervision of the Ministry of the Interior). In March 2012, an "integration agreement" originally provided for by *Leg. Decree 286/1998* was introduced to support a mutual commitment between the Italian State and newly arrived adult immigrants (from the age of 16 onwards), through language literacy, the knowledge of key civic principles and respect of the "Charter of Values, Rights and Integration." passed in 2007 (a set of non-binding guidelines for any immigrant wishing to apply for citizenship. During the last decade, with alternate positions towards immigration, a number of regional laws have been implemented. The most recent ones (Liguria's *Regional Law 7/2007*, Lazio's *Regional Law 10/2008*, Marche's *Regional Law 13/2009*, Tuscany's *Regional Law 29/2009*, Calabria's *Regional Law 18/2009* and *Puglia's Regional Law 32/2009*), clearly pronounce "intercultural education and communication" and the "safeguard of cultural identities" as a means for integration (Bodo & Bodo, 2013).

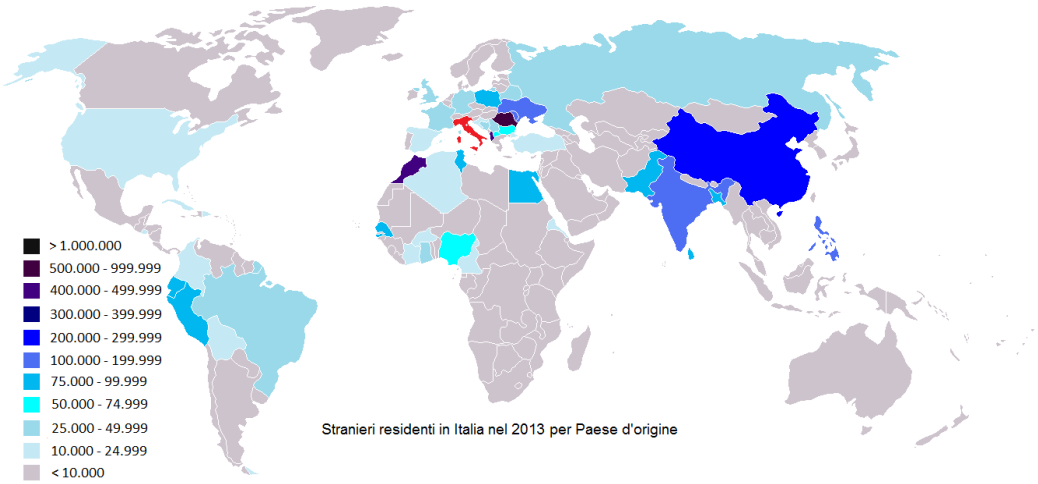

Figure 2.3 Foreign residents in Italy per country of origin as of 2013 (Wikipedia, 2013).

2.3.2. Motivations for Immigration

Today Italy is a country with a rich and diverse immigrant population (Figure 2.3). There are many reasons why immigrants choose Italy as a country to emigrate to. Firstly, the Italian peninsula is centrally located in the Mediterranean, with a border in the European Union on both the north and east, enabling immigration flows from North African and Middle Eastern countries. Secondly, the recent history of Italy as a country of emigration has made its rules less strict than other European countries, particularly in regards to clandestine immigration and therefore more vulnerable to it. Furthermore, the geographical characteristics of Italy make it difficult to effectively monitor its borders, which are constituted by easily accessible coastlines, more complex to patrol. Last but not least, various national and international criminal organizations have been involved in the labor

trades engaging immigrants (Dal Lago, 2004; Dal Lago & Quadrelli, 2003; Lupo, 2004; Pastore, Romani, & Sciortino, 1999).

As previously noted, the reasons behind the 1990s flows of immigrations, were mainly due to the collapse of the Eastern European Communists regimes, where collapses, civil wars and disintegration of acceptable living conditions pushed many citizens to flee their homelands (Kosic & Triandafyllidou, 2004; Morozzo Della Rocca, 1997; Piperno, 2002; Zincone & Caponio, 2007).

Thus, between 1992 and 2000, Italy experienced unprecedented immigration growth rates (Marchetti, 2010). Immigrants continuously arrived during the 1990s, primarily from Romania (with the end of the Ceausescu dictatorship), Albania, and the former Yugoslavia (during the civil war), The 2001 census revealed 1,334,000 foreigners, 1,175,000 of whom were born outside of Italy (Istat, 2002). From 1999 until 2004 the official annual entries for the immigrant worker population reached 200,000 each year (Caritas/Migrantes, 2005).

According to Caritas/Migrantes (2013), the foreign citizen legally residing in Italy were 2,670,000 in 2005, increasing to about 4,330,000 in 2008 (Caritas/Migrantes, 2009). During the year 2009 the number of foreign people increased by 343,764 units (+8.8%). According to the 2010 Caritas/Migrantes (2010a) Report and Italian Statistical Institute (Istat, 2010), at the beginning of 2010 the estimates were of 4,235,059 foreign residents or 7.0% of the total residents in 2009 (1 foreigner for every 12 Italian residents) while these estimates

reached 7.5% for 2010 (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010a; Istat, 2010). In the last decade, the increase of foreign residents has been of 3 millions, with about a million in the last two years during which time the foreign presences have tripled. However, the Caritas/Migrantes (2010a) Report estimated that the total amount of residents was significantly higher, including unregistered immigrants, at 4,919,000.

Figure 2.4. Google Earth map of Lampedusa and surrounding landmasses. **Top Right.** Aerial image of Lampedusa Island (Wikipedia, 2014). **Lower Right.** Map of Europe, GoogleMaps.

More recently, the 2011 NATO-supported war in Libya exacerbated the geopolitical instability in Tunisia and Egypt, the sub-Saharan region, and other parts of Africa and the numbers of migrants coming from those regions into Italy increased dramatically. The war forced migrants out of the war zone, people who

had reached Libya and had managed to make a living there. Thus, what it is now called the “”Emergency North Africa Odyssey” begun to affect all European countries, but in particular Italy via the Lampedusa Island (located between the coastal shores of Tunisia, Sicily and Malta) and called the “gateway to Europe”, (Figure 2.4) the first place within the European Community, or the European Fortress as it is often denominated (do to its increasingly borders control programs) where to seek refuge and asylum.

Although since 2010 migratory flows started to slow down for the first time in years, mainly due to the economic crisis, the immigrant workforce continues to play an important role in the Italian economy (Bodo & Bodo, 2013). By 2012, migrant workers employed in Italy reached about 2.5 million, representing one-tenth of the total employment rate (Caritas/Migrantes, 2012).

Most residency permits are for work reasons (62.6% in 2006), with family reunions also important (29.3%, or almost 100,0000 reunions annually), as well as smaller groups for religious and study reasons. The immigrant population is approximately evenly split male/female with women represent 49.9% of the foreign population. The immigrant population also is young, mostly between 11 and 44 years of age. In recent years, there have been notable increases, largely due to the entry of Eastern European countries into the EU allowing free migration between member states. The largest foreign community is Romanian with 796,477, or 20% of the total legal foreign resident population in 2008, estimated to have grown 20% to 997,000 as of January 1st 2011 (Table 2.2). Other

large national groups include Albanians (441,396, 11.3%), Moroccans (403,592, 10.4%, estimated 457,000 in 2011) Chinese (170,265, 4.4%; estimated 201,000), and Ukrainians (153,998, 4.0%, estimated 192,000) (Caritas/Migrantes, 2009; Istat, 2009, 2011; Waltson, 2010). Together, these five nationalities account for 50.7% of the immigrant population. Various national groups such as people from the Philippines, Peru, and Ecuador, reside in the big Italian cities. Others, like people coming from India, Morocco, and Albania mostly live in smaller cities and villages. These three national groups reside mostly in the northern and central regions of Italy, but the immigration phenomenon now extends to southern Italy as well. In the southern regions of Italy, big immigrant communities are found in specific areas, such as the Albanians in Puglia (south east), Ukrainians in Campania (south west), and Tunisians in Sicily (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010b).

2.3.3. Countries of Origin

The 1981 census revealed an elevated number of foreign residents (210,937) and foreigners (109,841). Among illegal immigrants, many of these people were of Italian descendants who were part of recurrent Italian migrations and had returned to their motherland (Gabaccia, 1998). It was not until 1984-89 that the first massive influx of foreigners took place, when 700,000-800,000 people entered the Italian borders with 300,000-350,000 people remaining in Italy without a residency permit (Maltoni, 2003). During this time, the first populations to choose Italy as a destination came from Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Cape Verde, El Salvador, and the Philippines Those people mainly were employed in domestic

and service jobs. Between 1980 and 1987, foreign presence in Italy increased noticeably with the new arrivals from the Asian continent, while, at the beginning of the 1990s, Moroccans and Tunisians represented the greatest foreign communities in Italy (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992).

Thus, between 1992 and 2000, Italy experienced unprecedented immigration growth rates (Marchetti, 2010). Continual arrivals of immigrants throughout the 1990s kept happening led by the collapse of the Eastern European Communists regimes (Kosic & Triandafyllidou, 2004; Morozzo Della Rocca, 1997; Piperno, 2002; Zincone & Caponio, 2007). The main countries were these flows originated were Romania (with the end of the Ceausescu dictatorship), Albania, and the former Yugoslavia (during the civil war), Poland, Moldova, and Ukraine with *ad hoc* provisions to help refugees from these countries with temporary stay permits "for humanitarian reasons (Zincone & Caponio, 2007). During this period, immigrant flows increased by an average of +11.4%. In 1999, Italy (101,200), Germany (204,880), and England (161,500) had the highest increase in foreign-born residents (Eurostat, 2010). The 2001 census revealed 1,334,000 foreigners, 1,175,000 of whom were born outside of Italy (Istat, 2002). From 1999 until 2004 the official annual entries for the immigrant worker population reached 200,000 each year (Caritas/Migrantes, 2005).

Table 2.2: Italian Foreign Resident Communities

	2005*	2010**	Growth (%) 2005-2010	2011***
Romania	248,849	887,763	256.7	997,000
Albania	316,659	466,684	47.4	491,000
Morocco	294,945	431,529	46.3	457,000
China	111,712	188,352	68.6	201,000
Ukraine	93,441	174,129	86.4	192,000
Philippines	82,625	123,584	49.6	131,000
India	54,288	105,863	95.0	118,000
Poland	50,794	105,608	107.9	111,000
Moldavia	37,971	105,600	178.1	123,000
Tunisia	78,230	103,678	32.5	107,000
Macedonia	58,460	92,847	58.8	98,000
Peru	53,378	87,747	64.4	95,000
Ecuador	53,220	85,940	61.5	91,000
Egypt	52,865	82,064	55.2	87,000

Sri Lanka	45,572	75,343	65.3	81,000
Serbia/Monte-negro-Kosovo	58,174	74,111	27.4	76,000
Bangladesh	37,785	73,965	95.8	82,000
Senegal	53,941	72,618	34.6	77,000
Pakistan	35,509	64,859	82.7	72,000
Nigeria	31,647	48,674	53.8	52,000

***(Istat, 2005), **(Istat, 2010), ***(Istat, 2011)**

By January 2004 the number of resident foreigners in Italy was 1,990,159 making Italy the fifth highest European country, after Germany, Spain, France, and the United Kingdom (Mondo Digitale, 2008). In 2004 the majority of immigrants came from within Europe (48.8%), a quarter from Africa (23.1%), followed by Asia (17.4%), America (10.6%) and Oceania (0.1%). Immigrants from Romania, Albania, Morocco, Poland, and Ukraine represented 45% of the immigrant populations with the Romanian group reaching 20% (Caritas/Migrantes, 2006, 2009, 2010a; Istat, 2007).

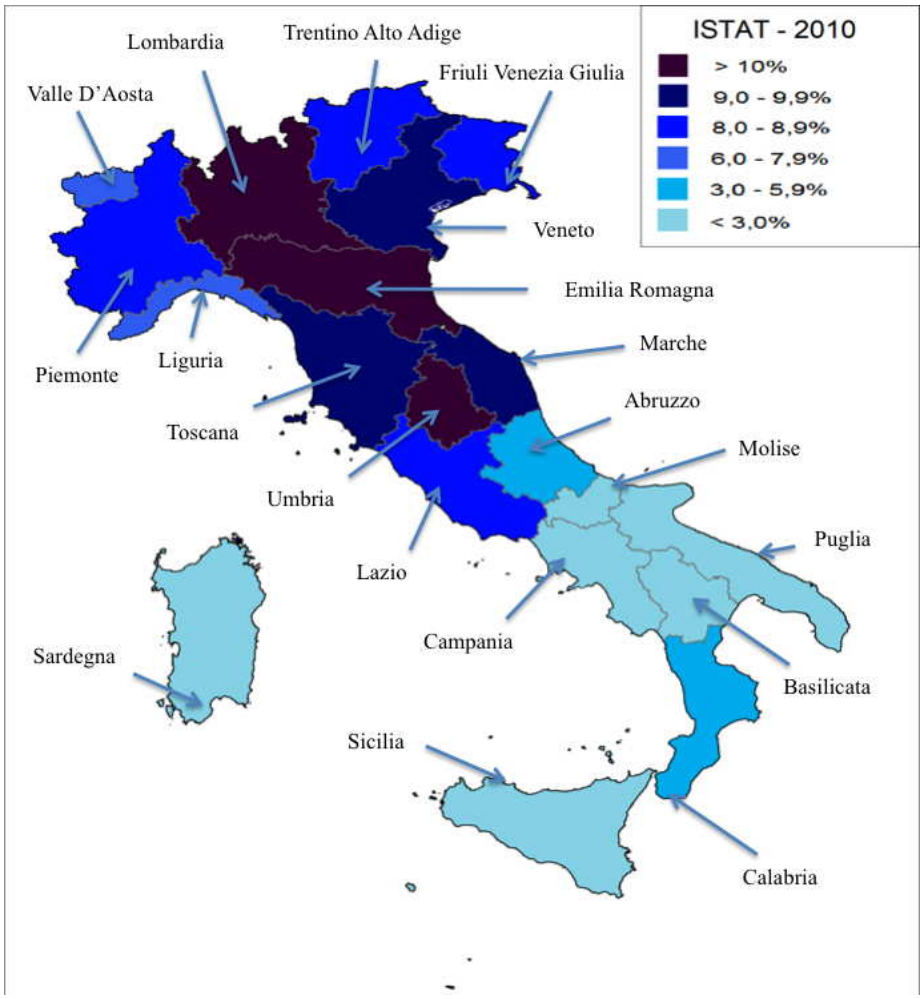

Figure 2.5 Foreign resident percent of regional populations (Istat, 2010).

2.4. Regions of Residency

The distribution of foreign residents throughout the Italian territory is highly varied (Figure 2.5). The northern regions, which have 44.5% of the total Italian population, host 61.2% of foreign residents. The region with the highest number of foreign residents is Lombardia (Figure 2.6), with 982,225 people, equal 22%, approximately a fifth of the total number of residents. The regions of central Italy

have a 25% presence of foreign residents, while the southern regions host only 18% of the total foreign residents. This is because the less-industrialized southern regions offer less employment possibilities.

A little more than one tenth of foreign residents (497,940, 11.8%) live in the Lazio region, where Rome, the capitol, is situated. Similar populations are found in Veneto (480,616, 11.3%), and Emilia-Romagna (461,321 10%), with Piemonte (377,241, 8.9%) and Toscana (338,746, 8.0%) follow. Rome and Milan are the main two cities with the highest number of foreign residents, respectively with 405,657, and 407,191 (Istat, 2011).

2.4.1 Immigrant Minors

Between 2004 and 2010, the number of foreign minors resident in Italy increased from 412,432 to 932,000 due to increasingly stable working situation for foreign immigrants, regularizations of their visa status, and government amnesties. As a result, many of these new residents were able to reunite with their families (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010b). This process of family reunification right for workers was introduced in 1995 in the Constitutional Court. Throughout Italy the location of minors also is diverse. In part this is because southern Italy and the Italian islands represent places of transit towards the center and the north. By January 1st 2011, foreign minors consisted of 932,675 (22% among the total population). In Lombardia and Veneto, it was 24.5% and 24.3%, respectively. In contrast, with

the lowest incidence in both Lazio and Campania, with 17.4%, and 17% in Sardegna (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010b)

2.4.2. Immigrant Minors in K-12

Throughout Italy, immigrant children attending schools increased notably since the years 1995-96 when there were just 50,000 students. By the school year 2004-2005 the foreign students were 361,576, 4.2% of the total school population, 90% of which in state based schools, and 9.5% in private schools. The students attending the primary school (elementary school) represented 40% of the school population. The students' nationalities with the highest number were Albania, Morocco, Romania, China, Ecuador, and the former Yugoslavia. The school year 2002-03 saw an increase of 50,999 foreign students compared to the previous year (MIUR, 2005).

The immigrant students attending schools was 673,592, or 8.0% of the total school population (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010a). By 2013, the total number of students in K-12 increased to 786,630 (Caritas/Migrantes, 2013). The regions and schools with the highest concentration of foreign students are those of central and northern Italy. Within the school system, primary schools (elementary) have the highest presence of foreign children, 7.7% of the total student population. Data from the Caritas/Migrantes (2010a) Report shows foreign children tend to fall behind the normal advancement for the same grades within the school system at three times higher rates than Italian children. The sudden increase of foreign students in only a few years has created cultural tensions and challenges for the

Italian school system, which has to develop strategies to overcome the many challenges of a multicultural school environment (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010a).

A little over one eighth of foreign residents (572,720, 13%) are born in Italy and are of second generation, mostly children and adolescents whom share, to some extent with other Italians, common language and socialization patterns. Over 200,000 foreign resident students, almost a third of the entire immigrant school population, attend kindergarten and elementary school, with the highest percentage (71.2%) in kindergarten. This represents about an eighth of the total K-12 population of approximately 7.3 million. The regions with the highest percentages of second-generation children are Lombardia (40.6%), Marche (37.5%), Veneto (37.1%), and Emilia Romagna (37%) (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010b).

2.4.3. Marche Region Immigration

The Marche Region (Figure 2.6) is situated in the central eastern part of the Italian peninsula, with immigration in the Marche Region is more recent than migration flows that affected the rest of the nation over the last thirty years. In fact, immigration was quite minor until the early 1990s (Pavolini, 2003). The favorable socio-economic conditions, with light manufacturing crafts, industries, as well as extensive agriculture, viticulture, and gastronomic products, offered many work opportunities (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010c). According to data reported to the 1981 census (Istat, 1981), foreign residents were 6,251, or 0.5% (Table 2.3)

of the entire region population, mostly coming from western Europe or North America (Moretti & Vicarelli, 1997; Pavolini, 2003).

Figure 2.6. Map of the Marche Region and its provinces (Solitalia, 2009).

By 2009 the Marche Region contained 155,200 foreigners, or 8.9% of the Marche population (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010c), the 5th highest immigrant population region in Italy. Between 2002 and 2009 there was a population increase of 157%. This was a relevant growth is we compare the numbers of foreign immigrants in 2002 when their number reached 54,000, or 3.7% of the total population, while in 2009 their presence reached 8.9% (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010c). Research studies on immigration in the Marche Region (Moretti & Vicarelli, 1997),show that until the mid-1990s immigration into Marche was low compared to national levels. Marche

immigration can be characterized into four phases since the 1970s. During the *first phase*, which spans from the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s, the majority of the foreign residents were either university students (mostly from Greece) or political refugees (from Iran). Other immigrant communities were Tunisians, working in the coastal fisheries, and tourist activities along the coast, as well as Moroccans working as itinerant door-to-door vendors.

Table 2.3. Foreign Residents in the Marche Region and in Italy.

