Chapter Six

Intercultural Pedagogy and Globalised Society: The Encounter with the Other – The Migrant

Luigia Melillo
Pegaso Online University, Italy
luigia.melillo@unipegaso.it

Bernadette Arrigo
Pegaso Online University, Italy
bernadette.arrigo@virgilio.it

Pedagogy and Globalised Society

Underlying any pedagogical concept, which over time has seen a continuous adjustment of the educational activity by avoiding the application of standardised procedures, lies the notion of the 'human being,' whose intellectual and human formation today can only be developed through a constant process, covering the whole of a lifetime and based on individual responses to more or less concrete stimuli, aimed at formal and informal learning (Melillo, 2015).

The socio-economic changes of the last decades – known as globalisation[1] have changed the pattern that characterised education and pedagogy in the West until modern times. The extension of social, economic and political activities beyond national and continental borders, the mutual dependence of countries even thousands of kilometres apart, together with the progressive increase in commercial, financial, cultural and migratory phenomena and flows, the acceleration in goods production and transportations, the influence of geographically

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[1] Beyond the numerous definitions of the term globalisation that have followed one another over the last twenty years, it is possible to summarise the issue with that 'process (or set of processes) consisting of a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions, which produces transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and power' (Held et al., 1999, pp. 7–8).

distant events capable of modifying economies and lifestyles on another continent, have all strongly marked the growth of the global village by sharpening both the increasing deregulation and privatisation of identity formation processes and the weakening of authority, associated with value messages and the fragmentation of life (Bauman, 2002, p. 162).

While moving increasingly towards a progressive 'institutionalisation of individualisation' which generates insecurity and precariousness (Beck, 2000, p. 16) pedagogy has lost its usual references, and education has lost its effectiveness. There are no more decompositions from the complex to the simple and conversions from chaos to order but, on the contrary, there is the ability to relate to complexity and context in a multidimensional and global manner (Morin, 2001, p. 38). Meanwhile, Portera (2003b, p. 55) argues that the new challenge for pedagogy lies in accepting change without locking oneself uncritically in the past (proposing methods, strategies and objectives that events have overtaken) and embracing all the current trends without criticism.

Based on a new recognition of the intrinsic value of culture and education, it is increasingly necessary to develop the knowledge of choice, seen as the *ability to choose,* select and synthesise, learn to learn, whilst mastering and adopting tools properly and developing critical abilities to understand the complex reality around us, rethinking and renewing pedagogy, making it a driving force for a positive change (Portera, 2003b).

Intercultural pedagogy can provide an opportunity to transform the concepts of identity and culture from a static level to a dynamic and constantly evolving one at the centre of which is, once again, a man in his entirety, without any linguistic, cultural, social or religious affiliations (Secco, 1999; Portera, 2003b). Such pedagogical revolution is an opportunity for individual and collective enrichment and growth, giving the encounter with 'the other,' with 'the different,' the possibility of comparison and reflection for deep, global and transcultural learning. In this situation of encounter, an area of contact takes shape, a so-called *Drittter Ort* (third place) (Wierlacher, 2003, pp. 257–264) where synthesis between two positions is replaced by an inclusive and collaborative synergy based on dialogue.

Thus, according to Sirna (1997, p. 14), intercultural pedagogy is that which renounces generalising and moralising visions. These discourses

reify the other, and instead, it looks at the relationships between subjects, contexts, processes and relational dynamics, striving to promote an educational practice that interacts constructively with the political-institutional and economic-social contexts. An intercultural pedagogy is a pedagogy that 'moves towards the universal' respecting the 'specificities' and the 'singularity' of people, which captures and values cultural diversity, the 'identical' that it is in the very structure of man and makes him so, but which does not coincide with any of his real determinations.

Integration Policies and Intercultural Pedagogical Approach

One of the fundamental questions that pedagogy has to answer undoubtedly concerns the interaction between people and between groups of people: Being a human being-in-the-world means being-together-with-others in a rapid and continuous interaction (Dusi, 2006). A coexistence is worthy of being investigated for a correct pedagogical reflection.

As Portera (2003b, p. 65) points out, several models of coexistence have been used. Still, they have all proved more or less unsuccessful: from the assumption of diversity as a threat, a model based on the elimination of the weakest has been formulated; from the myth of the good savage, primitive and backward, unilateral assimilation has been attempted or, conversely, total segregation from the dominant group without any possibility of interaction with the outside world; from the idea of the melting pot as the fusion of all cultural differences into a single culture to its failure in the self-segregation of the 'salad bowl'; from the universalism of communist regimes, which takes little account of differences, to the multiculturalism proposed by international organisations (UN and UNESCO) in which different cultures and religions coexist following the rules, at the risk of leading to separation.

The increasingly frequent migration processes have contributed to the need to analyse this issue under the impetus that the various immigration countries have received from the directives of international bodies. In the United States, following the failure of the idea mentioned earlier of the melting pot, the concept of multicultural education began to be introduced. As early as the 1970s, Canada and Australia formulated the first pedagogical responses to the phenomenon of immigration. In Europe, this phenomenon was initially limited to subjects coming from former colonies whose destination was mainly the former

homelands such as Belgium, England, France and the Netherlands. After that, we saw the second wave of subjects coming from countries of the Mediterranean basin towards the wealthy North of Europe. In recent years we have witnessed an increasing influx of migrants from third world countries, from war zones or from areas affected by international terrorism, which has had to be coped with those quota entries; many countries have introduced quota entries, tightening reception measures and security policies and worsening living conditions in the destination countries.

After many EU leaders criticised the concept of multiculturalism[2] from the pedagogical point of view, there has been a shift, especially in Europe, from a multicultural attitude to an intercultural dimension. At first, there was the problem of reducing difficulties linked to linguistic aspects using incentives for second-language learning and multicultural projects; subsequently, through interventions of an intercultural nature – solutions that value diversity with a relative approach or minimise it on a universal basis. In Italy, however, possibly owing to its past as a country of emigration, an intercultural approach became widespread from the advent of the very first migratory phenomena in the early 1980s. According to Santerini (2003, p. 61) the intercultural pedagogical approach[3] 'lies between universalism and relativism, but goes beyond them in a new synthesis.' Interculturality refers to a project, to the will to compare and to the search for constructive dialogue; as Camilleri (1993, p. 34) points out, where societies are multicultural, educational actions must be intercultural with an interaction that derives from a direct comparison with the other, from listening and from the predisposition to be constructive (Cambi, 2001, pp. 107–108).

The approach of intercultural pedagogy, contrary to the others, represents a real Copernican revolution: otherness, emigration and life in

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[2] In Europe, Angela Merkel (speech at the CDU conference, 17 October 2010) stated that multiculturalism had 'completely failed'; in 2011 David Cameron said that multiculturalism was a 'failed' policy of the past that weakened collective identity and encouraged different cultures to live separate lives; in 2011 Nicolas Sarkozy stated that multiculturalism had been 'a failure' because institutions were too concerned with safeguarding the cultures of immigrant citizens and not attentive enough to the identity of the host country. See Portera (2019).

[3] To better understand interculturality, it is worth clarifying the meanings of metaculture, transculture and multiculture.

a complex and multicultural society are not considered as risks of discomfort or illness, but as opportunities for personal and collective enrichment and growth; the encounter with the foreigner, with the ethnically and culturally different subject, represents a challenge, a possibility of confrontation and reflection on the level of values, rules and behaviour (Portera, 2003a, p. 6).

The relationship with the other, who is different, brings personal identity into play and represents an opportunity for individual and collective enrichment and growth.

Intercultural pedagogy, in this way, expressly rejects stativity and hierarchy and may be understood in the sense of the possibility of dialogue, of equal confrontation, without forcing the subjects involved to renounce *a priori* significant parts of their own cultural identity (Portera, 2019).

Moreover, the prefix 'inter' to the term 'culture' presupposes the relationship, interaction, and exchange among people. In this sense, the intercultural approach promotes contact, encounter, dialogue and confrontation (that is, being able to handle differences of opinion, disagreements and conflicts). In the light of these developments, there is a need to think about the appropriate forms of communication and dialogue in the present time to deal with increasing globalisation, interdependence and global cosmopolitanism. There is, therefore, a growing need for intercultural competencies (Portera, 2019, p. 5).