Year	Marche (%)	Italy (%)
1981 *	0.5	
1991 **	0.7	1.1
1995 **	1.1	1.2
1998 **	1.7	1.7
2000 **	2.8	2.5
2002 **	3.7	2.7
2004 ***	5.7	4.1
2007 ***	6.0	5.8
2009 ***	8.0	7.0
2010 ***	10	7.2

*** Caritas/Migrantes (2010b), ** SIS Regione Marche (2011), *** Istat (2011).**

During the *second phase*, between the mid 1980s and 1990s, the presence of foreign residents reached 10,500 people, or 1.1% of the Marche population, in

part due to the first national amnesty laws that were passed in 1987 and 1990 (Pavolini, 2003). During this period, immigration increased with foreigners coming to the region in search of stable work. They found employment in the areas most relevant for the flourishing regional economy, specifically, small-scale furniture and footwear manufacturing. As they found stable work, the immigrants' families, who initially remained in their countries of origins, reunited, establishing long-term Marche residency. Moroccans were the biggest community, with other immigrant communities from Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. Moreover, during this immigration phase, immigration flows were slow and steady, characterized by diffusion from coastal areas towards the interior of the region (Moretti & Vicarelli, 1997; Pavolini, 2003).

During the *third phase*, beginning in 1993-1994, immigration rates increased, and often involved entire immigrant families reuniting and establishing long-term residency within Marche, due to continued favorable and stable working situation. Pavolini (2003) stated that until the early and mid-1990s the immigrant population density of the region was relatively lower than the national density. For example, in 1991 the Italian population density was 1.1% versus the Marche population density of 0.7% (Table 3). In 1995, the regional population density reached 1.1% while the national levels were 1.2%. By 1998 the region had reached the same 1.7% of the nation (Pavolini, 2003). However, with the beginning of the new millennium, and what Pavolini (2003) terms a *fourth phase,* the immigration density of the region not only reached the national levels, but also

surpassed the national statistics, as in 2000, with 2.8% versus the national levels of 2.5%, or as more recently in 2010 with 8.9% versus the national levels of 7.2%.

2.4.4. Foreign Resident Nationality in the Marche Region

In the region of Marche in 2010, 57.8% of foreign residents came from Europe (24.3% from the EU, 33.3% from East-Central Europe, 0.2% Others); 20.8% from Africa, 16% from Asia, and 5.4% from North and South America (Istat, 2010). Albanians represent the biggest foreign resident community with 19,000 people, or 15.8%. Romanians were the second biggest community with 14,000 people, or 15.4%, followed by Moroccans (10.4%), and Chinese (12%). Other important foreign communities within the region include Tunisians, Polish, Pakistani, and Indians are shown in Table 2.4.

2.4.5. Foreign Residents Distribution in the Marche Region

The foreign residents distribution within Marche is highly diverse across the 5 provincial areas (Figure 2.7). Increases in the province have been large, about 170% increases in the early 2000s. Today, the provincial area with the highest percentage of foreign residents over the local population is Macerata, where foreign residents represent 10.5%, followed by Pesaro-Urbino with 9.2%, Ancona with 8.6%, and Ascoli Piceno with 7.7% (Pavolini, 2003).

Table 2.4. Foreign Resident Nationalities in the Marche Region (Istat, 2010)

Nation	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Albania	10,939	13,352	15,316	16,952	18,183	19,701	21,531	22,246
Romania	2748	4728	6158	7494	8504	15,400	19,602	21,679
Morocco	8120	9354	10,416	11,034	11,635	12,597	1,4070	14,642
Macedonia	5472	7014	7547	8320	9409	9730	10,409	10,789
China	1762	2582	3710	4678	5499	6288	7279	8171
Tunisia	3081	3424	3872	4098	4361	4625	5067	5133
Ukraine	665	2245	2917	3179	3456	3851	4394	4778
Poland	1097	1843	2412	2950	3616	4503	4946	5098
Pakistan	1287	1671	1999	2226	2366	2651	3010	3573
Moldavia	272	1058	1328	1629	1868	2599	3286	4001
Senegal	1096	1464	1648	1707	1830	1923	2172	2406
Serbia / Montenegro	1315	952	1252	1360	1076	1360	---	---
Serbia	---	---	---	---	---	---	1275	994
Total	54,660	70,557	81,890	91,325	99,285	115,299	131,033	140,457

The four areas in the Marche Region with the highest foreign resident concentrations (Figure 2.7) are around Pesaro and towards the interior; (2) around Fabriano; (3) around Macerata and its interiors; (Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica), and the coastal areas and the interior between Macerata and Fermo (Figure. 2.7).

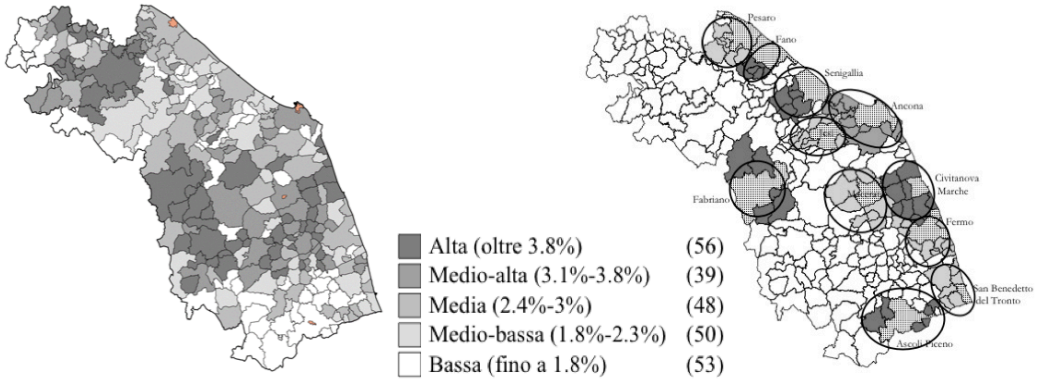

Figure 2.7 Left. Population density of foreign residents in the region of Marche (Pavolini, 2003). **Right.** Urban Systems in the Marche Region with higher foreign residents distribution (Calafati, 2009).

2.4.6 Marche Region Economic Growth Polarization

It is important to understand that today's cluster concentration of immigrants in relatively fewer areas within the Marche Region is due to the municipal transformation that the Marche Region sustained with the economic growth after World War II. Since the 1950s the Marche Region began a sustained process of industrialization, expansion, and intense manufacturing employment growth (212%). These led to profound change in the spatial organization of economic and social processes in the Marche Region and the formation of new cities, centered on 11 growth poles (Figure 2.8). This economic growth and expansion continued until the 1980s, and then consolidated during the subsequent two decades, 1981-2001 (Calafati, 2009).

Each growth pole, made up a set of contiguous municipalities arranged around pivot municipalities, became the largest municipalities in demographic terms. These 11 growth poles or inter-municipal urban systems (considered the new cities in the Marche Region) today comprise of 93 municipalities (Figure 2.7) where most of the regional population and employment is concentrated (Calafati, 2009).

The foreign residents distribution reflects the urban and industrial development distribution above mentioned in the urban poles or centers. Immigrants chose these areas for several factors. First, these zones offer greater job opportunities because of local industry and manufacturing related to furniture, shoes, and metalwork. Second, in contrast to other Italian regions where industrial districts are highly urbanized into large cities, the urbanization of the region of Marche is dispersed with most provincial cities of comparable small size. Third, immigrant communities tend to concentrate together, which in region of Marche are in smaller towns than in other regions (Pavolini, 2003). Many of these towns have depopulated over recent years, yet are close enough to allow commuting to work, and are more affordable because the town administration provide incentives to repopulate their centers, offer special benefits to their foreign renters.

2.4.7 Foreign Minors in the Marche Region and in its Schools

Over the last two decades, the children of foreign residents attending Marche Region schools has increased dramatically and have become an integral part of the school landscape. In 2005, the Marche Region had the fifth highest

concentration of foreign immigrants, after Lombardia, Emilia Romagna, Veneto, and Umbria. Children from foreign families born in the region reached 13.5% significantly higher than the national median of 9.4%, and represented 23.8% of the total foreign resident population (SIS Regione Marche, 2011).

According to the 2010 Caritas/Migrantes (2010c) Report, the Marche Region had 25,739 children attending schools, or 11% of the total regional school population. A total of 12.8% of the pupils attending primary school were permanent residents (higher than the national 8.7%), as were a similar percentage of junior high school students (12.9% versus 8.5% national). Lower, but higher than the national percentage (5.3%), is the percentage of students attending high school who have reached 8.5% (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010c). The highest percentage of immigrant students (14%) was concentrated in the provincial area of Macerata. However, some schools within the province were almost 30%. The provincial area of Ancona also had significant permanent resident students (12%), with some schools surpassing 20%. Ascoli Piceno and Fermo are similar (11%) with some schools having higher concentrations - Monte Urano, 23.4% (Caritas/Migrantes, 2010c).

2.5. Conclusion

Italy has experienced dramatic socio-cultural changes that have transformed it over the past century at the national and local levels. A very strong influence was from population movements, particularly immigration in recent years, which has

caused Italy to become multicultural in just two decades. These changes have profoundly influenced education in Italy, which is discussed in Chapter 3.

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CHAPTER III

METHODS FOR THE RESEARCH STUDY

3.1 Introduction

The present chapter presents an overview of the research methodologies, and is organized in two parts. First, I present the methodological frame, the theories encompassing this frame, and the procedures of doing the ethnographic study. The second part overviews the study and focuses on methodological tools used design, collect, and analyze the research data.

The analysis is presented in chapters 4 and 5 and covers the two parts of the study related to the textual-discourse analysis of policy documents and the teachers' classroom varying responses using their interview and close ethnographic observation.

Where a study spans languages, there is always a concern about translation – many concepts do not translate without important cultural context becoming lost in translation. Thus, all analyses of all texts and documents that originated in the Italian language were conducted in Italian. Translations provided herein, sought to maintain the spirit of the text, but did not underlie the analysis.

3.2 Methodological Framework

Ethnography was developed in anthropology and is used in a range of other fields including sociology and educational research. Ethnography is an approach to the study of people in everyday life with particular attention to culture, such as how people make meaning of their lives (Anderson-Levitt, 2006). It is a systematic approach to learn about the social and cultural lives of communities, institutions and other settings (Le Compte & Schensul, 2010).

This study employed ethnographic methods of data collection and analysis to examine teachers' perspectives on their everyday practices, actions, and reactions to multicultural changes in classroom environments. Ethnographic research studies people in everyday settings, with regard to culture and how people within the culture make meaning of their lives, in their own time and space, as members of human groups (Green, Skukauskaite, & Baker, 2012, p. 309). By using the ethnographic research principles I extended my understanding of another way of life and of the construction of meaning from the native's point of view (Anderson-Levitt, 2006). This involves "*learning from people*" rather than "*studying people*" (Geertz, 1973). This makes visible the everyday practices of teachers and the effects of teaching in multicultural environments (Spradley, 1980).

The ethnographic research principles form a guiding *logic of inquiry* "*as the study of cultural practices; as entailing a contrastive perspective;* and *as*

entailing a holistic perspective" (Green, Dixon, & Zaharlick, 2003). These ethnographic perspectives provide cultural knowledge and help identify patterns and principles of practice. Furthermore, they inform the researcher of the teachers' "insider-emic" perspectives (Green et al., 2003). Furthermore ethnography is a *non-linear*, *recursive, iterative, and abductive* logic (reasoning process) through which ethnographers develop grounded explanations for social phenomena (Green et al., 2012, p. 310).

3.2.1. Study Procedures

Analysis of in-depth ethnographic interviews, field notes, photographs, written artifacts of the school and teachers' projects, guided me to a better understanding of the complexities of teachers' multifaceted experiences carried with intercultural educational practices. This study also incorporated the analysis of international and national statistical reports, as well as, national and local school policy documents, and mass media information. These diverse data were collected to gain a broader perspective of the many influences affecting teachers' social and personal realities, their constructions of meaning, and their teaching experiences.

3.3. Study Overview

The epistemological position guiding this study involves making claims about knowledge from a constructionist perspective, which entails understanding how meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they live in through socio-historical perspectives and interactions (Anderson-Levitt,

2006; Green et al., 2003; Heath, 1982). Thus, the "logic of inquiry" used for this study is defined as the process that determines the questions that may be asked, the methodological procedures that may be chosen and used, and the ways the findings can be reported and represented in the study of learning (Crotty, 1998).

The initial exploratory fieldwork involved a number of teachers in the region of Marche in 2003 following my interest in exploring intercultural education in the Italian school system from the teacher's point of view. This provided me with the point of view of the application of teaching methodologies, implementation of school policies, and local responses to increasing immigrant populations. However, after a preliminary analysis of the first interviews using ethnographic, discourse analysis approach (Gee & Green, 1998) my interest was captured by the teachers' stories and narratives of their personal experiences in teaching in classrooms that had become multicultural over very short time periods. Particularly interesting to me, as a foreign language teacher, were their experiences in how they mediated language and culture during literacy practices as part of bringing intercultural educational approaches into their pedagogy.

As a follow-up to the pilot study, a long-term study was conducted over the course of a number of years that explored teachers' perceptions of their experiences with intercultural education while working in growing multicultural school environments in small towns in central-eastern Italy. The initial study was

in 2003. It investigated how intercultural education was implemented, supported, and constrained in their daily practices.

Follow up interviews a few years later, further investigated teachers' perceptions of their work in multicultural environments. In particular, one of my interviewee acted as my "knowledgeable informant" and introduced to some of her newer colleagues who had years of experience teaching immigrant children. These interviews informed me on some of the pedagogical strategies these teachers used when working with several children of different ethnical and linguistic background. It also provided me with deeper insights of their perspectives of what supported and constrained their practices as teachers in multicultural environments in small provincial towns.

Finally, some further years later, the second part of this study further investigated the continuing changes in experiences and challenges, and the growth of one particular teacher in a fast evolving multicultural society. This allowed me to continue to learn about the teacher's experiences as well as what supported and constrained her teaching in a multicultural classroom environment.

3.3.1. Study and the Participants

This study focused on the central eastern Italian region of Le Marche, in specific county districts (provinces/ province) and urban areas within the region with high-density immigrant population. The teachers interviewed worked in schools located in areas where there were the highest concentrations of immigrant

families and consequently, immigrant children attending these schools. All the informant of my study worked in primary schools near the high-density immigrant population zones. That had been experiencing increasing inflows over the previous two decades. My interviewees worked in schools located in the afore mentioned county districts of Macerata, Fermo and Ascoli Piceno, specifically in the towns of Morrovalle (on the outskirts of Macerata), Civitanova Marche, Monte Urano, Monte Granaro, Montegiorgio, Monte San Pietrangeli, Fermo, Porto San Giorgio, San Benedetto, and Arquata del Tronto.

The first, pilot interviews were collected in December 2003, and consisted of four teachers and one social worker representing minorities for the Marche Region. All teachers had at least 10 years of teaching experience at the start of the study. Three teacher interviews were conducted in private settings, while one interview was in the school where the teacher/interviewee was working. A total of 14 teachers who were involved in intercultural education were interviewed.

The second interview set collected consisted of five teachers, all of them with at least 15 years of teaching experience, 10 of whom worked in schools with a high density of immigrants. These interviews were conducted in private settings because the school year had not begun,

The third set of interviews followed some of the teachers previously interviewed and were collected at two times, approximately two years apart (Appendix 1, Table A.1).

3.3.2. Access and Rapport

Access to the research participants did not present significant impediments. During the first data collection, I contacted the school principal of one of the school districts with the highest immigrant population in the Fermo area. He then directed me to potential interviewees. These were teachers who taught classes with high immigrant student populations (over 50%). Several teachers provided me referrals to other teachers in other school districts and other provinces of Marche that I then interviewed. I also contacted teachers I knew from my years at the university and from having participated at teacher professional development seminars.

For the second set of interviews, I contacted some of the teachers from my previous interview set for follow up interviews, but I found out that some had moved to schools with low or no foreign student population. Some had retired, while others had changed their teaching expertise. I did follow up interviews with 2 of the teachers, one of whom was my knowledgeable informant since the second set of interviews.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

As previously mentioned, diverse sources of data were used in this study. These included, interviews, fieldnotes, policy documents, and artifacts. The data were collected over the course of the study.

3.4.1 Qualitative Open-Ended Interviews

Guidelines regarding informed consent were followed, and all interviewees agreed to tape record the interviews. Aside from the policy documents collected, the primary data source for this study were in-depth semi-structured interviews lasting approximately an hour. The interview approach followed (Gee & Green, 1998) for a semistructured interview guide where an interview is treated as a conversation with structure and purpose; a semistructured interview that comprises a sequence of themes to be covered as well as proposed questions. Yet at the same time, the semistructured interview has an openness to changes of sequence and forms of questions in order to follow up the answers and stories told by the subjects (Kvale, 1996). This interview method allows keeping the research focus consistent while providing opportunities for following the interviewee's lead in considering relevant aspects of the topic.

Interview questions were carefully designed for this study. An example, short subset of interview questions is shown in Table 3.1. The full interview question list is presented in Appendix 1, Table A.1.

The topics for the interview questions were life histories and background, intercultural educational policies, and the teachers' application of these policies. The interview questions also incorporated the teaching realities in a multicultural classroom environment, and the teachers' methods in mediating language and culture. All the questions in the interview protocol were made with the intention

of providing information for these research topics. This method helps the researcher gather an understanding of the informant's daily world seen from his/her perspective, and to learn about the individual's opinions of the topic at hand (Kvale, 1996). To establish a good rapport with each informant, Kvale (1996) guidelines for the interviewer qualifications were followed (Table 3.2).

Table 3.1. Example Series of Questions from an Interview

What are the main teaching strategies used to implement intercultural policy? Can you explain further?
What kinds of activities do these include?
Ho do you find out about new resources? New information?
What are the pedagogical strategies and methodologies used to teach non-Italian students who do not know the language?

Table 3.2. Interviewer Qualification Guidelines, after Kvale (1996)

- Be knowledgeable about the subject
- Have a structured plan for the interview process
- Pose questions clearly and understandably
- Be gentle and sensitive to the interviewee
- Be open to what the interviewee has to say
- Remember, recall, and relate the interviewee's statements

Interaction with the research participants was initiated with a standardized open-ended interview approach combined with the use of a general interview guide. This allows the interviewer to begin the interview using a conversational style,

while collecting relevant research information for the research (Patton, 1990; Spradley, 1979). The standardized open-ended approach allowed questions to be carefully considered and arranged prior to the interview. Probing questions during the interview were used both to clarify and to request additional information in more details (Appendix 1, Table A.1, Question 1). The intention was to follow a systematically arranged set of questions in the interview guide while making sure all topics requiring meaningful in depth responses were covered. Additionally the combination of these two methods allowed the interviewer to have a greater flexibility in exploring and elucidating the area of interest. It also allowed the interviewee to express personal perspectives while interacting in the conversation (Patton, 1990).

In framing the semistructured interview, I drew on ethnographic interview methods, starting with a broad question, which allows to get a wide view on the topic and to collect the "folk" terms (Patton, 1990). Interview questions followed a "funnel approach" as often used in ethnographic research (Spradley, 1979). These questions moved from the *grand tour* survey of key terms to *mini tour* probes into interviewee's knowledge (Appendix 1, Table A.1).

Moreover, opening questions can yield unexpected and valuable descriptions from the interviewees that provide insights into the main dimensions of the interview focus or foci (Werner & Schoepfle, 1987, p. 314). Thus, I asked the informant is she/he could talk about her/his background and experiences while

working as a teacher, followed by a question about her/his experiences with foreign students and proceeding to questions on intercultural education and the ways of her/his learning about intercultural education and the factors that supported such professional developments (Appendix A, Table A.1).

Interview questions were systematically arranged for each set of interviews over the course of this longitudinal study. All interviewees were asked the same basic questions about their background as teachers, their life experiences in school, their dealings with foreign students and intercultural education, and their teaching methods. They all granted me oral permission to tape record the interview, and I proceeded with posing the questions from my interview guide. As the interview proceeded, I noticed that some answers covered more than one question. Flexibility and spontaneous shifts between the questions were improvised to be sensitive to the interview's natural flow (Kvale, 1996).