Attempts to define intercultural competence and its components are innumerable and come mainly from the Anglo-Saxon world; common to all definitions is the reference to the ability to use a broad spectrum of knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow the person who masters them to satisfy communication needs and to interact successfully with interlocutors from other cultures. However, in recent years, based on a dynamic concept of culture, a new way of understanding intercultural competence has also been emerging (Risager, 2009, p. 16):

> The concept of intercultural competence is best seen from a global perspective. As human beings, we are citizens of a world that are connected in so many ways. Intercultural competence is very much the competence of navigating in the world, both at the micro-level of social interaction in culturally complex settings and at the macro-levels through transnational networks like diasporas and media communications.

Intercultural competence is the ability to orient oneself in a world characterised by cultural complexity. There are no national, ethnic identities but transnational cultural processes and practices, determined by migratory movements and the spread of mass media.

Alterity, Identity and Culture

In the field of intercultural pedagogy, it is obviously impossible to ignore the concept of culture itself. This theme has been the subject of a wide-ranging anthropological reflection that began with a divisive vision.[4] during the 19th century and that from the second half of the 20th century, has evolved towards the concept of fusion, according to which culture is the result of exchanges and crossovers (Santerini, 2003, pp. 19–20).

Thanks to scholars such as Geertz,[5] Hannerz[6] and Benhabib,[7] the concept of culture in the field of intercultural pedagogy becomes a notion that identifies frayed, borderless realities that are difficult to define, constantly changing and subject to a continuous process of mutual influence (Giusti, 2004, p. 13).

Every culture is dynamic and permeable, subject to reciprocal influences and cannot be acquired passively or unilaterally; its dynamism lies in its capacity to evolve, adapt and readapt based on the different influences it has undergone and is undergoing, according to a mechanistic principle of reaction to situations, contingencies and events. According to Abdallah-Pretceille (2006, pp. 109), the concept of culture should be replaced by *culturality,* emphasising the instrumental func-

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[4] This vision ascribed to each local group and/or nation a certain culture linked to the territory itself (Geertz, 1999, p. 61; Amselle, 1999, p. 41).

[5] According to Geertz's (1998) interpretive-hermeneutic approach, culture is 'a set of historically transmitted meanings embodied in symbolic forms, including actions, discourses and objects of various kinds, through which individuals communicate with each other and share their experiences, conceptions and beliefs.'

[6] In Hannerz's (2001) relational perspective, 'as collective systems of meaning, cultures belong first and foremost to social relations and the networks of those relations. They belong to places only indirectly and without logical necessity.'

[7] The aspect of negotiability is, on the other hand, proposed by Benhabib (2005), according to whom 'Culture has become a synonym of identity, a marker and a differentiator of identity. Of course, culture has always been a marker of social distinction. What is new is that the groups that now form around these identity markers demand legal recognition and resource allocation from the state and its agencies to preserve and protect their cultural specificities. Identity politics drags the state into culture wars.'

tion of culture instead of its ontological function. Culturality shows that cultures are always on the move, unstable, varied, honeycombed. It can reconcile complex thoughts taking into account small details, interstices and diagonals of communication and culture.

However, culture should not be used as a diversion to conceal profound social inequalities: cultural and social spheres must always be related and integrated, never separated; the cultural difference must not merge with differences in social class, wealth or even gender; otherwise, the 'cultural' would risk becoming a factor of division and not of inclusion and comparison, as it should be. According to Abdallah-Pretceille (2006, p. 114) it would be useful to include the concept of otherness and of diversity in intercultural education: the keystone must be differences (rather than cultural similarities), the respect for the complexities of the encounter between two or more cultures and their contradictions. Therefore, the very concept of identity must take on a relational and dynamic meaning that could reflect countless social exchanges in building an open and continuous relationship with the other (Barth, 1995, p. 8). Intercultural pedagogy must put in place all the necessary strategies to ensure that others are recognisable for their differences: recognisable first and foremost as persons, a recognition that entails an unavoidable co-responsibility (Giusti, 2004, p. 42).

The aim of intercultural pedagogy is also to promote encounters with the other in search of shared meanings, comparing feelings, behaviours and worldviews; a prerequisite is a mutual willingness to question one's own point of view in an equal dialogue relationship, also through the role of communication. It is not a question of superimposing a new discipline, as an inter-culture, on disciplines that already exist, but instead of promoting different ways of reasoning and making inferences, looking at traditional disciplinary topics from different perspectives. It is a question of overcoming the divisions between the various fields of knowledge to emphasise the reciprocal interactions, urging teachers to implement an integrated teaching method, working on interdisciplinary projects on specific contents, on affinities between disciplines and thematic modules (Tassitari, 2002, pp. 19–20).

The Future and New Challenges of Intercultural Education

Considering the various papers analysed so far, it is clear that interculturality can and must play a key role within the pedagogical discipline. Having overcome compensatory educational strategies, the in-

tercultural approach has made it possible to become aware of the dynamic nature of individual cultures and identities, considering the foreigner, the change and life in pluralistic and multicultural societies in terms of a resource, an opportunity for personal and collective enrichment and growth. The intercultural approach taking effectively into account the advantages and risks of global society – founded on dialogue, confrontation and interaction – could give new vigour to all pedagogy (Portera, 2019, p. 13).

A pedagogy that, on the one hand, will have to open up to the potential of scientific research, more based on reliable and assessable scientific evidence and, on the other, it will have to draw on the legacy of the past, developing teaching models able to put the human being at the centre aiming at stimulating the activity and autonomy of children by introducing into their training intercultural models the search for dialogue, interaction with the others and with what is different, as well as the development of individual critical thinking that recognises and appreciates all forms of intelligence, according to Gardner (1993) and his multiple intelligences.

Moreover, according to Giusti (2017, p. 12) intercultural pedagogy should improve and facilitate the creation of educational systems inspired by the ideas of interculturality to assimilate ideas and ways of becoming young adults and then adults suitable for new societies in transformation and not closed to them.

Suppose the first task of intercultural pedagogy is to transmit a positive vision of migration, to educate the young generations in concrete and plural relationships, where ambiguities are possibilities and challenges to be exploited and mutually understood through interpersonal communication. In that case, the ultimate goal must be constructing an idea of 'open culture.' A culture that holds diversity together in respect of different specific needs and in the strength of the similarities that unite human beings.

In this way, the activities proposed in methodological and didactic-educational pathways may also have a positive impact on the family and social background of the students (Giusti, 2017, p. 172) and spill over into positive behaviour outside the school itself (p. 11).

Intercultural Learning and Foreign Languages
Successful communication between members of different cultures depends on the appropriate code used as the usual means of communi-

cation between different interlocutors. Sharing a common code does not only mean using the same language – the internationalisation of English as a *lingua franca* (shared language) does not *a priori* guarantee communication free of intercultural misunderstandings – but a minimum sharing of certain communicative intentions. Therefore, foreign languages have a decisive role in the communication process aimed at mutual understanding between different cultures, overcoming linguistic borders and cultural barriers. Nevertheless, foreign languages should not only be seen as a means of transmitting information on other cultures. Since the teaching and learning of foreign languages is one of the most important political instruments in the contemporary world, the teaching of foreign languages is also vested with new requirements and aims. The concept of the foreign language as a system of lexical, grammatical and phonetic notions is now obsolete. It is essential to supplement modern foreign language teaching with a communicative ability to perform linguistic acts and intercultural competence, thus creating an intercultural communication competence. Modern didactics has long been calling for the teaching of culture through language, thus leading to culture being considered a fifth skill alongside the traditional skills of reading comprehension/speaking and writing/speaking. Contemporary didactics even aims at transforming civilisation studies into more extensively cultural studies that identify their objective of learning in the target culture, considering its specific, not generic contents, and analysing its role concerning its own reality (Altmayer, 1997, pp. 86–112).