Furthermore, many of the basic questions were followed up with more spontaneous questions and different types of probes used to gain more information when necessary, to increase the richness of the data obtained, as important topics emerged (Novak & Gowin, 1984). To obtain detailed description from the informant, *detail-oriented probes* were used, such as: "who" "where", "what", "when", and "how". Additionally *elaboration probes* where used to encourage the informant to keep talking, such as by nodding, confirming, giving verbal feedback or by asking directly to elaborate further on the topic.

Clarification probes were used when information gathered from the interview was in need of clarification, or more context (Patton, 1990; Schensul & D., 1999). As a result, to an important degree the interviewee 'owns' the interview (Patton, 1990). This is important because the interviewee is the knowledgeable informant, the expert in the world the interviewer is researching.

3.4.2 Field Notes

Ethnographic field notes were recorded during the interviews, describing interactional details occurred during the interview. All written notes were typed the same day as the interview when the information was still easily remembered. The process of writing fieldnotes aids the field researcher to understand her/his observations by enabling her/him to participate in newer ways; by listening with greater acuteness; by giving special attention to the indigenous meanings and concerns of the individuals in the study; by observing with a new lens; and by using the written fieldnotes as an essential grounding and resource for writing broader, more coherent accounts of other's lives and concerns (Gillham, 2000).

3.4.3. Policy Document Analysis

Analysis of policy documents allowed the creation of a behind-the-scene overview, which may been limited otherwise by a purely observational approach (Emmerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Document analysis provided more comprehensive information that may have been possible to gather directly during the interview process. Also, document analysis provided a deeper understanding

of both the historical and socio-demographic changes in the Italian socio-cultural landscape over the past twenty-five years.

Document analysis of historical information on immigration policies, and immigrant groups and ethnicities in Italy, as well as media, provided valuable information related to socio-cultural and historical changes. Document analysis of educational policies related to the integration of immigrant students within the Italian educational system provided important information on how intercultural educational policies originated, developed, and changed.

Documents of interest for this study also included test materials, students' assignments, and artifacts produced for intercultural projects completed in the schools where my interviewees worked. These documents and artifacts gave this study a more comprehensive representation of the efforts and work accomplished by teachers over the years.

3.5 Interview Data Analysis

In qualitative studies, data collection and analysis are iterative as the initial concepts and understandings develop and shift during the collection and analysis of the data leading to modifications (Patton, 1990). The preliminary process of gathering information as well as a first preliminary data analysis influenced several decisions about the data collection process.

The primary data was audio recordings of my interviews. The interview records were initially treated as records, acknowledging that the process of organization and transcription are amid the first analysis layers (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

To investigate the researchable questions, teachers' interviews were transcribed and analyzed in Italian (the same language of the interviews) and also translated into English. Interviews were analyzed in the original Italian via *discourse transcripts*[1]. Transcription is a representational process (Green, Franquiz, & Dixon, 1997) as well as elective and motivated by analytical goals (Green et al., 1997). Once transcribed, the interviews were organized in response to the questions. Two qualitative methodological approaches supported the data analysis for this study, discourse analysis and narrative analysis. These approaches are discussed below.

3.5.1. Discourse Analysis

Literature related to social sciences recognizes central functions to the role of language and spoken discourse, as well as discourse analysis as an analytical strategy amid many, where elements of social life are made explicit (Gumperz, 1992) as well as socially, and dialectically interconnected with and through the language people use when talking or writing (Cameron, 2001). By using

[1] The transcription of the oral utterances was represented in *message units* that, as defined by Green and Wallat (1979), represent a minimal unit of conversational meaning. The boundary of a message unit is linguistically defined by contextualization cues (Gumperz, 1992). The identification of semantic relationships existing among them enables the researcher to interpret the intended act of speakers (Green & Wallat, 1979).

discourse analysis, I aimed to gain a "holistic view" (Cameron, 2001). Specifically, I wanted to learn how the social realities surrounding the teachers, within my interviewees, affected their discourse, both constraining and not constraining their opinions and personal realities on pedagogical issues under consideration for this study. This is holistic because it provides me access to the pedagogical perspectives and how they relate and are influenced by practices in multicultural classroom environments. It also gives me access to teachers' subjective discursively constructed perceptions, concerns, reactions, and challenges towards intercultural educational practices with respect to the educational policies in place.

Discourse analysis is the study of language as used by people saying and doing things. Scholars interested in discourse analysis do not just refer to one specific theoretical and methodological approach, but also rather use various ones (Fairclough, 2003). There are many different "interdisciplinary" (Gee, 1999, 2011b) approaches to discourse analysis, as they evolved from the disciplines of linguistics, semiotics, anthropology, philosophy, and literary criticism, and which are interested in issues related to social, political, institutional ideological or literary texts and contexts (Lakoff, 2001, p. 200). Although many discourse analysis approaches are part of the discipline of linguistics and closely tied to the study of grammar and its structure, others concentrate on the study of ideas, issues, and themes expressed in the spoken and written language in many sociocultural settings (Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton, 2001; Starks & Trinidad,

2007). When people speak or write, they use language to give significance, to convey and support practices, roles, identities, relationships, as well as politics, connections, signs, and systems of knowledge (Gee, 2011a, 2011b).

The particular methodological approach I take to discourse analysis builds on sociolinguistic ethnography, grounded in the *ethnography of communication* (Gee, 1999, 2011b), and the works of educational researchers who have been involved in both discourse and literacy studies in educational settings (Gumperz, 1982; Gumperz & Hymes, 1972; Hanks, 2000; Hymes, 1974).

The use of discourse analysis within the ethnographic and sociolinguistic frameworks (Bloome, 1997; Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, 2005; Gee & Green, 1998; Green & Bloome, 2004; Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2006; Temple, 2001) helped to form the basis to identify what a social group's members in the classroom or other educational settings require knowing to produce, predict, interpret and evaluate within the setting or social group appropriately in order to participate (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2006). Supportive of what could be seen and understood through this approach was a series of questions that served as a guiding perspective: Who can say or do what? To or with whom? When? Where? For what purpose? Under what conditions? And with what outcomes? (Gee & Green, 1998, p. 26). These recognize the central role of discourse in mediating processes of meaning construction in and of the classroom (Collins & Green, 1992; Green et al., 2003; Green & Meyer,

1991), and social identities (Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 1992; Green & Dixon, 1993).

The particular forms of social practices are mediated by the nature of discourse practices (Fairclough, 1992b; Gee, 2000, 2011b), which positions the participants within a particular interactional context in a particular group. In the case of this study, not only the teacher's discourse choices inform us about the personal position in relation to the educational system, its policies and practices, the students and their families, but also tell us how the policies, the students etc. are positioned in relation to the teacher him/herself and others.

Research has shown that discourse in education provides opportunities for creating constructive, cohesive learning communities, in which differences are accommodated and bridged, and where people negotiate their identities and disciplinary knowledge together in culturally respectful and equitable ways through both social interaction and discourse (Giddens, 1979). Additionally, linguistic and interactional processes that mediate newcomers' participation in routine cultural practices (as part of language socialization), like language and literacy activities, facilitate the developing of their communicative performance and membership in discourse communities (Chang-Wells & Wells, 1992; Cummins, 1996; Duff, 2002). Therefore, knowledge and participation in educational activities are co-constructed and linked with issues of identity, agency, and difference (Duff, 2002; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986).

Various studies have investigated how the representation of both social relations and social identities are potentially constructed through particular discourse events (Castanheira, Green, Dixon, & Yeager, 2007; Duff, 2002; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Ochs, 1993) and choices. Thus, particular forms of social practices are mediated by the nature of discourse practices, which position the participants within a particular interactional context (Fairclough, 1992b; Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Ivanič, 1994).

Thus, the analytical method of discourse analysis of the teachers' interviews provided an understanding of how the lives of the teachers working with intercultural practices, in a multicultural context, in a time of socio-cultural change, came into being, became organized, and led to different roles and future potential relationships and identities through different interactional events at both collective, and individual levels. Not only do the teacher's discourse choices inform us about the teachers' position in relation to the student or group of students, they also provide insight into how the students are positioned in relation to the teacher and others (Fairclough, 1992b; Giddens, 1986).

The *Interactional Sociolinguistic* approach used sought aimed to capture how language is used by participants in educational activities in everyday classroom activities to achieve goals, to learn, and to participate in the everyday activities of the classrooms (Castanheira, Crawford, Dixon, & Green, 2001) while trying to understand

> "[…] the interpretive processes that underlie the individual's perception of what goes on in the classroom" - (Green, 1983, p. 174).

Although this study was not related directly to a specific classroom setting, it is tied to teacher classroom practices to investigate their liaison towards intercultural educational practices and all that entails.

Critical Discourse Analysis is another theoretical and methodological approach that analyzes language use in society and its relationship to social and cultural change drawing from theories and methods developed within sociolinguistics and language studies (Gumperz, 1982) and social and political thought (Halliday, 1985; Labov & Fanshel, 1977). Studies from these perspectives look at the social effects of different kinds of discourse in constructing or constituting different social entities and relationships (Foucault, 1972; Foucault, 1982; Giddens, 1986; Gramsci, 1971). Language, or better *linguaculture* (Fairclough, 1992b) is something more than just grammar and vocabulary, and thus cannot be separated from culture - it includes both the words and their meanings.

Under the guidance of post-structuralist theories of language, drawing from a socio-cultural perspective grounded in traditions like cultural anthropology (Agar, 1994) and interactional sociolinguistics (Geertz, 1973; Spradley, 1980) research has shown that both social relations and social identities are constructed through particular discourse events and choices (Gumperz, 1992; Gumperz, 1982; Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 1982). Furthermore peoples' language

choices reflect ideologies and the power relationships of their social and political contexts (Fairclough, 1992a, 1993, 2001; Ivanič, 1998). Therefore, critical discourse analysis as a methodological approach can uncover ideologies, power relationships, and resistance from conversations sociolinguistic conventions, which reflect the bigger societal macro-structures (Van Dijk, 1999).

Interactions between people often are complex, ambiguous, and indeterminate, involving issues of social identity, power relationships, and broad social and cultural processes (Fairclough, 1995). Every event allows people and provides them with opportunities to create new meanings, new social relationships while creating and re-creating the worlds in which they live, concepts connected to the concept of *Social Identity*, which has many meanings (Bloome et al., 2005). Traditionally, social identity refers to the social group to which an individual belongs, such as an ethnic group, gender, racial group, economic class, etc. Within a classroom, a student's social identity might also include membership in a particular group […]. *Social Identity* also has been used to describe more subtle, situated, and dynamic social relationships. Social identities are not viewed as fixed, predetermined, and stable (also described as *Social Positions*), but are viewed as being constructed through the interactions people have with each other (sometimes referred as *Social Positioning*) and a consequence of the evolving social structures of social institutions (Bloome et al., 2005).

3.5.2. Narrative Analysis

Another form of analysis I used on the interview data is narrative analysis (Bloome et al., 2005), given its focus on the way individuals present their accounts of themselves and view self narrations both as constructions and claims of identity (Gee, 1991; Riessman, 1993, 2002). Narrative research, rooted in different social and humanistic disciplines, from anthropology, sociology, philosophy, sociolinguistics, and education, has developed many forms, uses and a diversity of analytic practices (Linde, 1993). Narrative inquiry has been used for studies in communities, cross cultural studies, curriculum, ethnic studies, language learning, language teaching, multiculturalism, school reform, etc. (Chase, 2005; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Creswell, 2013; Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004). "Narrative" can be the phenomenon being studied (i.e. a narrative of illness) or can be the method used in a study, such as the procedures of analyzing stories told (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

Narrative analysis is a useful tool that seeks to address teachers' oral histories of their professional lives their discursively constructed perceptions, concerns, and reactions to challenges in literacy practices with immigrant children and their families while grounding an understanding of the situated living experiences of the teachers about intercultural educational.

People are story telling creatures who make sense of the world and the things that happen to them by constructing narratives to explain and interpret events,

perceptions and experiences by providing information about their social, cultural, and historical positioning to themselves and to others (Chase, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Hubert, 2010; Creswell, 2013). Teachers' stories are not new to research about the experiences and professional development of teachers. Over the past twenty years, a vital area of research that elicits and reports stories of teachers and teacher development has grown (Schiffrin, 1996). Researchers have come to recognize that teachers' stories offer a wealth of information about their individual identities and classroom experiences. This analysis builds on the notion that, by human nature, people lead storied lives and share their experiences and identities through stories about their lives (Carter, 1993; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Doyle & Carter, 2003; Elbaz, 1991) connected to the events in which they are told and to the events that they recount man (Bruner, 1987). As the works of Doyle and Carter (2003) and Delpit (1995) have shown that, while culturally sensitive teaching strategies may help students from diverse cultural groups, in such situations teachers find their personal values and beliefs challenged in the classroom on a daily basis. Therefore for this particular study this form of analysis informed how the teachers relate to them through their stories. Also teachers' narratives informed of how their "self," their issues of identities, their positions, and their positioning (De Fina, 2006).

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CHAPTER IV

NEW INTERCULTURAL EDUCATIONAL POLICY: TEACHER ADAPTATIONS TO POLICY MANDATES

> Teaching within an intercultural perspective means considering diversity as a paradigm of the school's own identity.
>
> *Insegnare in una prospettiva interculturale vuol dire piuttosto assumere la diversità come paradigma dell'identità stessa della scuola.*
>
> - Giuseppe Fioroni, Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione (MPI, 2007a, p. 4)

4.1. Introduction

In order to understand the meaning that teachers give to their practices and lived experiences in teaching in a multicultural context, it is necessary to understand the policy framework within which they teach. In this chapter, I provide an historical overview of the Italian educational system since Italy's unification in 1861 until contemporary Italy, which has become increasingly multicultural in the postwar period (discussed in chapter 2). In response to the changing socio-cultural dimension of the Italian society that reflected into the school system, diverse educational policies were developed. During the postwar period, changes in the Italian educational system drew upon both the American educational framework

and the European. These include multicultural and intercultural educational frameworks, which I discuss in this chapter. I then present the implementation of Italian intercultural educational policy over the years, which has been recurrently and inadequately funded, generally addresses changing conditions that occurred several years prior, and has suffered from policy shifts associated with changing administrations. Teacher pedagogical strategies to address these policy realities were studied through analysis of interviews of teachers with multi-cultural and multilingual classroom schools in the Marche Region. In this chapter, I also present and discuss themes across teacher practices and based on the interviews.

4.2. Development of the Modern Italian Educational System

4.2.1. Post Unification Italy

After Italian unification in 1861 government policy sought to create and promote a new Italian national identity out of the many fragmented regional cultures that had developed and diversified over the centuries along the peninsula (like in other European countries at the time). Often, people throughout Italy could not understand each others' languages (Lelli & Summa, 1994).

One of the first post-unification steps was unification of the school system. The national school system was based on the laws and reforms of the northern region called Piemonte, which contained Torino, where the unifying movements and revolution began. The school and its structure were influenced by the different political orientation of the national government and resulting legislation over

time. In fact there were five periods when the school system had different orientations, three before the second world war (Lombardi, 1986).

The first period was between 1859 and 1867 when the newly established Italian school system was made available for the poor. Predominant features were a conservative politics and the philosophical movement of *Spiritualism* where a moral education was taught accompanied by basic educational skills (Lombardi, 1986).

The second period, roughly from 1867 to 1923, was a time of *positivism* and democratic politics. During this period, education was seen as the main vehicle for discipline, submission, and instilling respect for traditional beliefs (Lombardi, 1986).

The third period was from 1923 to 1945, when the ideology and philosophy of Minister Giovanni Gentile called *idealism* guided the Italian school system. According to Gentile's theory, philosophy and religion were the only guides for the education of a good citizen (Lombardi, 1986). The same theories were strongly supported by the Church and the fascist government of Mussolini who wanted the Church as an ally. It is curious to note that although the different dialects and languages spoken throughout the Italian territory were not suppressed before, linguistic unity became an essential condition for political homogeneity with the fascist government (Catarsi, 1990).

4.2.2 Post-World War II Italy

The fourth period began after the end of World War II during the postwar years when Italy was very chaotic and poor. All aspects in the school system that were

possibly connected with fascism were expelled and the American pedagogical theories of Washburne were introduced (Lelli & Summa, 1994). These pedagogical theories included the ideas of self-government in school, socialization, and collaboration between students (Lelli & Summa, 1994).

During the first ten years of the postwar period, the Italian social landscape changed dramatically due to growing industrialization, which required more complex education. Basic instruction still ended at fifth grade but the government recognized a need for an extended basic schooling, shifting to an earlier national entrance age for children in the school system. This led to the creation in 1955 of a new elementary school curriculum, a unified junior high school in 1962, and obligatory kindergarten in 1968 (Catarsi, 1990).

Stronger emphasis was placed on the student's experiential world which was envisioned as "intuition, fantasy and emotion" (Catarsi, 1990, p. 155). Teachers were trained to follow and stimulate the natural growth of the children (according to Jean Paget's theories), without interfering with the developmental phases of the intelligence of the child. In this approach the child and his needs were at the center of the educational process, his *motivation*, during the learning process, and the *environmental setting* where the child learns and socializes with other children (Catarsi, 1990).

4.3. Multicultural / Intercultural Education

After the four periods described, intercultural education began to be embraced in Italy. The origins of intercultural education lie in multicultural education, which was developed in the United States.

> "Multicultural education is a philosophical concept built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human dignity as acknowledged in various documents, such as the U.S. Declaration of Independence, constitutions of South Africa and the United States, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations."

and,

> "Multicultural education advocates the belief that students and their life histories and experiences should be placed at the center of the teaching and learning process and that pedagogy should occur in a context that is familiar to students and that addresses multiple ways of thinking."
>
> – National Association for Multicultural Education (2014)

Because Italy was part of the European community, important influences also came and continue to propagate from other European Community members and Brussels. The European implementation of multicultural education is termed

intercultural education and has important distinctions. One definition of Intercultural education is revealed by a description of intercultural curriculum:

> Intercultural curriculum is about the acquisition of knowledge and understanding together with the skills and dispositions to enable all children/students to live and learn together and to reach their full potential socially, spiritually and intellectually. To be truly effective it must be delivered and implemented in a supportive environment that acknowledges, celebrates and respects diversity.
>
> – McGovern (2007).

In this chapter I review Multicultural Education from an American perspective, followed by the European development of Intercultural Education within a multicultural framework and Italian policy for Intercultural Education.

4.3.1 American Multicultural Education

In the United States, changing demographics gave rise to intense debates about how to provide high quality schooling for all students. Central to these debates were questions and concerns about the concept of multicultural education (Marshall, 2002). Historically, multicultural education grew out of the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Multicultural education developed as a vision of schooling and the educational institutional reforms based on democratic ideals of justice and equality for diverse racial, ethnic, and social class groups (Banks, 1994; Banks, 1995; Banks & Banks, 2004). As a result, multicultural education

aims to teach students to accept, understand, and appreciate culture, race, social class, religion and gender differences, and instill these values during their formative years (Manning & Baruth, 1996, p. 3).

Drawing on the view of multicultural education as a form of 'equal opportunity,' some have characterized multicultural education as requiring school reform, because some students are denied equal educational opportunities due to their racial, ethnic, social-class, or gender characteristics (Lee & Slaughter-Defoe, 1995; Nieto, 1995). From this perspective, multicultural education is a process that attempts to reform schools to provide all students an equal opportunity to learn and is a never ending process (Banks, 1995, p. 392).

Banks and Banks (2004) list five dimensions that define multicultural education:

1. Content integration
2. Knowledge construction
3. Prejudice reduction
4. Equity pedagogy
5. Empowering school culture

Content integration implies that teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate concepts, principles, generalizations, and theory in a particular subject area – i.e. social studies, language, music, science, etc. (Banks & Banks, 2004). Knowledge construction process refers to the extent to which teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the

implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, biases, and perspectives inform the knowledge they encounter (Banks, 1995).

Prejudice reduction refers to lessons and activities teachers should use to help students develop positive inter-group attitudes towards different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. This follows research that has shown that by the time children go to school they may have already formed perceptions and negative attitudes towards and misconceptions about different racial and ethnic groups (Banks & Banks, 2004). Equity pedagogy is based on the premise that all students can learn. In response, teachers modify their teaching to facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, gender, and social class groups using a critical pedagogical perspective (Banks & Banks, 2004).

Finally, empowering school culture implies the enabling of the school to adapt its social structure to promote gender, racial, and social-class equity. This involves not only teachers but all members of the school staff (Banks, 1995).

4.3.2. European Intercultural Education

In Europe, the concept of intercultural education began in the late 1970s (Gundara, 2001; Portera, 2008; Sleeter & Grant, 2007). Central and local authorities became interested in intercultural education as a way to "manage" the growing ethnic and cultural diversity (Gundara, 2001).

During the postwar period, European integration led to calls for increasing dialogue and cultural co-operation, particularly intercultural dialogue, recognized as political priority.

> "Intercultural dialogue is an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that lead to a deeper understanding of the other's global perception."
>
> – Council of Europe (2014)

An important component of furthering an intercultural dialogue that is open and respectful begins with education and the right to an education, a principle enshrined in the Amsterdam Treaty (European Parliament, 1999). This also implies a commitment from the European Union and its countries to ensure that the same rights to an education exist to immigrants as to those of children who are EU citizen. Today nearly all European education systems pay particular attention to the intercultural approach, defined as the sets of processes by which relations between different cultures are constructed in curricula (Council of Europe, 2014).

The aim of the intercultural approach is to learn about cultural diversity both with respect to international cultures and European cultures – both between and within European nations. Learning about cultural diversity enhances the values of respect, and tolerance among pupils, discouraging racism and xenophobia (Eurydice, 2004a).

Over the years, due to increased flows of immigrants as well as the reunion with their families, more and more European countries have called for changes and restructuring of their educational programs (Santos Rego & Nieto, 2000) and curricula (Portera, 2003). Some countries like Belgium (French Community), Estonia, Italy, Austria, Portugal, and Sweden, have their main focus on cultural diversity. Where the intercultural approach is part of pre-primary education, the main focus is respect and tolerance vis-à-vis cultural diversity (Portera, 2008).

Many European countries with relatively high immigration flows (such as France, Germany, Belgium, and The Netherlands) show a similar course of development with respect to intercultural education. In the period after the 1950s "economic miracle," teachers and politicians aimed to overcoming linguistic problems in schools. Developmental measures for learning the host countries languages were implemented. However, great importance was placed on giving children the opportunity to *preserve* their languages and cultures of origin, to allow their return to their native country at any time (Portera, 2008). Additionally, during this time, various projects were created that could be characterized as "multicultural." The main aim was to learn about the commonalities and differences on a linguistic, religious and cultural level.

In the 1970s, several countries created and implemented new subjects due to the growing numbers of foreign children in schools. Germany implemented the *Ausländerpädagogik* (pedagogy for foreigners) while France had *pédagogie d'accueil* (pedagogy of reception). Their main goal was the achievement of

specific, different measures of intervention for foreign children. Over time, however, this concept has been progressively criticized, due to the increasingly visible risk of a 'compensatory' and 'assimilatory' pedagogy. Theoretical considerations and practical intervention strategies with respect to intercultural pedagogy did not begin until the 1980s (Portera, 2008).

The Council of Europe adopted multiculturalism and multicultural pedagogy in the 1970s. The Conference of Ministers passed a first resolution focused on the entry age of migrant worker children into schools of European member states in 1970. According to Portera (2008) this resolution, no. 35, termed "double track strategy," was established to promote both the integration of these children within host country schools and also to preserve cultural and linguistic connections with the country of origin in order to facilitate potential school reintegration. Further conferences held in the 1970s (1973 in Bern, 1974 in Strasbourg, 1975 in Stockholm, 1976 in Oslo), similarly addressed concerns related to the education of migrant workers, as well as the possibility of maintaining one's connections with languages and countries of origin. In 1983, during a conference in Dublin, the European ministers for education unanimously passed a resolution on migrant children schooling that highlighted the importance of the 'intercultural dimension' of education. Thus, in 1984, a recommendation for teacher education was issued based on intercultural communication. Since the mid-1980s the Council of Europe has promoted education projects that are considered 'intercultural,' rather than multicultural or transcultural (Rey, 1986).

Since the 1990s, the Council of Europe has defined intercultural education in terms of 'reciprocity' (Portera, 2006). The intercultural perspective has both educational and a political dimensions. Thus interactions contribute to the development of co-operation and solidarity in opposition to relations of domination, conflict, rejection, and exclusion.

The Council of Europe stressed the concepts of dialogue, and intercultural understanding by establishing the project 'Education for democratic citizenship' in cooperation with various organizations. These included the European Union, United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO), the World Bank, and Soros Foundation, among others (Portera, 2008). The project's aim was to raise citizens' awareness of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society by activating existing networks and encouraging and facilitating the participation of young people in civil society (Birzéa, 2000). In response to the events of September 11, 2001, the European Ministers of Education decided to promote widespread 'intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. Since then, Council of Europe projects stress the importance of intercultural dialogue as a way to prevent conflicts, to build exchange and peace among different nations and different cultures (Portera, 2008).

In the compulsory educational curricula in Europe, the intercultural approach generally is reflected in skills, subjects, and values that are developed on a cross-curricular basis, such as by different components of the curriculum whenever they offer possibility for doing so. Many countries have identified specific subjects

through which the intercultural approach is or should be developed. Thus, each subject should specify the intercultural content for incorporation, teaching recommendation, and the skills, values, and objectives associated with the development of intercultural awareness and the respect of different viewpoints that should be enhanced among pupils (Eurydice, 2004b).

Often the intercultural approach is integrated into subjects of history, geography, foreign languages, religion, and the instruction language. In the German-speaking communities of Belgium, Scotland, and Poland, multi-lingualism is considered an aspect of intercultural education. In a third of European countries, the intercultural approach is included in lessons and topics regarding knowledge and understanding of society like civic education, sociology and ethics, and education in citizenship (Eurydice, 2004a).

Even as recently as 2004, little evaluation had been completed at a national level of how schools implement curricular instructions regarding intercultural education Eurydice (2004a). In some cases, such as Italy, Luxembourg, and The Netherlands, intercultural education is described in few policy documents and not even in the official curricula (Eurydice, 2009).

As of 2004, only five countries (the Czech Republic, Denmark, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Norway) had evaluated curricula for school implementation of intercultural education (Eurydice, 2004a). The Czech Republic offered specific monitoring on the practices of individual schools. Denmark

showed a great variation in the extent to which schools practices reflect cross-curricular guidelines for intercultural education. In The Netherlands, studies on intercultural educational practices had been conducted since the 1990s. These studies found that intercultural practices were not widespread due to lack of commitment from school administration, insufficient time, and other priorities (Fase, 1993). From the United Kingdom, schools that were strongly committed to an ethos that values cultural diversity and challenges racism used their funding more effectively. In Norway many teaching aids reflected multicultural sensitivity, such as showing diversity in children photos, although the material largely depicts the majority socio-cultural customs. Still, these teaching aids were utilized very little. Furthermore, the teacher guidance sections did not provide practical advice with respect to multicultural classrooms (Eurydice, 2004a).

This state of affairs shows that local schools within European national educational systems respond differently and often inadequately to immigrant children that arrive in their territories. There are a few study-surveys that show significant achievements in the implementation of intercultural educational practices. Still, there is a lack of demonstrable widespread positive outcomes in schools with daily intercultural educational practices integrated into their educational curricula (Eurydice, 2004b).

Debates on educational responses vis-à-vis ethnic pluralism have occurred across Europe. Whether it's called "Intercultural Education" in the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, France, or "Multicultural Education" in England, or "Interkulturelle

Erziehung" in Germany, the common thread is a strong emphasis on mutual understanding, recognition of the normality of diversity in all areas of human life, prevention of prejudice, discrimination, and racism, making possible the awareness towards a range of different ways of life, customs, and worldviews, as enriching. This is primarily the aim and the goal of education, which promotes equal opportunities for its pupils (Eurydice, 2004a, 2009).

In over half the European countries, the activities associated with intercultural educational practices are not just confined in the classroom, but also are integrated into other aspects of school life. This may include activities like festive events at school that celebrate cultural diversity, international exchanges of students, and projects involving members of the community outside of school. In Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Finland, the United Kingdom and Romania, initiatives are encouraged and supervised by central education authorities (Eurydice, 2004a).

4.3.3. Intercultural Education in Italy

Changing School demographics

Education in Italy has changed significantly in the last twenty years in response to the increasing complexity of society, which has become culturally stratified, and socially mobile (Alberti, 1990; Blezza, Cirignano, & E., 1994; Lelli & Summa, 1994; Piazza & Ianes, 1999). Changes in other countries have affected Italy, including the radical political, economical, and social changes in Central and

Eastern Europe and the war in the Balkans after the collapse of communism. These created new and significant immigration to Italy (Bonifazi, 1998; Collicelli & Salvatori, 1994). Although foreigners represent a relatively small fraction of the Italian population, immigrants have increased rapidly from low levels of 1.5-2% in the 1990s (Mancioti & Pugliese, 1998), to 3% in the early 2000s (Oberndörfer & Berndt, 2003) to 7.4% by 2013 (Caritas/Migrantes, 2013).

In tandem, the numbers of foreign students in Italian schools also have increased. In response, new educational approaches have been developed and implemented (Demetrio & Favaro, 1997; Favaro, 1992; Paoletti, 2000). The main waves of immigrant populations came from northern Africa (mainly Morocco) and Eastern Europe (mainly Albania and ex-Yugoslavia (MIUR, 2002). According to the Italian Public Education Bureau, the presence of foreign students in Italian schools comprised 200 different nationalities in 2013 (Borrini & Boi, 2013). Although these numbers may be perceived as small from the American perspective, their real significance could be understood only if one considers that this phenomenon has grown rapidly over the last decades.

> "The shift from multicultural to intercultural takes place through an ongoing negotiation of roles and places, through a discernment of values that associate, join, and direct the synthesis process."
>
> "Il passaggio dal multiculturale all'interculturale si sviluppa attraverso una rinegoziazione continua di ruoli, di spazi, attraverso

un discernimento dei valori che accomunano, legano orientano i processi di sintesi."

- Rizzi (1992, p. 41)

Development of Intercultural Education

Within the multicultural theoretical framework, the Italian educational system has developed theories and practice of intercultural education. Intercultural education stresses the dynamic exchange between cultures within a pedagogy that considers the *cultural other* the starting point for reflection and action (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992, 2002; Rizzi, 1992). Decrees have mandated that intercultural education should encompass learning Italian as a Second Language as well as learning about and valorizing cultural differences (MPI, 1989, 1990), and recognizing the fundamental right of foreign children to an education respecting their culture of origin. The Curriculum for the Elementary School (DPR, 1985) considered the concept of intercultural education as the foundation for the education to a "democratic interaction with other people" to prevent stereotypes and biases against other cultures, in a friendly and cooperative environment starting from the classroom setting. It is fundamental for the educational system and their teachers to reflect upon cultural differences existing in the classrooms and society throughout all processes of teaching and learning (Banks & Banks, 2004; Freire, 2000; Nieto, 1992). Thus, educators should approach education as a reciprocal process while creating a cohesive and equitable learning community (Marshall,

2002; Nieto, 1992). Intercultural education encompasses more than simple acknowledgment and acceptance of cultural differences. Intercultural education promotes the equal exchange between cultures as a dynamic interaction among all the participants in the educational process: teachers, Italian children, foreign children, and also foreign parents (Amatucci, 1994; Santerini, 1994).

In brief, the Curriculum for the Elementary School was produced with a vision of contemporary society, which has become a "complex society." Due to the fact that ideas and events change continually, the curriculum suggests the development of critical thinking starts in primary school (Lelli & Summa, 1994).

The preface of the 1985 Curriculum strongly recommended the prevention of stereotypes and biases against other cultures, and an atmosphere that enhances understanding and cooperation between different peoples. Intercultural education encompasses first of all initiatives of welcoming the new students to the new classroom environment. Secondly it encompasses the teaching of Italian as a second language, and last, but not least, activities of cultural and intercultural contacts among the culturally different students (both the Italian and the foreigners) through activities that let the students know the differences and similarities among the different cultures, as well as reflections and deconstruction of stereotypes, prejudices (Paoletti, 2000, p. 267).

Officially, Italy adopted intercultural education in schools in 1994, with the groundbreaking *Ministerial Memorandum 73/1994* (MPI, 1994) whose key

principles stressed the importance of intercultural education as the pedagogical answer to cultural pluralism, as an *integrating background* against which any education is possible in today's world, and not as a mere compensatory activity. Intercultural education must involve all students, and targets the development of relational skills and dialogic identities, rather than specific topics. Intercultural education implies a less Euro-centric approach to school subjects, and a safeguard of minority languages and cultures (Bettinelli, 2003).

In 1997, individual schools were entrusted by Law 59/97 (Repubblica Italiana, 1997) to revise the curriculum according to Memorandum guidelines. One year later, in 1998, Law 40/1998 (Repubblica Italiana, 1998) required schools to develop various intercultural education projects aimed at acknowledging linguistic and cultural differences as the basis for mutual respect, intercultural exchange and tolerance. Law 40/1998 was followed by a Presidential Decree (DPR 394/1999), which clarified rules and regulations for enrolling foreign student into schools (DPR, 1999). The Ministerial Memorandum 155/2001 (MPI, 2001b) aimed to support schools with high immigrant population rates and their personnel. Additionally in the same year the Ministerial Memorandum 160/2001 (MPI, 2001a) sought to create and implement Italian language courses for foreign citizens, both adults and children.

Democratic Co-Habitation Education Policy

In Italy, although intercultural education had been part of educational practices in regions of significant immigrant student population, in the early years of 2000, during the Italian Berlusconi administration, intercultural education was de-emphasized for several years. Changes in legislations and consequent school reforms were implemented throughout the Italian territory.

The 2003 school reform (MIUR, 2004; Repubblica Italiana, 2003) set aside formal mention of multicultural society. Instead, it substituted the concept of intercultural education with the concept of education to civic and democratic co-habitation in a school environment where diversity is mostly associated with disabilities.

Against a background of overwhelming growth of the foreign students population in the past decade, the Ministry of Education broke its silence by creating a Unit for the Integration of Foreign Students in 2004. At first, the 2006 school system reform overlooked any explicit reference to the role of formal education in a multicultural society, and cut funding for the essential professional resources such as "learning facilitators", "tutors" and cultural/linguistic mediators, due to financial constraints (Bettinelli, 2006).

Return to Intercultural Education Policy

With the change in governments again, there were significant policy changes (MIUR, 2006b) including in 2006 the establishment of an Immigration

Observatory by Ministerial Decree to monitor the immigrant population (MIUR, 2006a). In 2007, the Ministry of Education published guidelines on Italian intercultural education and the integration of foreign students (MPI, 2007a) that reinforced the key principle of the 1994 Memorandum (MPI, 1994) that intercultural education is the "integrating background" against which *any* education is possible in a world of increasing contact and interaction between culturally different practices. Accordingly, its main lines of action refer not only to "integration" but also to "intercultural interaction" (Bodo & Bodo, 2013).

The 2007 National Guidelines declare:

> "School has to be […] a place where the importance of values of belonging, identity and passion can be transmitted are recognizes with the importance of what one does. First of all the recognition of the respect of self and others with the recognition of everyone's dignity, without the exclusion of anyone."
>
> "La scuola deve essere [...] un luogo dove si riconosce significato a ciò che si fa e dov'è possibile la trasmissione dei valori che danno appartenenza, identità, passione. Primo fra tutti, il rispetto di sé e degli altri, generato dalla consapevolezza che esiste un valore intangibile: la dignità di tutti e di ciascuno, nessuno escluso."
>
> - MPI (2007b, pp. 5-6)

In 2012 the Ministry of Education published a revised New National Curricular Guidelines (MIUR, 2012) for the kindergarten (3-5 years), Primary School (6-10 years), and Secondary School Junior Level (11-14 years). The 2012 guidelines were based on the 2007 Guidelines (MPI, 2007b). These guidelines confirmed many procedures from the educational curricular guidelines of the previous two decades and added suggestions and feedback coming from teachers and experts across Italian schools and educational institutions. The 2012 Curricular Guidelines present a compendium of essential pedagogical, anthropological, and cultural recommendations whose aims are to achieve defined students' learning outcomes for each topic of study, across disciplines, within each order of school (kindergarten, primary and secondary junior level) and within the European educational framework. They expand on school responsibilities in helping students to achieve educational and curricular goals (MIUR, 2012).

The 2012 Curricular Guidelines stress the civic responsibility of the local authorities and the school communities (teachers, students, and families) to guide students in becoming responsible Italian citizen within the European Union and to promote knowledge, respect, and the valorization of individual differences within an intercultural educational framework:

> "A multiplicity of cultures and languages has entered the school. Intercultural education is already a model that allows all children and adolescents the reciprocal respect of everyone's identity. […] the school successfully takes up the universal challenge of opening

itself towards the world, while recognizing that everyone is equal though different."

"Una molteplicità di culture e di lingue sono entrate nella scuola. L'intercultura è già oggi il modello che permette a tutti i bambini e ragazzi il riconoscimento reciproco e dell'identità di ciascuno [...] La scuola raccoglie con successo una sfida universale, di apertura verso il mondo, di pratica dell'uguaglianza nel riconoscimento delle differenze."

- MIUR (2012, p. 4).

Within the curricular guidelines teachers and school principals are given autonomy of choices and procedures given the students and the school resources. School communities are encouraged to be constantly interactive and innovative in researching, applying, and modifying methodological strategies to achieve educational goals (MIUR, 2012).

4.4. Teacher Adaptations to Curricular Policy Mandates

4.4.1 Inadequate Resources

Intercultural education programs often are funded inadequately creating challenges for teachers to implement the diverse array of policy initiatives from the education ministry. Furthermore, teachers often receive poor or no training for the specific needs of foreign students (Paoletti, 2000). At the beginning of the

immigration flows, the Italian system did not provide systematic resources and programs specifically aimed at supporting immigrant students. Immigrant students were integrated into a school system that rarely provides the needed linguistic support (Demetrio & Favaro, 1997; Paoletti, 2000). Often resources available to the school district for teacher training depended on educational funds allocated by local authorities to the local school districts. However, by their resourcefulness and supportive school principals, they found ways to obtain or create methodological audiovisual materials to help teach the foreign children.

Teacher Personal History

The theme of inadequate resources was addressed in an interview with a teacher, Sandra, who was in her late thirties at the time. Sandra had worked for 7 years in the province of Fermo, where a high immigrant population density resided. Her school was 50% foreign students including from countries like Albania, Northern Africa, South America, Middle East, and the Indian subcontinent. Sandra's interview notes challenges with newly immigrated students whose linguistic and cultural background were unfamiliar, particularly given the inadequacy of available resources.