Interculturality in the field of language teaching seems almost a tautology: it is impossible to separate the learning of a foreign language from knowledge of the reference civilisation, although this approach has led to intercultural learning coinciding with that of knowledge, traditionally falling within the sphere of 'civilisation,' and transforming it into a transmission of data and facts.[8]

This contrasting approach has proved to be particularly suitable for dealing with cultural differences, allowing linguistic and cultural phenomena to be compared, thus highlighting different forms and functions in the mother tongue and the foreign language, or in one's own

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[8] Kramsch (1995, pp. 51–66) called this approach 'colonialist' in that it is based on an interest in a particular country and its culture without regard to its intercultural multiplicity and cross-cultural intersections.

culture and that of another nationality. Intercultural learning must focus on the learner, his interests and needs, personal experiences in life and the learning process. The language is always immersed in a sociocultural context, it is never isolated, and must also be presented to the learner in a contextual form, preferably through authentic texts, which represent the entire social reality and therefore also implicit aspects of the target culture, whilst requiring also an adequate competence in critical reception (Roche, 2001). Thus, intercultural teaching/learning aims to induce learners to develop empathy, critical tolerance and the ability to overcome conflict situations caused by intercultural misunderstandings whilst positioning themselves between the source and target cultures, allowing them to discover a new culture and, at the same time, to learn to perceive their own from a different perspective. With the decrease of monolingual classes and an increasing presence of international students or immigrants, the need to provide the student with a solid intercultural competence is fundamental and eliminate the use of unshared codes of behaviour and interactive structures.

Foreign language lessons, in fact, 'oblige' all the students to come into contact with diversity, to feel *alien, 'fremd,'* strangers to the language they study. Diversities recognised in the group as the dominant class beyond language lessons are annulled, certainties given by the mother tongue are questioned, and, at the same time, the ability to manage intercultural differences is developed. The language itself is no longer a means of transmitting information, a means of communication: it becomes a cultural expression, the basis and foundation of intercultural learning (Bleyhl, 1994, pp. 9–20).

It is, therefore, possible to identify the specific objectives of intercultural language learning:

- combining the knowledge of one's own culture with that of other cultures;
- developing open and proactive attitudes towards the other;
- promoting a critical spirit to reflect on conflicting attitudes;
- recognising the other as a subject of equal values and dignity
- recognising human rights.

In this way, through the teaching of foreign languages, it will be possible to achieve intercultural competence as an instrument of education for peace and civil coexistence (Diehr, 2007, pp. 169–176).

Interculturality in Teaching Practice

Intercultural education through teaching methodologies and techniques advances the goals of intercultural education, which, according to Bennet (1993, pp. 21–71) is achieved through five stages:

1. ethnocentrism – inability to understand differences and use of stereotypes;
2. recognition of differences;
3. respect;
4. assimilation;
5. integration and internalisation of differences.

It is, therefore, necessary to move away from the logic of culture and civilisation as a presentation of what characterises one people in relation to another and aim closer towards a perspective of intercultural communication in which the point of view is that of the interlocutor, according to whose perspective everyone is different (Caon, 2016, pp. 95–116).

The path towards intercultural learning must be to broaden the horizons and the individual dimension of the learner to enable interaction in situations of potential discomfort and conflict by highlighting feelings. According to Witte (2009, pp. 49–66) this path goes from ignorance to the relativisation of one's own interpretative models, passing through initial contact with the foreign language and then introducing moments of connection with real life and culture of the foreign country that may, in turn, conversely lead to an awareness of stereotypes, to a moment of metacognition in which one reflects on one's own way of thinking and acting. In this sense, the intercultural lesson is not only aimed at the acquisition of a new communicative competence but also the development of cognitive, metacognitive and relational knowledge.

Concerning the choice of contents to be proposed, it would be necessary to refer to universal experiences, independent of the culture to which one belongs, so that such may constitute a bridge on which to base the intercultural exchange. In this way, the subject – also through role-play and dramatisation – may arrive at a communicative exchange. Therefore, Metacognitive reflection will be based not only on a linguistic-cultural reflection but also on semantics and pragmatics. These aspects are not only reflected in the didactics of foreign

languages and civilisation but also in the didactics of literature, when the literary text becomes a tool for intercultural analysis.

From Foreign Culture and Civilisation to Intercultural Communication

Assuming an intercultural perspective in language teaching requires revising the teaching method to present a model to observe cultural differences and similarities, inducing students to create their own intercultural communication manual (through various cultural stimuli: films, documentaries, exchange projects) whilst assuming a lifelong learning logic. Moreover, this cultural dimension is based on the communicative approach since teaching aims to develop communication competencies and since this competence in L2 necessarily implies the presence of two interlocutors with different mental and cultural backgrounds. In the light of the preceding, the intercultural dimension may become a subject for teaching (Caon, 2016): language skills will no longer be only receptive and productive ones but also relational ones in terms of interculturality.

The concept of communicative competence, developed by the American anthropologist and sociolinguist Dell Hymes (1971) in the 1960s, is adopted in the communicative approach and has recently evolved into Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). Balboni and Caon (2015) offer their own model of CCI, and it integrates the mastering of relational competencies, the possession of fundamental skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking, interaction) and the ability to 'make language'; the perfect balance of these components allows the learner to act effectively in intercultural communicative events, i.e. in situations involving interaction not only between speakers of different languages but also between active and aware members of different cultures.

However, unlike linguistic-communicative competence, ICC is not entirely teachable or measurable but rather a sensibility that the L2 learner must refine with the help of a guide. The teacher can, in fact, train learners so that they may experience a positive, open and willing approach to the most diverse cultural factors. To this end, the teacher guides the learners in the non-critical observation of socio-cultural phenomena, and proposes, in the form of input, the different declinations in the world of the same cultural model, so that they become accustomed to an evaluation free of any form of prejudice. An interesting model of intercultural communicative competence is the follow-
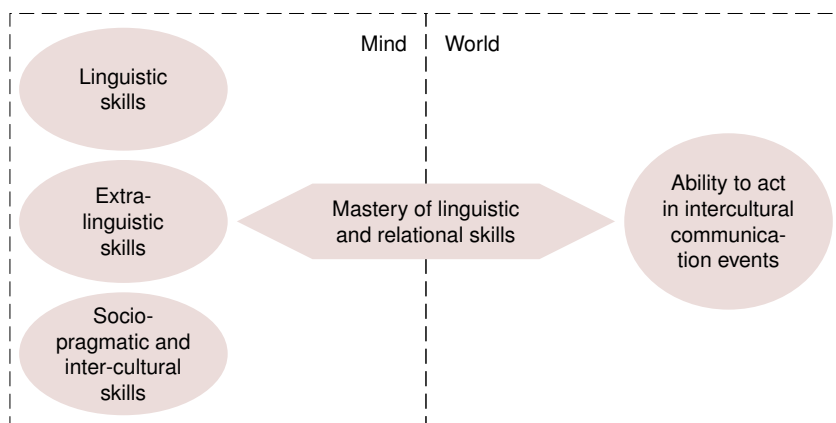
FIGURE 6.1   Intercultural Communication Competence Model
(adapted from Balboni & Caon, 2015)

ing, proposed by Balboni and Caon (2015) themselves (Figure 6.1). As is clearly shown in this model, the development of an adequate intercultural communicative competence requires the development of specific relational skills: being able to observe, decentralise and distance oneself (removing the impact of previous experiences and stereotypes), being able to defer judgement (in cases of potential intercultural crisis) and to relativize (awareness of the partiality of one's own point of view), to listen actively (overcoming dichotomies based on the awareness as mentioned earlier), to understand emotionally (based on empathy – the ability to participate in the emotional state of the interlocutor actively – and exotopia – the ability to recognise one's own and others' differences); ultimately to negotiate meanings (highlighting the purposes of an expression or gesture) (Balboni, 2015, pp. 1–20).

Sharing Caon's (2016) assumption that intercultural communication – being a complex and dynamic phenomenon – cannot be taught for both qualitative and quantitative reasons, it is instead possible, thanks to an intercultural approach, to stimulate learners to build up an in-progress manual they can integrate, autonomously, the different information derived from the observation of the cultural reality of the other in a wide-ranging perspective (e.g., with films, readings, direct experiences, etc.). Obviously, it will be necessary for a teaching approach to differentiate between the two areas of English as a lingua franca and other languages. In the first case, such teaching opens the way to interculturality without, however, treating it in a systematic and spe-

cific way, but working on creating an attitude of intercultural availability aimed at facilitating communication itself. On the other hand, on the methodological level relating to the intercultural dimension, in the teaching of languages other than ELF, the aim is to teach how to observe and classify, becoming autonomous, first of all, towards one's own culture.

Classes with Differentiated Linguistic Abilities

A brief analysis of CAD (Classes of Differentiated Language Abilities) may be engaging in the context of the present work since it regards classes with students differing in language level, cultural background, learning styles, attitude towards language, mother tongue, intelligence, world knowledge, learning experience, knowledge of other languages, age or maturity, gender, personality, self-confidence, motivation, interests, self-discipline and level of education (Ur, 1996, p. 304).