Excerpt 4.1 Inadequate Resources

> towards the mid nineties
> some extra communitarians began to arrive,
> in particular at the beginning some Ivorians,
> not many, but enough

to constituted a tight, very strong community,
[…]
I mean the principal help us as he could
such as he allowed us to have extended hours
if we needed to
or if we asked for educational material that could help us
we bought it
we created it
but it was all very limited
we did not have any help
at the beginning from the local town hall authorities,
for example facilitators, cultural mediators,
so we found ourselves very alone
to face this situation

verso metà degli anni novanta
hanno cominciato ad arrivare alcuni extra comunitari
in particolare inizialmente ivoriani
non in numero eccessivo
però abbastanza da costituire una colonia molto forte e molto unita
[…]
e inizialmente di fronte a questa situazione
noi ci siamo trovate molto sole
nel senso che il dirigente ci ha aiutato come poteva
nel senso che se ci serviva qualche ora in più ce la concedeva
Oppure del materiale che potava esserci utile
lo abbiamo acquistato
lo abbiamo creato
però in maniera molto limitata

Non abbiamo avuto alcun tipo di aiuto dalle autorità del comune
per esempio Facilitatori, Mediatori culturali
per cui ci siamo trovate proprio da sole
ad affrontare questa situazione
- [Maestra Sandra]

In the excerpt, Sandra says we "found ourselves very alone," in the context of inadequate resources. She does relate that the principal tried his best to help; however, the need was greater than his available resources. As a result, she drew upon her creativity to create and implement projects (discussed in Chapter 5) to reach out to students – i.e., developing practical intercultural classroom pedagogies. She uses the pronoun "we" to signify that many of the teachers in the school were in the same situation of inadequate resources and policy mandates for addressing increasing numbers of immigrant students. They were alone, together.

One approach demonstrated by Sandra and another teacher, Samuela, was to develop a collaborative project, the *Narrative Laboratory Project*, also discussed in Chapter 5. This project demonstrates creative adaptations motivated in part by the inadequate resources and in part by the inspiration of the teachers. In her interview, Sandra mentions that she "knocked on every door" to try to find resources and assets to help address and embrace her classroom's diversity.

Teacher Personal History

Natalia teaches English as a foreign language specialist in elementary schools in a school district in the Ascoli Piceno province, many with high foreign student

attendance. Natalia was in her mid thirties and had taught for about a decade. She shifted between classes, teaching up to one hundred students.

The feeling of alone-ness related by Sandra was based on experiences during the period when immigrant students were arriving in local school classrooms in the mid-1990s. Eventually, resources began to be allocated and distributed locally where they were needed, as told by Natalia in the interview excerpts below. Although teachers had more resources, the resources initially were poorly matched to meet government mandates–though any resources were very welcome.

Excerpt 4.2 Resources Mismatch

> At present until this year
> there were some operatives
> procured by the local municipal authorities
> whose function was that one of linguistic facilitators,
> but they did not have any specific training in that sense.
> say they were a help in collaboration with teachers
>
> Attualmente, fino a quest'anno
> c'erano degli operatori
> messi a disposizione dal comune
> che svolgevano la funzione di facilitatori linguistici,
> ma non avevano nessuna preparazione specifica in questo senso.
> diciamo che era così
> un aiuto che avveniva
> in collaborazione con gli insegnanti…
> - [Maestra Natalia]

In the excerpt, Natalia says that the school provided "linguistic facilitators, but they did not have any specific training." As a result, these facilitators were unable to help Natalia with the linguistic diversity confronting her (and other teachers) in the classrooms. This largely was because the facilitators were not trained in the non-European languages that the region's immigrant children (Chapter 2) the spoke in the classroom. Clearly to be useful, teachers require the linguistic facilitators to have the knowledge of their students' languages. Although the "resources" provided were not those needed, they were welcomed and used in "collaboration with teachers;" however, this required the teachers to contribute to linguistic mediation.

Although the Italian Ministry of Education directed teachers to implement a curriculum including intercultural education (MPI, 2007b), the resources provided were to support linguistic mediation, which is a small part of intercultural education. Despite the lack of appropriate resources, teachers developed strategies to promote intercultural education. Thus, although the initial resources attempted to address the critical need of communication, they left teachers "alone" in terms of resources to meet intercultural education goals.

Eventually, appropriate resources became available that actually helped teachers develop and implement the curriculum to further the goals of intercultural

education. In the excerpt below, Natalia describes taking advantage of one of these resources, a regional course.

Excerpt 4.3 Regional Course Resources

This year I signed up for the in service training across disciplines
It started in February
it was a regional course called
“Regional Course: “Beyond Ethnocentrism”
This course taught us to
recognize ethnocentric attitudes and racist
discourses
in the textbooks
in the discourses of adults, as well as children
and to face them adequately following the educational and
intercultural policies.

Quest’anno mi sono inserita nel corso di aggiornamento per le
discipline
E’ cominciato a febbraio
e’ un corso regionale che si chiama
Corso regionale “Oltre L’etnocentrismo”
Questo corso ci ha insegnato a
riconoscere atteggiamenti e discorsi
etnocentrici
e razzisti nei libri di testo,
nei discorsi degli adulti
come quelli dei bambini
e ad affrontarli in modo adeguato
e conforme alle direttive educative e interculturali

> poi con le insegnanti della Scuola abbiamo fatto questo lavoro di decostruzione con I libri che avevamo adottato per le classi.
>
> -[Maestra Natalia]

Natalia was excited to attend the regional course, "Beyond Ethnocentrism," which, she notes, was designed to help her recognize ethnocentric and racist discourse in textbooks, and in the attitudes and the discourses of both adults and children in and out of school. The course taught how to address racism within the intercultural pedagogical policy framework. Most of the teachers interviewed in my study also participated in this regional course.

The positive impact was revealed in Sandra's interview where she discussed her *Student's Narrative Project*, presented in Chapter 5. Specifically, she notes that most of her students brought disparaging comments about immigrants and immigration to class, which they had heard from outside the classroom, from adults in their families (parents, grandparents, etc.). During the *Student's Narrative Project*, Sandra's students expressed great admiration for the courage shown by their fellow Albanian student. After the project, Sandra recalls that her students' attitude and comments towards immigrants changed entirely.

4.4.2 Government Policy Changes

In Italy, the policy direction from the ministry of education is subject to political whim, leading to changes in policy when governments fall and are replaced by other political parties. As a result, Italian educational policy has shown a lack of

continuity during the ongoing educational system restructuring, which can be described as erratic funding from top levels. Nevertheless, the Italian Ministry of Education is responsible for ensuring consistency with policy directives at the European Community level, leading to self-contradictory policies and objectives in some cases. Often, teachers negatively viewed these policy changes.

As an example, teacher Natalia relates a story about the *Students Proficiencies Portfolio*. The portfolio was a sort of progress report that teacher had to write for each student in his/her classroom regarding activities, students works, evaluating student progress as well as teaching successes and challenges.

Excerpt 4.4 Changing Policies

> It started because a law mandated it in the schools
> And then when there was a change in the government the law that mandated it changed as well
> And then
> Given the fact that teachers could choose
> They chose not to do it
> Because it required a lot of effort
> And most did not do it
>
> è partito perché una legge lo prevedeva nelle scuole,
> e poi quando c'e' stato un cambio di legge all'interno del governo,
> la legge è cambiata
> e quindi
> visto che le insegnanti potevano scegliere,
> hanno scelto di non farlo.
> - [Maestra Natalia]

In the interview Natalia says that the Portfolio went awry as soon as a new minister of education was seated and declared that the *Student Proficiencies Portfolio* was optional for each teacher. As a result, Natalia recalls that the majority of her colleagues decided not to use this evaluation tool. Natalia proposes two possible reasons regarding this "mutiny" on the part of her colleagues. First, the *Student Proficiencies Portfolio* was very time demanding for the teachers, given their time constrains and the number of students in their classrooms. Second, the *Student Proficiencies Portfolio* can misrepresent student proficiencies, because teachers tend to showcase the best of his/her students' works while diminishing difficulties on the part of the students. This is because student-learning difficulties often are viewed as a mirror of teacher performance, implying poor classroom practice. Thus, although the portfolios were meant as an evaluation tool, teachers did not feel safe in participating honestly.

4.5 Discussion and Conclusion

In today's increasing multicultural societies across Europe and within each European country, educators are at the threshold between state and curriculum mandates, education authorities, and the students with their families they work and live on a daily basis. Therefore, the challenges of the intercultural education approach lies in the ability of the educational systems to offer support and training to the school communities and their educators.

Over the last decades, Italy has undergone dramatic shifts in regional and national demographics due to flows of immigrants transit with accompanying shifts in the classroom demographics (Chapter 2). As is often the case, educational policies were developed after the fact, mandating solutions to conditions that reflected several years prior and were no longer current. Although policies and curricula were created to address intercultural issues, the success of these policies depends upon implementation by educators and the community, and acceptance by students, their families, and the community. This placed a heavy burden on teachers educated and trained to teach mainly monoculture classes, who were ill equipped to face the rapid demographic and classroom cultural shifts occurring in many classrooms. Furthermore, ministry mandates were expansive, while legislative resources allocation was miserly, leaving chronic underfunding and a mismatch of needs and resources.

Fund allocation can vary greatly between towns because immigrants tend to live in population clusters, and because within these clusters there are many different cultural backgrounds and countries of origins. This creates challenges and difficulties for small town suburban schools, where teachers and school districts supported by the local authorities generally are unprepared to face rapid development of multicultural classroom environments. These problems were particularly chronic in small cities in the Marche Region where many immigrants settled and resource "pooling" was not possible to the extent it would be in a larger city.

Moreover, implementation of the intercultural principles in the school curricula has been inconsistent due to the uneven territorial distribution of migrant communities across Italy. As a result, the multicultural demographics develop at different rates and with different nationalities in different schools across Italy.

In reality, relatively few schools met the challenge of implementing an intercultural education curriculum due to lack of funds for local administrations (Bodo & Bodo, 2013). In this environment, successful implementation of intercultural educational curriculum depended on teacher initiative and engagement, that Sandra "knocked on every door" to find support and resources to create projects, such as for the *Narrative Language Project*. Despite the effort to find support, resources were insufficient, and creative teachers used their own resourcefulness through collaborations with the classroom communities and other teachers in the school to develop intercultural educational projects.

As noted, intercultural educational policies were not forward looking, but reactive, mandating solutions to conditions of several years prior. As Natalia notes in her interview, although linguistic facilitators were provided, they did not have the knowledge of the actual languages in the classroom of teachers like her. These and other resources were needed urgently when large immigrant populations began attending local classrooms, and finally became available to support teachers after a number of years. It is important to note that the resources were developed using both national and local support, requiring coordination between these levels in future budget priorities. Needless to say, changing political

administrations continually alters budget priorities and hence planning at national and local levels, hindering coordination.

To enable teachers to create intercultural educational classrooms, the general curriculum often is integrated with specific projects and activities designed to value particular aspects of different ethnicities (Crotta, 2000). Support is provided by the local territorial agencies to identify specific needs of immigrant students, and to find ways to assist them. As a result, regional Institutes for the Educational Research and the Experimentation (IRRSAE) have played an important role in defining educational and didactical strategies, in on-going teacher training, and in providing assistance for educational projects (Crotta, 2000).

The National School Curriculum recommends teaching in the students' native language and culture with the curricular subjects (MIUR, 2012; Repubblica Italiana, 1990)]. Unfortunately, due to the great linguistic diversity in schools it often is almost impossible to provide special classes on the language of origin. In Italy, the availability of bilingual education resources is largely left to the initiative of the schools and local authorities (Eurydice, 2009).

Since the introduction of intercultural education concepts, educational mandates in Italy largely remained consistent across many different administrations until the early 2000 when the Berlusconi administration took power. The Berlusconi administration substituted the concept of intercultural education with the concept of education to civic and democratic co-habitation in a school environment where

diversity was mostly associated with disabilities. This policy shift away from European guidelines was followed in 2006 by a return to an emphasis on intercultural education with the new administration. From the perspective of teachers in schools, these policy shifts were confusing and resisted. Moreover, the Berlusconi administration provided too few resources to address the needs of the growing immigrant student population, a situation where meeting mandates with inadequate resources left teachers feeling disheartened. The interviews reveal how pedagogy can shift with political fortunes, creating school policy incoherency (Bodo & Bodo, 2013).

Faced with this reality, teachers adapted to the rapid changes in their classrooms by drawing on their own creativity to develop pedagogical tools to meet their student's learning needs. Based on my analysis of my ethnographic fieldwork of teacher interviews, themes were identified from the interviews and are discussed in Chapter 5. These pedagogical themes from the interviews are discussed with the policy themes from Chapter 4 in Chapter 6.

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CHAPTER V

EDUCATIONAL AND CURRICULAR RESPONSES TO A MULTICULTURAL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

> Diversity is a valuable resource
> It is important for harmonious cohabitation,
> which requires seeing the beauty in diversity
> as it manifests in the diversities and similarities.
> - *interview with a teacher*

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I present my analysis of the interviews and teachers' pedagogical practices in response to the changing policy and demography in the regions and the schools. As I discussed in chapter 2 and 4, in part due to European community mandates, and in part as a response to the increasing diversity in the Italian classrooms, the Italian Education Ministry developed a range of evolving policy directives to address immigrant student needs. Based on these policies and the reality of rapidly changing classroom environments due to increasing immigrant student populations, teachers responded through changes in pedagogy and curricula to meet their student's diverse needs.

These teacher pedagogical strategies were studied through analysis of interviews of teachers with multi-cultural and multilingual classroom schools in the Marche Region. In this chapter, I present and discuss analysis on a range of teacher practices and themes based on the interviews.

My analysis investigates telling cases regarding:

1. Themes developed from the teachers' interviews.
2. Teachers' pedagogical practices using narratives, and cooperative learning groups.
3. Teacher's pedagogical strategies on linguistic valorization.

5.1.1. Teachers' Intercultural Educational Approaches from Interviews

The Italian educational system stresses a dynamic exchange between cultures within a pedagogy that considers the cultural other as the starting point for reflection and action. This promotes the equal exchange between cultures as a dynamic interaction among all the participants in the education process (Allegra, 1993; Demetrio & Favaro, 1992; Fiorucci, 2008; Giusti, 2005; Perotti, 1994).

Within the interviews, I identified a number of themes related to teacher pedagogical practices reaching out to the cultural other (Table 5.1). Specifically, to involve all students in the classrooms, teachers' methods include, to name a few, the use of stories, songs, and cultural traditions, each of which is presented and discussed separately below.

During class activities teachers use and experiment with methods that aim to reduce students' ethnocentric views and support their learning by broadening their cultural perceptions on both cognitive and anthropological levels. This implies comparing and contrasting one's own culture with those of the migrant students' and their families who become part of their classroom communities. When their school lacks sufficient resources, the teachers interviewed became both the linguistic and cultural mediators between the foreign children, their parents, and the class and school community, discussed in Chapter 4.

Among the cross-teacher themes identified (Table 5.1) several main pedagogical approaches were recognized where the principles of intercultural education were woven into their practices. The teachers use class activities to help students recognize the value of other cultures, to reduce students' ethnocentric views and to build a more democratic classroom environment.

Table 5.1 Cross-Teacher Themes

Themes	Approaches	Motivation/ Why
Interacting with the Cultural Other	Dealing with their arrival in the class community	Ministerial guidelines for doing intercultural education
	Dealing with their departure	
	Settling in the school community	It's a local school/community effort
	Settling in the local community	It's a personal effort related to the teacher's background
	Communicating with families	
	Informing about immigration causes	It's a way to make the Italian students aware of their classmates
	Helping students whose families experience economical difficulties	
	Researching the homeland	It's a way to help the foreign student with loss of the home country and for the Italian to be aware of their ethnocentric realities
	Comparing living here v living there	
	Comparing the school communities of here v there	
	Discussing of returning to the homeland to help	To raise awareness in the larger school community
	Dealings with feelings of displacement	
	Dealing with the school culture versus the immigrant family	To enhance a democratic perspective of the many background of the citizen of

	culture	contemporary Italy
	Creating School Projects with families involvement and participation	
	Dealing with misconceptions of foreignness if the "foreign" students are born in Italy	
Mediating the Language	Through linguistic evaluation questionnaires	National Curricular Guidelines
	Through Foreign Language Methods (Total Physical Response, TPR),	
	Through Italian L2 methods	Universality of music
	Through linguistic mediators from the immigrant community	
	Through songs across languages	Universality of stories told or represented as a way to express emotions and feelings mediated by stories
	Through fables and fairy tales across languages	
	Through dramatization and theatrical representation	As a way to show that some games are common across cultures
	Through poetry	
	Though games	
Mediating the Culture	Inviting immigrant parents to tell stories from their homeland	Stories share similarities and differences across borders as well as people
	Inviting students to tell the story of their journey	
	Researching the immigrant students homeland	Universality of stories told or represented as a way to express emotions and feelings mediated by stories
	Inviting the students to compare and contrast aspects of the foreign students culture with	

	aspects of the Italian students culture	
	Researching folk tales across cultures	
	Comparing and contrasting fairy tales	
	Mediating concerns with immigrant families	
	Mediating concerns with Italian families	
Being Inter-culturally Aware	Originates from teachers' agency	Being a teacher who traveled and lived in other countries make them empathic and want to reach the children and their families
	Originates from their personal histories	
	Comes from love and learning of foreign languages, and cultures	Through clashes and tensions "rich points"
	Comes from their lived experiences in foreign countries	
	Is a kind of literacy learning	
	is a kind of struggle	

5.2.Teachers Pedagogical Practice on Students' Narratives

In the growing number of multicultural classrooms in Italy, life stories (Demetrio, 2002) and narrative laboratories (Brunet, 2009; Giusti, 2004) now are considered important pedagogical tools in intercultural education practices. In narrative laboratories, stories represent a starting point for cultural encounters (Demetrio & Favaro, 2002) where students, mediated by educators, can learn and discuss about the cultural others in ways that enhance and value different ways of being and doing things (Brunet, 2009).

The role and use of stories in language arts and literacy education long has been recognized as a central instrument for organizing people's own experiences into tales of important happenings (Bruner, 1990; Heath, 1982; Michaels, 2006). With the increasing sociocultural diversity of classrooms, stories have been used to recognize children's cultures, their diverse experiences, as well as their connections to their families and their friends. Stories have interrelated, evaluative and social functions. They help learners make sense of the world (Egan, 1992). By sharing a story the storyteller cast her/himself as an expert, a social actor who is entering the ongoing classroom dialogue (Dyson & Genishi, 1994).

In the present study, the use of narratives in classroom activities to relate a personal journey of immigration is shown as a powerful tool to allow the listeners to be participant in the storyteller experiences (Demetrio & Favaro, 2002; Nanni & Curci, 2005). When students listen to someone narrating her/his story of the travel towards the final destination, they compare and contrast their personal background and experiences to those of the traveler/storyteller, who, transforms from a foreign, abstract, and dangerous entity to a group member (Nanni & Curci, 2009).

Teacher Personal History

Understanding the enthusiasm for the *Student's Narrative Project* and further projects arises from Sandra personal history and classroom demographics in the school where she taught. Sandra was in her late thirties and had worked for 7 years in a school located in the heart of the footwear district in the province of Fermo. This area had a high immigrant population density–for example, the school where Sandra taught was 50% foreign students. The foreign students' families' countries of origin varied from Albania,

Northern Africa, South America, Middle East, to the Indian subcontinent. She vividly recalled her years working with the foreign students who mostly were of Albanian, Indian, and Pakistani origins. Sandra held a degree of English as a foreign language and therefore her colleagues considered her an expert in dealing with "foreign-ness, with other teachers asking for her help in communicating with newly arrived foreign children. Sandra recalls difficulties in dealing with newly immigrated students whose linguistic and cultural background were unfamiliar from her own personal experiences, particularly given the inadequate resources available. However, with one of her colleagues, whom she refers to as her "anima gemella" or twin soul, she attended a course on intercultural education to research and then create material to better teach her foreign students.

Data from the interviews with three teachers are explored in this section. The excerpt selected below recalls a classroom project by a teacher, Sandra that sought to implement intercultural education principles in learning about cultural others. The *Student's Narrative Project* involved both her foreign born-and native born-students through a sharing of their stories.

Excerpt 5.1 Student's Narrative Project

> Beautiful was the tale of the journey
> Therefore what they told us about their trip to come to Italy
> […] I remember an Albanian girl who came on a rubber dinghy
> Therefore she told us about her story
> That for days she did no eat
> And I remember the other students
> They were already in third grade
> And they were listening this story with wide-open eyes

And surprised
Because any way
[…] The fact to have in class
A friend
[…] Who had lived through things that they were watching on the news
[…] It was a moment of exceptional growth

Bellissimo una volta è stato il racconto sul viaggio
Quindi quello che loro ricordavano del viaggio per venire in Italia
[…] Mi ricordo una bambina albanese che venne col gommone
Quindi
lei raccontava della sua storia
Che per giorni non aveva mangiato
E ricordo gli altri alunni
questi erano già in terza elementare
Che ascoltavano questa storia con occhi sgranati e sorpresi
perché comunque
[…] il fatto di avere in classe
una compagna
[…] che aveva vissuto cose che loro vedevano al telegiornale
[…] li lasciava veramente sconcertati
[…] è stato un momento di crescita eccezionale
- [Maestra Sandra]

In the above excerpt, Sandra recalls encouraging her Albanian student (newly arrived but with a fair Italian competency due to the fact that most of Albanian households had access to Italian TV) to relate to her fellow 3rd grade students, the story of her personal journey in a rubber dinghy from her country of origin (Albania) to Italy. Sandra recalls this period as one when every day the media was showing boats loaded with people

coming from Albania to the main Italian ports. This was a time when her students would bring to the classroom racist comments regarding "those foreign people coming to Italy" as well as questions regarding who they were and why they were coming to "our land." Sandra relates that most of her students were bringing to the class comments they heard from adults in their families (parents, grandparents, etc.). In answering her students' questions and dealing with their comments she planned an activity to tell "la storia del viaggio" [the story of the journey] in her class.

Developing Empathy

Sandra was enthusiastic about this particular event of sharing stories, which she valued as an important growth opportunity for her students and herself. Not only did the native students listen with great attention and awe to their fellow Albanian student's difficult journey on a precarious boat, and of being without food for days during the trip to Italy. They asked questions regarding her life in Albania before coming to Italy, her decision to leave her country, her language from the country of origin. They also asked about her experiences living in Italy - a foreign country to her where a foreign language is spoken. Thus, the shared story provided Sandra's students with an opportunity to experience life through the eyes of their Albanian classmate and to begin to understand what it means to begin a new life as an immigrant.

Sandra's students expressed great admiration for the courage shown by their fellow Albanian student in leaving everything behind to start a new life in Italy. The students expressed great empathy for the many difficulties of their fellow Albanian student who left behind family members (grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncles) and all their

friends. Sandra recalls that after the activity, her students' attitude and comments towards immigrants changed entirely.

Students as Cultural Experts

The *Student's Narrative Project* stimulated the native students to begin to include the Albanian student in their social circles, strengthening their participation in the classroom community. Furthermore, the native students started representing themselves as the "experts in matters of immigration" because they were able to retell the story of their friend, to whom they were asking questions regarding "all things Albanian."

Learning about a Geographic Place and Culture

In addition, Sandra's students became interested in learning more about Albania. Therefore, in collaboration with her colleagues, teachers of history and geography, she created and implemented several classroom projects that involved researching and learning and presenting on the history, geography, and cultural practices of Albania. A similar theme about expanding interest was described in the activity leading to greater student interest in knowing more about each other's stories.

Engaging Student Interest

Developing the student interest in other geographic locations helped them recognize each other's similarities and differences. This interest sustained the students learning on their own and willingness to participate in other projects, such as the *Narrative Laboratory Project* described below. Engaging students i.e., stimulating their interest as Sandra notes, is well recognized as important to a number of goals valued by Sandra, such as the development of a more democratic classroom community (Demetrio & Favaro, 2002).

Specifically, engaging and developing student interest by Sandra in other students' narratives of personal experience allowed those students to act as resources for the classroom community.

5.2.2 The Narrative Laboratory Project

A way to use the narrative method is to create understanding of self and the cultural others that are part of the growing multicultural nature of Italian society and the classroom community(ies). This method was used by teacher Sandra who developed the *Narrative Laboratory Project* in collaboration with another colleague.

As Sandra is a great advocate of the pedagogical value of narrative used in intercultural education activities (Giusti, 1998; Nanni, 2004), she, together with one of her colleagues, organized the *Narrative Laboratory Project*, a three-phase project. The first phase consisted in the teacher reading selected short stories to her 5th graders. After each reading the teacher would allow time for discussions and sharing of students' opinions about the readings compared with personal experiences. Some of the stories were imaginary, while others told the lives and experiences of both immigrant children and adults. The second phase of the *Narrative Laboratory Project* consisted in a written assignment called "lettera a…" or "*letter to…"* This assignment allowed students to write a letter where they told their life story to someone meaningful in their life. For the third phase of the *Narrative Laboratory Project* students read their letter to the classroom and was followed by discussions.

Intercultural education activities involving narrative laboratories are considered an important and safe pedagogical tool to acquaint students with different people, their

cultures, beliefs and ideologies, which are explained by the teacher and discussed together while similarities and differences are compared and contrasted with the students' lived experiences (Giusti, 2004; Nanni, 2004).

Sandra recalls with particular fondness and great emotion a particular story written by Mara (pseudonym), a girl from Pakistan who moved to Italy with her family the year prior to the *Narrative Laboratory Project.* She was placed in Sandra's class at the beginning of 4th grade and continued with Sandra in the 5th grade. Sandra recalls Mara as a very bright and motivated student, who learned to speak Italian very quickly and was able to write as a native by mid-year in the 5th grade.

Mara dedicated the *Narrative Laboratory Project* written assignment to her best friend still living in Pakistan, whom she missed greatly. In her letter she wrote about her life in Pakistan before Italy, about the last year and a half of her life living in Italy, and also of her nostalgia for her friend. She talked about missing the scents of the food and of her home back in Pakistan despite the family still cooking and observing their homeland traditions (Excerpt 5.2). She also wrote to her Pakistani friend of the many new and exciting things she had found in Italy, the best of all being the school she was going to, her new Italian friends, and her teachers.

Excerpt 5.2 Narrative Laboratory Project

> Mara's story disconcerted them a little
> I think it was very useful for them
> because to my opinion it help them grow
> discussions were generated
> many questions arose

about Pakistan
its location
their language
their habits
what they ate there
why they had chosen Italy
what were these scents that she said she was missing
also the meat that they bought
and the particular associated ritual,

la storia di Mara un po' li ha sconcertati
ma secondo me è servito a loro
perché secondo me li ha fatti crescere
sono nate delle discussioni
son venute fuori tante domande
sul Pakistan,
su dove si trova
la geografia
sulla loro lingua
sulle abitudini,
le loro tradizioni
che cosa mangiavano lì
perché' avevano scelto l'Italia,
quali erano questi profumi che a lei mancavano
anche la carne loro la compravano
con il loro rito particolare,
- Maestra Sandra

Sandra's goal was to teach children a new literary genre, that of personal narratives, to create a space where students' opinions were considered valuable and therefore it was

important for them to share what they thought about the stories. In so doing, Sandra and her colleague wanted to create a space for students to reconcile their lived experiences with the many lived experiences, cultures, and realities described in the student textbooks.

Sandra was very enthusiastic about this project and the fact that the *Narrative Laboratory Project* and the student's written assignments sparked further interest in learning about the many cultures that were part of their classroom community. She notes how this experience was "incredible" both for the students and the teachers themselves. Together they explored the topics of diversity among people, as well as the similarities people share. Sandra recalls that the *Narrative Laboratory Project* and the outcomes of the written assignments far exceeded her and her colleagues' expectations.

With the *Narrative Laboratory Project*, Sandra sought to make visible and give value to the many cultural backgrounds of each student, especially the non-native children in her 5th grade class. She wanted to make visible the diversity of cultural resources in her classroom community as a point of departure for further exploring.

Also with the *Narrative Laboratory Project*, the teachers linked their project with the discipline of geography, when students researched the various countries of origin of the students in their classes.

Engaging Student Interest

As a way of further engaging student interest, Sandra and her colleague created a mini-research project for the class, which was divided into groups. Each group was assigned one of the diverse countries of origins of the many non-Italian born children in the class

(Pakistan, Albania, Morocco, etc.) and asked to research their assigned country's characteristics (its geographical location, language, history, religious traditions, food, etc.). Afterwards the students presented their findings to their classmates.

Sandra recalled with fondness how Mara's story generated strong interest among the other students. She recalled how the students asked a great many questions about Pakistan, about the scents she had described, the food mentioned, and the traditions that Mara's family currently were observing. Mara's story sparked students' curiosity about Mara's life in her country of origin, its location, its people and customs.

Beyond an Ethnocentric Point of View

Through the *Narrative Laboratory Project* students and teachers both learned about themselves and their classmates through personal stories. In intercultural education, the use of narratives is a way to reflect on one's own personal stories and experiences, as well as a way to go beyond one's own ethnocentric point of view and gain a "transcultural perspective" (Demetrio, 1997b). This is because stories allow the readers, to experience the emotions of the characters in the stories, their joys, their pains, and desires (Ravecca, 2002). In this way, because all people despite their countries of origin and their cultural and linguistic background share these emotions, they expand the listeners' point of view beyond their ethnocentricity.

Encouraging Self-Reflection and Growth

Finally Sandra was touched by Mara's personal experience of immigration and her growing sense of belonging in their school. Sandra realized the profound impact she and her colleague had in helping Mara's adjustment in the school, including making new

friends. Ultimately, the *Narrative Laboratory Project* affected positively Mara's desire for a better future.

Research indicate that the quality of students' relationships with teachers influence students' social-emotional adjustment (Pianta, Nimetz, & Bennett, 1997) their sense of belonging in school (Gibson, Gándara, & Koyoma, 2004) which influence their motivation for academic success and their aspirations (Goodenow, 1993; Goodenow & Grady, 1993; Osterman, 2000).

5.2.3 The Universal Language of Fairy Tales

A different means of using narrative in the classroom as related from the interviews is by using fairy tales and fables. Fairy tales and fables represent a universal narrative genre, with familiar and recurrent patterns that are common to many traditions (Propp, 1928) Fairy tales are found across cultures embedded in their oral traditions, passed from one generation to the next with various changes or adaptations across time and between cultures (Demetrio & Favaro, 2002; Favaro, 2002). Not only are fairy tales an educational tool within a culture, but they also are a great intercultural educational tool to advance knowledge of other cultures, and to manage conflicts arising from differences in multicultural classrooms (Demetrio & Favaro, 2002; Nanni & Curci, 2005; Perez, 2007). The world of fairy tales is a world full of possibilities for both the immigrant and non-immigrant students, where the foreign students can find a way to identify themselves and their cultural background and where the Italian students can find ways to bridge their culture with that of their peers (Demetrio, 1997a; Franchino & Roncaglione, 2011). Beyond the variety and richness of languages and cultural references in fairy tales, they

embody profound meanings by which people interpret and explain the world they live in (Favaro, 2002).

Teacher Personal History

Like Sandra, Mariella had a university degree; however her specialty was in humanistic subjects, specifically the Italian language. As a result, her efforts to address the cultural complexity of her classrooms involved projects that were strongly language-based like asking students to read text in their own language. For example, Mariella explained that during the *Fairy Tale Project*, her students understanding was improved in important concepts of time in language, the past, present, and future. Thus, it is natural for Mariella to use a language-centered approach.

Mariella is a teacher of Italian, history, and geography in a small town elementary school in the footwear district of the Fermo provincial area. At the time of the interview she was teaching two 5th grade classes with students she had taught since the 3rd grade. The school population had a 30% attendance of foreign students, whose families emigrated from Northern Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Russia, and China. The growth in foreign students attendance was slower compared to the school where Sandra taught. At the time of the interview, Mariella was in her late thirties and had been teaching in elementary school for about 10 years.

The Fairy Tale Project

In Mariella's interview, she describes an intercultural education project with her 5th grade students using fairy tales. The intercultural education *Fairy Tale Project* involved all the students she was teaching, across several grades.

During the interview, Mariella related details about the *Fairy Tale Project* with enthusiasm. Like Sandra, Mariella believes that stories, whether fantastic or real life are a powerful pedagogical tool for students of any age. Specifically, fairy tales were a valuable teaching tool that used a different yet familiar narrative genre to her 5th grade students, while improving their knowledge and understanding of the Italian written language, in its syntax and morphology. Also Mariella believes fairy tales are a powerful pedagogical tool to help students open a window onto the lives of different peoples, allowing them to see both differences and similarities with their own experiential world.

Excerpt 5.3 Fairy Tale Project

> There was a year
> […] we did an intercultural project with fairy tales
> which involved all 5 grades within the school complex
> so also children from lower grades
> […] for my 5th grade classes this was a project of Italian and the study of the narrative text of the fairy tale
> […] so we first worked
> on documenting ourselves, researching, reading, studying, analyzing, and writing about the various fairy tales more or less traditional of different cultures
> […] European fairy tales
> but also Moroccans, Lebanese, Albanians and Russians,
> because my students were from there.
> Afterwards we analyzed the main figures of the fairy tales,
> Both of the narrative structure,
> And of the fundamental elements,
> for example
> of the main characters,

of the dynamic of the fairy tale,
of the various heroic figures,
of the various positive or negative figures
that were more or less present in these fantastic plots
[…] the most beautiful thing that came out of all of this
was to discover the universal elements shared between fairy tales, between us and between people and traditions completely afar from each other […]

c' è stato un anno
[…] è stato fatto un progetto a livello interculturale con le fiabe
che ha coinvolto tutte le 5 classi a livello di plesso
quindi anche con bambini di classi inferiori,
[…] per le mie classi 5e
questo era un progetto di italiano sul testo narrativo sulla fiaba […] quindi è stato fatto un lavoro
prima di documentazione, di ricerca, di lettura, di studio, di analisi e di scrittura
delle varie fiabe più o meno tradizionali di culture diverse
[…] fiabe europee,
ma anche marocchine, libanesi, albanesi, russe,
perché i miei studenti venivano da lì […].
Dopo abbiamo fatto il lavoro di analisi delle figure delle fiabe,
sia nella struttura narrativa,
sia negli elementi fondamentali
per esempio,
dei personaggi,
della dinamica della fiaba,
le varie figure eroiche,
le varie figure positive o negative
che erano più o meno presenti in queste trame fantastiche

[…]la cosa bella che è scaturita da tutto questo
è stato riscontrare degli elementi universali che accomunano fiabe,
tra di noi e tra popoli e tradizioni completamente lontane […]
- Maestra Mariella

There were students from Morocco, Lebanon, Albania and Russia in Mariella's two parallel 5th grade classes. Thus, she selected stories from these cultural backgrounds, as well as some traditional European fairy tales. Mariella recalls selecting the fairy tales during meetings with the other teachers in her school who participating in the *Fairy Tales Project*. In selecting the stories they wanted to choose European and non-European stories familiar to both Italian and non-Italian students. In selecting the non-European fairy tales, the teachers considered the cultural background and countries of origin of the non-Italian students in their classes. They also involved some of the foreign parents to make sure that both parents and their children knew the selected fairy tales, and they were culturally and linguistically appropriate. This was because some parents were invited to read the selected foreign fairy tales in the original language to their children's class.

After analyzing the narratives, the students represented the fairy tales that they had worked on with big posters (Figure 5.1). The culmination of the *Fairy Tale Project* was a performance where all children across grades presented their work to their parents and the other children of the school. Each grade had studied the fairy tales according to their age and different mean of expressions according to their learning abilities. This resulted in a performance where fairy tales were presented with songs, sung by children both in the original and the Italian language, music, dances, and gallantry shows, which Mariella remembers with fondness and emotion.

Figure 5.1 Student drawings representing and telling fairy tales as part of the *Fairy Tale Project.*

Mariella explains that by a variety of activities, her students realized that fairy presented many differences in the descriptions of the settings, the daily habits, the described food and traditions, and the characters that were considered important. These activities included researching, reading, studying, analyzing, comparing and contrasting the different fairy tales, their characters, and their plots. Significantly, Mariella's students also realized that the fairy tales they analyzed in class presented many similarities. For example, the heroes presented similarities in their important and heroic characteristics (i.e., courage), the stories all had magic elements, etc.

Mariella also explained that her students came to better understand various concepts during the *Fairy Tale Project*. One important concept was the concept of time and how it related with concepts of past, present, and future time, both in relationship with the actions of the stories read, and in relationship with the students' perceived time.

Another important concept explored was that of one's place in society. Mariella's aim was to enable her students to recognize that everyone has a place and a role in society. Even though many of the societies described in the fairy tales varied in their rules, structures, and cultural practices, there also shared many values and principles.

Mariella's democratic and intercultural interpretation for "living together harmoniously" is to find ways to assert the respect of everyone's' cultural identity as a whole (linguistic, religious, gender, etc.). This certainly is not easy for immigrants struggling to survive while their children attend schools and learn a new language as well as acquiring the cultural practices of their hosting country.

Emphasizing Diversity

The oral translations of the stories read in class were a culturally and democratic way to assert positively her immigrant students linguistic and cultural diversity. Mariella's biggest worry about intercultural education activities was that students and teachers could lose the true meaning of intercultural education, diminishing and diluting the different cultural identities into a hybridization, or worse, reducing the richness of an entire culture to an exotic dish or a specific dance. When using fairy tales from different cultures, teachers aim to guide their students to identify both the universal (narrative structure) and the transcultural and common themes across cultures - the hero, the princess, the evil

characters/spirits, the trials the heroes have to go through life to achieve growth and self understanding (Demetrio & Favaro, 2002; Nanni, 2003).

Engaging Students

Mariella indicates how excited her students were to read so many different fairy tales in the *Fairy Tale Project*. She notes that her students, as they were reading and working on the stories, identified themselves with the characters of the stories and became active agents of the stories themselves. They anticipated outcomes, rejoicing if their expectations were met. They also suffered with the characters during their trials and tribulations before the happy endings. They even discussed possible alternative outcomes for some of the fairy tale situations. In the process they shared personal experiences that they saw as similar to the experiences of the people in the stories, a theme identified in Sandra's interviews as encouraging empathy.

Students as Experts

Mariella sought to prevent stereotypes of and by her students, and did so by making visible the advantages of coming from different cultures, the resource of speaking different languages. Mariella often involved her immigrant students in classroom activities, making them the experts and the cultural and linguistic informants of their mother tongue and their cultural background.

Excerpt 5.4 Students as Experts

> […] I teach Italian in 5th grade.
> Many times I like to present any reading,
> after having introduced it in Italian,

to translate it concurrently in the Arab and the Romanian language I mean
Emil reads the same excerpt in Romanian,
and Abdul reads it in Arabic.
[…] I believe it is very important to be able to listen to the beauty of the sound of a different language [...]

[…] Io faccio italiano in quinta.
Tante volte mi piace presentare un qualsiasi brano,
dopo averlo introdotto in italiano,
tradurlo simultaneamente in lingua araba e rumena,
cioè Emil legge lo stesso brano della lettura lo legge in rumeno
e Abdul lo legge in arabo
[…] è importante poter ascoltare la bellezza della sonorità di una lingua diversa […]
- [Maestra Mariella]

Immigrant Students as a Classroom Resource

Mariella refers to her two immigrant students as "perfectly acculturated" into the school community and very proficient in the Italian language. Nevertheless, they also remain proficient in their respective mother tongue, as they study it at home, after school. In fact, the students often serve as linguistic mediators between their parents and the schoolteachers. Thus, Mariella considers herself fortunate to have the opportunity presented by students who retain their parent's language. In fact, Mariella emphasizes the concept of diversity within her classroom as enabling her immigrant student's linguistic knowledge to be a resource for the class. The strength of her views on immigrant students as a resource is revealed by her regret for the immigrant students whom she has met over the years who had lost their mother tongue because their families' language rule was

Italian-only. This is a common phenomenon in many immigrant families who want their children to acculturate completely to their new nation's culture.

Like Sandra, Mariella used stories to give depth and value to different cultures and diversity of cultural practices, as well as to similarities. Additionally, Mariella constantly kept the concept of diversity in the classroom context as valued by using her immigrant students' linguistic knowledge as a class resource. For example, Mariella asked the immigrant students to read or translate into their own language and read it to the class each day. Similarly, the discussion of the fairy tales also encouraged students to view each other as valuable resources. Furthermore, Mariella states that recognition of diversity as a valuable resource is important in life for an harmonious cohabitation, which requires seeing the beauty in diversity as manifest in the diversity and similarities across cultures of fairy tales.

Encouraging Student Sense of Self

Mariella emphasizes the value of students having a strong sense of sense of self as a part of her efforts to encourage students to value others as a resource. One approach that Mariella used was to ask the immigrant students to read or translate something the class had done or planned on doing every day. In this manner, the immigrant students were actively contributing to the classroom learning, reinforcing their value and hence self-worth. A number of researchers have emphasized how student development of a positive sense of self (Phinney, Berry, Vedder, & Liebkind, 2006) is important, particularly where it incorporates developing an inclusive environment for them in the school (Gibson et al., 2004). Immigrant students navigate and bridge multiple cultures every day (Berry, 2005), thus it is important to recognize and value both their ethnic and their national identities.

5.2.4 Intercultural Cooperative Encounters on the Playground

Game activities can be powerful educational tools that enhance intercultural educational principles through specific practices (Nanni & Curci, 2005). When students play they are involved in cultural and transcultural activities (Caon & Rutka, 2004) in a spirit of cooperation. Game activities can be considered culturally determined because they mirror the society in which they are developed and played with specific rules, symbols, and aspirations (Staccioli, 1998, p. 151). A game also can be considered a transcultural activity because when children or adults play they share what Caon and Rutka (2004) define "una grammatica universale ludica" (a universal playful grammar) such as the respect for the rules and rituals involved in the game itself. When playing, people are involved in an activity that positions them in relationship to each other and in relationship with their knowledge and proficiency (Caon & Rutka, 2004). Thus, game activities that involve learning cooperatively in small groups are ideal intercultural educational tools to teach students to welcome, listen, communicate, and mediate interactions in growing multicultural classrooms (Comoglio, 1996). Cooperative learning is a dynamic pedagogical tool used to teach diverse content to students at different grade levels and diverse proficiency. Students are responsible for both learning the material and for helping the members of their group learn (Antil, Jenkins, Wayne, & Vadasy, 1998; Putnam, 1998). Students work together in small, structured heterogeneous groups to master subject matter content while teachers act as facilitators (Slavin, 1995a).

In cooperative learning environments, teachers act as facilitators. Cooperative learning has proven to have positive effects on academic achievement, self-esteem, active learning, social skill development, and equity achievement in intergroup relationships

(Cohen, 1994; Cohen & Lotan, 1997; Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1994; Slavin, 1996). Cooperative learning groups support positive social interaction among students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds as they have great potential to facilitate the building of cross-ethnic friendships and to reduce racial stereotyping, discrimination, and prejudice (Slavin, 1995b).

Teacher Personal History

At the time of the interview, Carlo was a teacher of Italian and social studies in the 5th grade in an urban school. Carlo had 30 years of teaching experience in the elementary school in the city of Fermo. When he started teaching, the classroom had no immigrant children, he recalls, the only students foreign to his classes were the occasional children of traveling circuses, and the children of itinerant Rom. However, with the immigration waves to the Marche Region the classrooms where he taught began to change. In fact, his school became increasingly multicultural due to its location in a peripheral area of the city that was close to footwear factories and had affordable lodging. Carlo recalls his and his colleagues' unease in teaching foreign students with no Italian language skills, having just arrived from their homeland(s). Carlo was a strong, long-time supporter of collaborative learning activities as an approach to enhance foreign students' respect, participation, and membership in the classroom community and to improve their self-esteem and academic achievement.

Game of Cricket Activity

Carlo repeatedly mentions using cooperative learning activities within an intercultural educational framework as a way to enhance immigrant students' integration and social

participation in class activities. At the time, his class had 4 students from Pakistan, where cricket is an important national sport. He notes that these students were placed in his class two years earlier. Carlo organized a learning activity around the game of cricket and then engaged his Pakistani students as group experts who taught (and were needed to teach) the Italian students about the game of cricket, both on a theoretical and a practical level.

Excerpt 5.5 Game of Cricket Activity - I

[…] The first thing is to let emerge the real abilities
that this boy, this girl has
because often the foreign child,
given the fact that he doesn't know the Italian language,
is considered a child who does not understand.
[One] should be able to show to the class that instead
this child understands
and it is only a question of language
a difficulty he has in communicating with the language,
and not a question of intelligence and learning abilities.
This is very important
thus the good outcome of certain practices
of specific teaching activities
in every discipline
[…] thus the respect for the other
also the importance of game activities!
These children are particularly capable,
more than other children in some games.
For example the exchange of content knowledge by playing games.

[...] Il primo elemento è di fare emergere le capacità reali
che ha questo bambino, questa bambina,

perché spesso il bambino straniero
dato che non conosce la lingua italiana,
viene considerato un bambino che non capisce.
Il riuscire a dimostrare alla classe che invece
questo bambino capisce
è solo una questione di lingua,
una difficolta di comunicare con la lingua,
non di intelligenza e di capacità di apprendimento.
Questo serve molto,
quindi il buon esito di certe pratiche
di certe unità didattiche,
in qualsiasi disciplina.
[…] e quindi anche il rispetto dell'altro,
poi anche l'importanza del gioco!
Questi bambini sono molte volte particolarmente abili,
più degli altri alunni in alcuni giochi.
Ad esempio lo scambio di conoscenze livello di giochi.
- [Maestro Carlo]

By working together in groups, students perceived themselves as part of a team, and therefore they worked together to help their teammates by providing support and feedback. Carlo emphasized strongly how teamwork motivated the team to achieve group tasks ("importance of game activities!"). In the course of the activity, Carlo notes the important positive changes in students' perceptions regarding the foreign students and their capabilities. The native students began view the immigrant students not as cultural others and then started to help them constantly, including them in the classroom community. One activity that Carlo recalls as 'tipping the scales' and effecting a significant attitude change towards the immigrant students was from role reversal.

Excerpt 5.6 Game of Cricket Activity - II

For example with some Pakistani children
we worked on the game of cricket
in small groups
collaborating with each other
and then they were the ones to teach it to their classmates
and so to have this reverse role
to be the ones to teach to the Italians
to have a completely diverse situation
to discover a new game and to have these foreign pupils as teachers
[This] lead to a diverse dynamic in the class.

Ad esempio con dei bambini pachistani abbiamo lavorato sul cricket
in piccoli gruppi
collaborando tra loro
e poi sono stati loro
ad insegnarlo ai compagni
e quindi ad avere questo ruolo rovesciato
di essere loro ad insegnare agli Italiani
e ad avere una situazione completamente diversa,
scoprire un gioco nuovo ed avere
questi alunni stranieri come insegnanti.
Hanno cambiato la dinamica della classe.
- [Maestro Carlo]

Carlo explains that the *Cricket Game Activity* provided the class with discussion opportunities that reduced negative stereotypes towards the Pakistani students. The *Cricket Game Activity* presented an occasion for comparing and contrasting students' reciprocal knowledge and for allowing the Pakistani students to assume the group role of

teachers, which was necessary to play. Thus, the Pakistani students were transformed into experts, similar to the transformation of the native students in Sandra's class into experts at home and in class after they learned about their Albanian classmates cultures. Students as experts also was reflected in Mariella's interview where she remarks how in order to reduce stereotypes she transformed her students into experts as the cultural and linguistic informants of their native country's cultural practices for their classmates.

In addition, Carlo emphasizes that the activity enhanced their self-esteem and academic achievement. This is a common theme with the other teacher's interviews, where the teachers (Sandra, and Mariella) relate how when students become experts, their sense of self and self-worth improve. Furthermore, the teachers all note how the activities and projects increased the non-native students' sense of belonging to the classroom community. Carlo notes how this was related to academic achievement improvements, similar to Sandra's telling of how Mara developed a desire for a better future, and motivation for improved academic success. Finally, Carlo feels it important to tell how the activity provided a great opportunity to apply intercultural educational principles on the playground.

5.3. Linguistic Valorization

Cummins (2000) reviews a number of research studies and concludes that in more than half of classroom interactions, students use single word answers or do not speak at all. This highlights the value the interviewed teachers placed on student engagement. One aspect that can lead to low student engagement that particularly affects non-native students is their linguistic ability, which can place non-native speakers at a disadvantage,

inhibiting their classroom participation. Enabling student participation through respecting diversity and valorization of the cultural other is important to the creation of an inclusive classroom environment (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992; Fiorucci, 2008). Thus, addressing linguistic ability and respect for diversity are interwoven in the development of a democratic classroom community (Demetrio & Favaro, 2002), a goal of intercultural education (Fiorucci, 2008).

Valorization of cultural and linguistic differences is important in the multicultural context to ensure education is enriching rather than problematic, supporting a positive learning process (Nieto, 2010; Wurzel, 1988). Multicultural education teaches respect for other cultures and values enabling students to learn successfully while expanding their macro and micro cultural perspectives and experiences (Cummins, 1986; Trueba, 1989; Wurzel, 1988).

5.3.1. Songs and Linguistic Valorization

Songs have been a part of human tradition and cultural transmission since historical times (witness religious songs in the bible). The use of music and songs in the language classroom long has been recognized as a valuable resource and useful tool in language learning and teaching (Cameron, 2001; Medina, 1993). Studies related to adult English Language Learners (ELLs) and English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning English through music have shown benefits. For example, when singing or playing musical games in cooperative groups, in an enjoyable, non-stressful, learning environment Mashayekh and Hashemi (2011) found enhanced student cooperation between peers. Also studies on music and songs on young foreign language learners show that students learn English better due to a lowering anxiety level (Sevik, 2011) enhanced self-esteem (Baker & Jones, 2006), and improved participation in classroom activities

(Bird, 2007). The use of music and song have been shown to improve second language learners' speaking ability (Kennedy & Scott, 2005), including vocabulary acquisition and retention (Alipour, Gorjian, & Zafari, 2012; Legg, 2009; Salcedo, 2010), sentence structures and patterns (Murphey, 1992), pronunciation (Kennedy & Scott, 2005; Terrell, 2012), and grammar (Fagerland, 2006). Songs enhance the acquisition of reading and writing skills (Le, 1999), and aid student understanding of the culture of the target language (Jolly, 1975), particularly, when combined with multisensory learning approaches and kinesthetic (Facella, Rampino, & Shea, 2005).

Teacher Personal History

Natalia teaches in a school district in the province of Ascoli Piceno, which has high foreign student attendance. In her interviews, she remarks about students from China, Albania, Morocco, Tunisia, Poland and Romania, as well as from South America. Natalia teaches English as a foreign language specialist at the primary school level. This means she shifts between classes, teaching up to one hundred students, but only for a short time each day. At the time of the interview, Natalia was in her mid-thirties and had been teaching in elementary schools for about a decade.

Natalia has a University degree in foreign languages and cultures and always has been enthusiastic of learning and knowing about the cultural practices of other countries. This has been particularly valuable to her teaching practices since she teaches in primary school classrooms that are increasingly multicultural.

The Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project

In an interview with Natalia, she relates a story of a newly arrived Chinese student, who was very quiet and withdrawn from classroom activities. To engage his attention, Natalia brought to class a music cassette from a former Chinese student. The cassette had the Chinese version of the *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques* song. She developed an entire class project around this song in an intercultural education framework.

Excerpt 5.7 Fra Martino Project

In seeing the enthusiasm that the song produced,
I asked if they sung it in their own country,
and if they knew it,
if the Chinese version corresponded
to the Italian version in the meaning
or just in the rhythm,
and it was at this point that
every one of them came forward
gifting us with a fragment of their lifestyle
also asking to their parents and friends from other classes
and who knew Italian better
and could interact

Nel vedere l'entusiasmo suscitato dalla canzone,
ho chiesto se anche loro la cantassero nel loro paese,
e se la conoscevano,
se la versione cinese corrispondesse
nel significato alla versione italiana,
o solo nel ritmo,
ed è stato a questo punto che

ognuno di loro si è fatto avanti
regalandoci uno spaccato del loro vissuto
anche chiedendo ai genitori o a dei compagni di altre classi
che conoscevano meglio l'italiano
e potevano interagire.

- Maestra Natalia

According to the theory of multiple intelligence (Gardner, 1995), some students' strengths are in musical intelligence. Natalia was searching for a way to reach and engage her students. She comments that songs, not only greatly excited her students when singing, but allowed them to overcome possible linguistic and cultural barriers with the unifying positive of singing. This specifically applied to the Chinese student who did not speak Italian. The *Frère Jacques Project* arose out of a gift of a former student of a tape of well-known songs, like *Frère Jacques* in Chinese. Natalia tried to reach the new Chinese student by playing the Chinese (and Italian and English) versions of *Frère Jacques*. This opened the doorway and she was rewarded with students 'gifting us with a fragment of their lifestyle.' The non-native students engaged their social network (parents and friends of same linguistic background) to help them write the version of *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques* in their native languages. They also prepared themselves to talk about their life back in their native countries. The Chinese student brought the song written in Chinese. Out of this arose the classroom activity; the *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project* arose.

The *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project* involved teaching both the Italian and English versions of Frere Jacques, a 17th century song that was published first in the mid-1800s, and since then has been translated into many languages (Wikipedia, 2014). Natalia used

the "universality" of this resource to integrate versions of the song from each student's culture into a project that explored similarities and differences between cultures. The song provided an opportunity for students to share personal experiences associated with the song. In part, Natalia relates, this arose from student interest in other classes who heard about it from friends in Natalia's classes. The project was summarized in the school newspaper, which featured some of the project artwork (Figure 5.2).

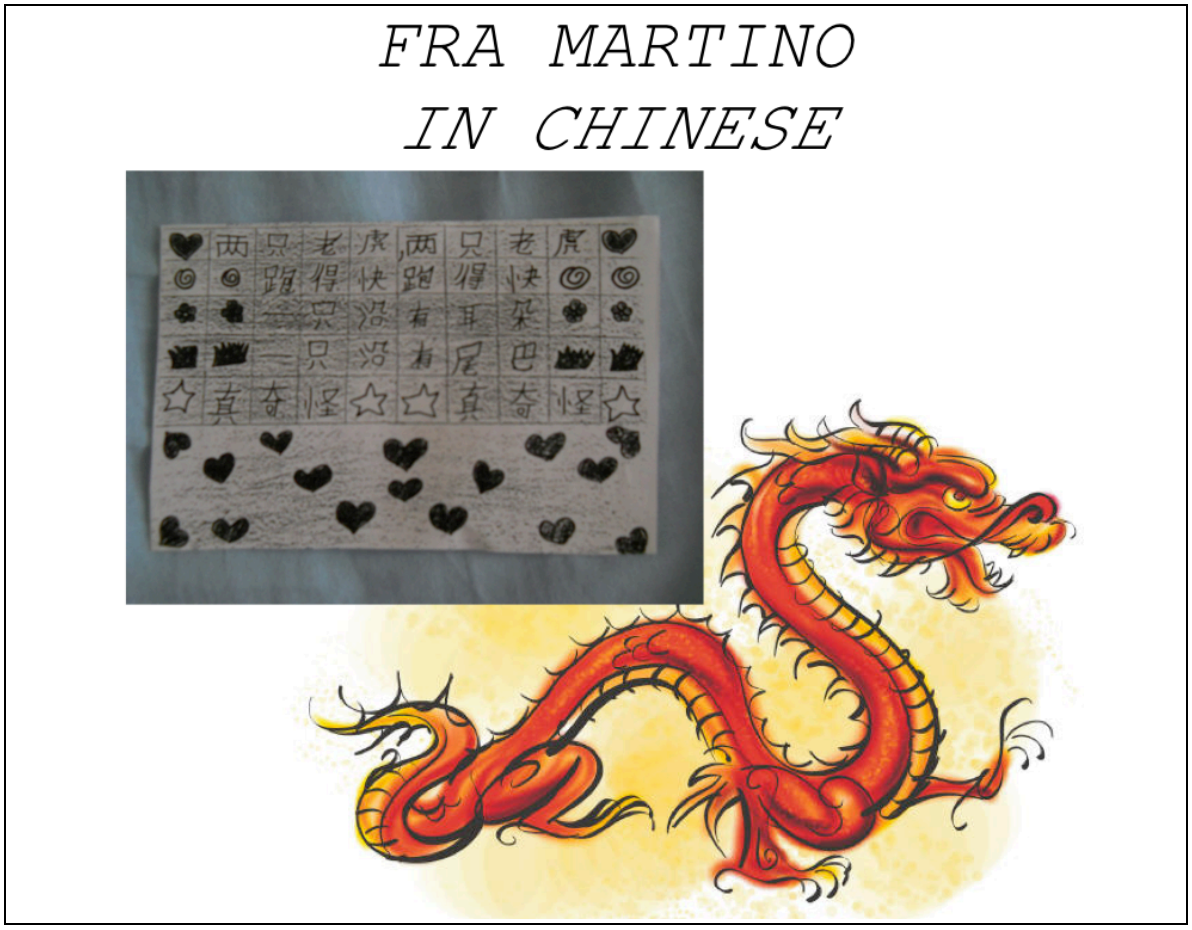

Figure 5.2 Excerpt of school newspaper article showing Chinese version of Frère Jacques song as part of the *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project*.

The *Frère Jacques Project* illustrates Natalia's teaching philosophy, which combines teaching with creative listening activities through direct musical experiences to her students, such as songs accompanied with movement, rhythmic instruments. She also often includes helping "visual aids," such as song lyrics, other visual materials, and body language. Natalia notes her belief in music as a motivational tool to help foreign language learning in a "relaxing and fun" manner - e.g., Krashen (1982). Not only do the songs and activities engage her students, as shown by her noting that they improved participation levels, but they also help their self-esteem. This is because students can respond to songs without feeling threatened as linguistically inadequate. Thus, songs create a situation of linguistic valorization in the classroom.

Engaging students (and families)

Sandra and Mariella both strongly emphasize the importance of projects that engage students, with Sandra even relating about how she herself became engaged. In the interview, Natalia is emphatic about the student engagement that she observed when she played the *Frère Jacques* song in the class 'the enthusiasm that the song produced". In fact, the *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project* not only engaged her students but also reached out to and engaged their families, in a manner similar to the *Fairy Tale Project*.

Student engagement has been well researched (Zepke & Leach, 2010) and is strongly and positively influenced by active teacher support, improving educational outcomes (Klem & Connell, 2004). There are a number of definitions of engagement, Chapman (2003) suggests "cognitive investment in learning tasks," while Zepke and Leach (2010) propose two types of engagement, motivational and transactional, where the former implies students are "intrinsically motivated" and the latter implies "students and teachers engage

with each other." Natalia's students demonstrated their engagement in the *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project* by volunteering to do research at home, engaging their family members' help. They asked their parents to help find versions of the song in their native language, demonstrating intrinsic motivation towards academic achievement. However transactional motivation also played a role, as evidenced by not just the students' enthusiasm for the project that Natalia relates enthusiastically, but also her own enthusiasm.

Zepke and Leach (2010) emphasize the importance of students' self belief, or sense of self, which Sandra strongly notes for Mara in conjunction with Mara's engagement in their *Narrative Laboratory Project* assignments. In the case of Mara this led her to expand her academic goals. Natalia notes as well that when she is able to connect with her students at an emotional level, she is able to change the dynamic of her students' interaction both with herself and between themselves in the classroom. Natalia is particularly passionate about helping her students become active agents of their own learning while doing fun and culturally relevant activities within an intercultural educational framework. To achieve these goals, Natalia emphasizes the importance of connecting with her students, beginning with their own living experiences. She has experienced first hand, how this repeatedly changed both the dynamic of her classroom activities, and her students' engagement, self-confidence, and academic achievement. Thus, Natalia aims to adapt her lessons to the students' personal interests and their learning abilities. She does so by using songs that can expand beyond the teaching of English as a foreign language - e.g., *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project*, engaging all

the linguistic resources that her non-native students bring into the classroom community. In so doing, they become the linguistic and cultural ambassadors - experts for the class.

5.3.2 Mediating Classroom Linguistic Differences

The use of puppets and puppetry in teaching and learning has been shown to benefit language minority students (Facella et al., 2005) individuals with disabilities (Dunst, 2014), science reasoning (Simon, Naylor, Keogh, Maloney, & Downing, 2008), and ESL classrooms (Ernst-Slavit & Wenger, 1998). In second and foreign language acquisition theories, the use of role-playing, pantomime, and puppets, also defined as "creative drama techniques," is recognized as a valuable tool in language acquisition (Maley & Duff, 1983; Verriour, 1985), creating engagement opportunities for students (Kotler, Wegerif, & Levoi, 2001).

Puppetry or dramatic narrative enhances students' internalization of language patterns and listening skills, as they engage their full attention to the words of the teacher/narrator/actor/or storyteller, while participating in exciting and joyful activities. Drama allows practicing risk-taking skills in a safe environment. Additionally drama enables student exploration of themes related to their experiences, to improve their understanding of themselves in a larger context (Ernst-Slavit & Wenger, 1998), which teachers can use to reduce conflict and create a more democratic, inclusive classroom.

Drama is particularly suited to address and mediate conflict, which forms the basis of most drama. Thus, teachers can develop puppet narratives as a valuable tool to overcome student conflicts, and to allow both students and teachers to assume different roles. This provides an approach for students to identify with and develop empathy for cultural

others. Drama can fulfill this role because it explores the world of 'let's pretend' where students can project themselves imaginatively into another situation, outside of the classroom, pretending to be someone else (Holden, 1981). Thus, puppets can bridge classroom and real-life situations by providing insights for managing and coping with complex social circumstances (Davies, 1990).

In her language teaching, Natalia uses a variety of strategies including songs, audiovisual material, artifacts, and games to engage students. Many of these strategies lie within an overarching pedagogical strategy (meta-theme) of drawing upon, and thus valorizing, the classroom's multicultural diversity as resources for herself and her students.

Max The Puppet Mediator

Natalia combined her use of songs with another classroom resource that she created, "Pupazzetto Max," or "Max the Puppet." Max the Puppet was a friend of all the students, could speak English, and always was interested in learning about *cultural others* and their languages and cultures. Max served as a cultural mediator during classroom conflicts that arose for a variety of reasons. Most severely, these included the expression of ethnocentric views and prejudices, as well as stereotypes. Prejudices and ethnocentric views are counter to the intercultural educational framework that emphasizes inclusion, respect for others, and respect and valorization of cultural diversity (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992; MPI, 2007a). In such cases, Max the Puppet interceded, helping to mediate and resolve potential and actual conflicts by demonstrating a strong interest in constructing new knowledge in the classroom, with both the immigrant and non-native students. For example, Max the Puppet learned words in Albanian to help with his role of conflict resolution mediator.

Excerpt 5.8 Max the Puppet

One day a student says to me about another student
“you know teacher
I have to tell Max too
do you know that that child does not know how to speak Italian
[…] that one does not know how to read
because he only speaks Albanian
and he does not know how to read”.
[…] Then I said,
“if he is Albanian
then it is a beautiful thing
because they know two languages in place of one only
instead of only knowing Italian
they know two
I like this thing very much
and Max likes it too
and do you know that
Max also knows a few words of Albanian?
he is studying it!
because here in P.
there are many children who speak Albanian,
that is why he is curious to learn.”

Un giorno un bambino dice a me di un altro bambino
“lo sai maestra
lo devo dire anche a Max
lo sai che quel bambino non sa parlare l'italiano
[...] quello non sa leggere
perché parla solo albanese non sa leggere”
[…] Allora io ho detto

“se è albanese è una cosa bella
perché sanno due lingue
al posto di una sola
invece di sapere solo l'italiano
loro ne sanno due
a me piace molto questa cosa
pure a Max
e sapete che
anche Max sa qualche parolina in Albanese
lo sta studiando
perché qui a P.
ci sono tanti bambini che parlano in albanese,
per cui lui è curioso d’imparare.”
- Maestra Natalia

Max the Puppet is a familiar and frequent presence in the classroom, able to talk with students, with less of the hierarchical teacher-student relationship. He played the role of a peer or confident of the student, as evidenced, that the student wanted to share his observations of cultural otherness with Max “I have to tell Max too. Do you know that that child does not know how to speak Italian?” In this exchange, Natalia responded to the student “it’s a beautiful thing;” however, she told the student that in this specific detail, she and Max were in agreement. Natalia relates in her interview (transcription not shown) that Max speaks with his own voice, distinct from Natalia’s. This emphasizes his independence in terms of roles, evidenced by her informing the student that “Max also knows a few words of Albanian.”

Here in Excerpt 5.9, Natalia calls on her knowledge of a few words in Albanian, communicated through Max, to give importance to the Albanian language and by

implication the cultural knowledge of Albanian students. Thus, Max demonstrates that he places value on their knowledge. Specifically, she has asked Albanian students in another class to teach her and Max a few words of Albanian. Thus, Max demonstrates that the non-native students were a resource to learn information helpful to the class.

Excerpt 5.9. Max the Puppet Speaks Albanian

I pretended that Max was saying one of the words in Albanian
then I pronounced a word in Albanian
'lapis' – pencil,
and then I saw the eyes of these Albanian children
who were in class with me
who before had denied to be Albanian
and were saying
"yes, yes Max is right
we say pencil like that!"
and the episode ended like that
the others remained mortified
because they wanted…
I don't know…
to point the finger
while I valued the language [...]

Ho fatto finta che Max dicesse una parola in albanese
allora ho pronunciato una parolina in albanese
'lapis' - matita,
e allora ho visto gli occhietti di questi bambini albanesi
che stavano in classe con me,
che prima avevano negato di essere albanesi,
e dicevano

'sì, sì Max ha ragione! diciamo così matita!'
e la cosa è scivolata così.
gli altri sono rimasti mortificati,
perché volevano ...
che ne so…
puntare il dito
mentre io ho valorizzato la lingua [...]
 - [Maestra Natalia]

Valorization of linguistic differences is important in intercultural education and the creation of an inclusive classroom environment [*harmonious cohabitation*–Maestra Mariella] to support the positive learning process (Nieto, 2010). Here, Natalia engages her Albanian students by having Max speak in Albanian. Then, through the "eyes of these Albanian children" she saw that they suddenly felt they could acknowledge their language and culture without concern for ridicule or derogatory comments. When Max the Puppet says there was a change from "denied to be Albanian" to "Max is right," Natalia created a "rich point" (Agar, 1994) in their understanding of their role as social participants in the classroom. After the rich point valorized their language and culture, the voiceless Albanian students (silent and non-participatory) found their voice.

Student engagement only occurs when the students do not remain silent (for example for protection from humiliation) and they begin to exhibit initiative or agency and participate (Duff, 2002). Increased classroom participation and engagement occurs when students find their voice (Duff, 2002), in this case, once opportunities were created for the Albanian students. The importance of this moment and the linguistic valorization of the *cultural other* registered on the non-Albanian students, too – who were "mortified."

Linguistic valorization is a part of a common theme in the interviews of emphasizing the value of diversity to encourage empathy and see the other students not as cultural others, but as members of the group – i.e., an inclusive classroom environment, for which Mariella's *Fairy Tale Project* is an example. However, the seeds of empathy cannot sprout and grow where the classroom environment is not harmonious due to prejudice and stereotypes. To address these stereotypes, Natalia and Mariella use linguistic valorization not only to emphasize diversity, but also to counter stereotypes and ethnocentric and racist discourse and beliefs. The example above shows Max the Puppet directly confronting a stereotypical idea head on. In contrast, the linguistic valorization of the *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project* is closer in its goals to the *Fairy Tale Project* through emphasizing the beauty and value of diversity.

Valorization of Linguistic Diversity

Natalia is different from the other teachers interviewed in that she teaches in several classes every day, and thus navigates diverse classroom environments in terms of demographics. One distinction between her two excerpts presented is the classroom dynamics and whether the multicultural demographics are primarily between two cultures or many cultures. The *Fra Martino / Frère Jacques Project*, emphasizes a broad diversity, makes it highly suitable to a multicultural classroom, as does the *Fairy Tale Project*, and in both interviews, the presence of a wide range of cultures is described. In Excerpt 5.9, Max the Puppet speaks Albanian; however, students from other cultural backgrounds are not mentioned, and Max takes a more targeted approach – addressing Albanian stereotypes.

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CHAPTER VI

TEACHERS' LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES IN THE MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOM

6.1 Overview

This research study focused on the classroom changes in the context of the regional and larger Italian societal changes, addressing the increasingly significant problem of teaching in a multicultural classroom environment. In recent decades, Italy has undergone dramatic shifts in regional and national demographics from a nation of out-migration to a nation of in-migration (Chapter 2). These problems arose from the rapidly changing sociocultural landscape of Italian classrooms, which transformed from *mono-cultural* into *multi-cultural*, where resources to address and support teaching with immigrant students often were inadequate (Chapter 4).

To study these problems I conducted interviews, collected documents, and analyzed these data according to methods (Chapter 3) to answer the following research questions:

1. How have educational policies changed over time? And how have situations in the classroom adapted?

2 How do teachers perceive, and adapt to a changing multicultural classroom environment in the face of 1) policy directives and 2) inadequate resources?

Analysis of policy documents revealed complexity and changeability in mandates to address the changing classroom environment through an intercultural pedagogical framework within curricula (Chapter 4). Ministry mandates were expansive, while legislative allocation of resources was miserly, as related by several teachers interviewed (Chapter 4). This chronic underfunding also led to a mismatch of needs and resources. These problems were particularly chronic in small cities in the Marche Region where many immigrants settled and resource "pooling" was not possible to the extent it would be in a larger city (Chapter 4). Faced with the realities in their classrooms, teachers adapted to the rapid changes by drawing on their own creativity (Chapter 5). Analysis of the interviews provided themes, which are synthesized below.

6.2. Concluding Synthesis

A common theme was identified in the interviews of teacher adaptation to the challenges of teaching in a multi-culturally diverse classroom. Teachers draw upon their creativity to bridge the "gap" between policy mandates (implementing an intercultural pedagogy within the curriculum), inadequate resources, and the reality of the challenge of creating a "harmonious" environment in a multicultural classroom with students prone to conflicts arising from stereotypes originating from outside the classroom (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2006).

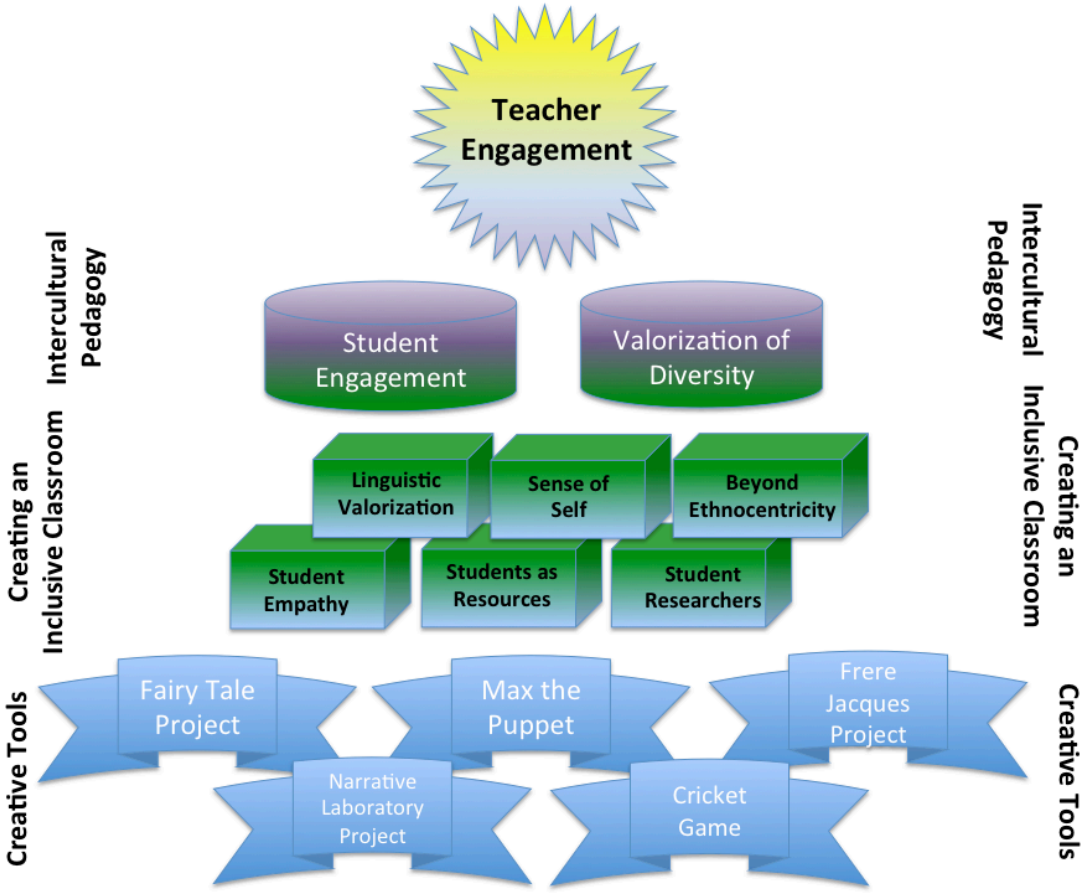

Figure 6.1. Themes, meta-themes, overarching themes, and unifying theme from my study. Creative pedagogical tools (ribbons) support creating an inclusive classroom environment (building blocks), which in turn supports the intercultural pedagogy (pillars) under the unifying theme of teacher engagement. See text for discussion.

The transformation of the Italy classroom is on going, and as is often the case, policy attempted to address these shifts through mandates that often reflected conditions several years behind that no longer were current. Furthermore, schools in small towns such as in the small cities of the Marche Region were underfunded to address the classroom changes. Teachers adapted by drawing on their own creativity.

The analysis of the interviews found many themes of teacher practices to address multicultural classroom environments (Chapter 5). These themes were classified into "pedagogical tool" themes, meta-themes related to the creation of an inclusive classroom community, and overarching themes related to Intercultural Education. These are represented graphically in Figure 6.1. Also shown in Figure 6.1 is what I term the unifying theme of teacher engagement. These themes are discussed below.

Within the pedagogical tool theme, there were tools, like *Max the Puppet* and the *Narrative Laboratory Project* that demonstrated the creativity of the teachers in reaching out to students, both native and non-native. These tools were multi-dimensional in terms of their positive effects on the students, which included reducing stereotypes - beyond ethnocentricity – and strengthening student empathy, among others. These latter two are examples of meta-themes (building blocks in Figure 6.1) that are part of the creation of an intercultural pedagogy in a welcoming, inclusive classroom environment. Other important meta-themes were improved sense of self, students as researchers, and students as resources. The latter taught the students to look at the cultural others as a valued resource. Several of the tools or projects also supported linguistic valorization, which is intrinsic to the valorization of cultural diversity. These building blocks are interlocked through overlapping aspects of these themes. For example, linguistic valorization combines with viewing students as classroom resources to provide an improved sense of self. Similarly, student empathy is intrinsically linked to moving beyond ethnocentric and stereotypical views, which are incompatible with intercultural education.

These meta-themes support important over-arching themes related to intercultural education, the valorization of diversity, and student engagement (pillars in Figure 6.1).

As was found in analysis of all of the interviews, student engagement was a critical goal and a critical outcome of the teacher practices discussed in the interviews. Similarly, valorization of linguistic and cultural diversity – respect for each other's languages and cultures was a common theme to all the interviews, and is a foundation of intercultural education. There is an important caveat, the two "pillars" illustrating the overarching themes of intercultural pedagogy are those that were identified in the interviews, and are a subset of the many dimensions of intercultural education.

I have woven together the many threads identified in these interviews regarding teacher practices within the principles of intercultural education. However, there was one key aspect that the interviews revealed was largely missing from the literature and policy - teacher passion and engagement with their students. It was clear that all the teachers involved in successfully engaging students were themselves strongly engaged.

Teacher engagement is critical for student engagement and classroom participation, without which intercultural education cannot succeed.

6.3. Future Research

There were a number of areas where future research and investigations would be particularly valuable. Specifically:

• Compare and contrast teacher adaptations in small urban areas like in the Marche Region with larger urban areas, like Rome.

• Investigate changes in a teacher's practices over time and compare with changes in policy.

• Combine teacher interviews and analysis with classroom observations of student-teacher and student-student interactions in multicultural classrooms.

• Conduct an ethnographic study of teacher practice in multicultural classrooms with high and low multicultural diversity.

• Conduct an ethnographic study of how students learn in a multicultural classroom and what it means to be a non-native student in Italy.

Chapter VI Bibliography

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Appendix

Table A.1: Sample Interview Protocol

1. How many foreign students there are in your school? How many in your classroom?

   For how long have they been attending?
2. How is the grade of entry selected for foreign students?
3. Is the entry grade usually well chosen?
4. What resources are used to welcome foreign students in the classrooms?
5. What resources are used to integrate them?
6. What are the most recurrent problems you encounter in the classroom related to foreign students?
7. How do you try to solve them?
8. What are some examples of typical successes?
9. What are the main teaching strategies used to implement intercultural policy?
10. What kinds of activities do these include?
11. Ho do you find out about new resources? New information?
12. What are the pedagogical strategies and methodologies used to teach non-Italian students who do not know the language?
13. How do you connect with the foreign students' own culture?
14. How do you share their culture with the other students in the classroom?
15. How were you prepared as a teacher to work with foreign students?

16. What kinds of activities did this include?

17. How do you develop the intercultural class material?

18. Can you give me some examples?

19. What are the main difficulties? How do you try to overcome them?

20. Can you give me examples of a typical day in class?

Is there anything you would like to add?

Table A.2 Participants.

No	Name	Age	Teaching Position	Years of Teaching Experience	School Location	Year of Interview	Written Artifacts
1	Igenia	46	Italian and Social studies	15	Fermo (Lido Tre Archi)	T1	Yes
2	Paola	58	Italian and Social Studies	25	Fermo (Campiglione)	T1	Yes
3	Simona P.	38	Italian and French as a Foreign Language	15	Morrovalle	T1	No
4	Mariella	38	Italian, History and Geography	15	Monte San Pietrangeli	T1	Yes
				18	Fermo	T2	Yes
5	Marisa	32	Italian, History and Geography	10	Monte Urano	T1	No
6	Helene	58	French as a Foreign Language	25	Fermo	T1	No
7	Maria	37	Social worker	n.a.	Fermo	T1	No
8	Fabrizio	64	School Principal	32	Fermo	T1	Yes
9	Giovanni	41	Social Worker	N.A.	Fermo	T1	Yes

10	Natalia	33	English as a Foreign Language	15	Ripatransone	T2	Yes
				18	Colli del Tronto Arquata	T3	Yes
				20		T4	Yes
					Colli del Tronto	T4	
				21	Arquata		Yes
				22	Colli del Tronto Arquata		
11	Sandra	43	Italian and English as a Foreign Language	15	Fermo (Lido Tre Archi)	T2	Yes
12	Carlo	59	Italian and Social Studies	30	Fermo	T2	Yes
13	Simona M.	37	Italian and English as a foreign Language	10	Porto San Giorgio	T3	Yes
					Porto San Giorgio	T4	Yes
14	Daniela	34	Italian and English as a Foreign Language	10	Montegranaro	T2	No
					Torre San Patrizio Monte Urano	T3	