These classes – an ordinary reality in European countries that are increasingly subject to migratory phenomena should not be seen as a simple summation of different and diverse people but rather as a dynamic system that depends on the nature and contribution of each person constituting it and acts within it. CAD presents itself as an open system in which the parameters of 'difference,' which may be recorded in several aspects and on several levels, are the key to the effective management of language learning (Caon & Tonioli, 2016, p. 140).

Caon and Tonioli (2016, p. 145) consider language learning as the first step towards a broader training in which the specificity of social mediation methods (such as Cooperative Learning) aims to simultaneously enhance linguistic-communicative, social and relational, cultural and intercultural, metacognitive and meta-emotional skills. In this sense, preference would be given to the use of L2, the integration of linguistic and non-linguistic codes (especially with low-level students), the comprehension of the input, the interaction by all students, the use of varied resources, socialisation and interpersonal relations (through cooperative activities), interdisciplinary abilities, the integration of multimedia and hypermedia materials, the use of metacognitive teaching, the request for feedback, the evaluation of progress.

Teaching Italian to Migrants

As already highlighted, the massive migratory phenomena that have affected Europe in the 21st century have often seen Italy as the country

of first landing and reception, imposing mandatory management of migrants arriving on the peninsula sometimes considered a bridge to other European countries and sometimes the final destination of long journeys. They all share a significant socio-cultural and personal past. The first and second level reception centres have guaranteed Italian language courses open to all guests but creating highly heterogeneous (Diadori, 2015) groups from many points of view and multicultural and multi-level classes. The typology of the learners – mainly adults and young adults – in these cases, is just as varied: although they fall into what is more generically defined as the immigrant profile, they are mainly asylum seekers and refugees, who often have less solid or shorter-term plans; some even already know they want to stay in Italy for a minimal time, which will negatively affect their motivation, at least the extrinsic one, to learn Italian.

Moreover, since the arrival in the reception centres, especially in those of second reception[9] may occur in different phases of the migrant's period of stay. It is very common to find learners in the same group who have been living in Italy for several years together with others who have arrived only a few months before. It usually implies (although not necessarily) the former has a more profound knowledge of the L2 compared to the latter, where it is not rare to find learners coming from a background of very little or no schooling (Galli, 2017). Understanding the learners' linguistic background and having at least a general idea of the characteristics of the languages already acquired helps to understand some features of interlanguages better[10] and particularly to identify or predict transfer phenomena – linguistic behaviour dictated by the influence of previous linguistic knowledge.

Motivation is undoubtedly an element that influences learning and which, in the case of migrants, may be decisive to acquire the L2 of the country of arrival. In such cases, teachers can rely on both instrumental and integrative motivations. According to Vedovelli (2010) it is possible to consider the domains in which the migrant is mainly immersed daily, and it can be the starting point to reach his objectives and to satisfy his most immediate needs, taking into account the length of

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[9] Former SPRAR – Central Service of the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (https://www.siproimi.it/la-storia).

[10] According to Selinker (1972), who was the first to coin the term and develop the concept, interlanguage is that self-contained language system that results from the learner's attempts to reproduce the target language.

time of the learner's stay, his experience and his plans for the future. However, the integrative motivation of learners wishing to assimilate the target language and culture to actively and positively integrate into the host society and territory is essential and obviously more prevalent among migrants intending a long-term stay.[11] If some type of motivation is present, the teacher's task will be undoubtedly simplified, but it will be essential to meet all these needs and base teaching on them, first of all with the choice of materials to be used.

In reception centres for migrants, learning a language is a fundamental part of the integration project in the host territory and social fabric, as it is clearly a goal of primary importance.

Therefore, it is clear how the Italian course fits into a complex and constantly changing reality and how it must be able to adapt to it, welcoming external aspects and managing to export something outside the classroom. It is therefore essential not to create a clear and enforced separation between the didactic and extra-didactic contexts so that the former does not become an aseptic place where only abstract notions are learned (Mamusa, 2020).

The input to be provided will also be linked to the local and cultural reality, without sanctioning any interference between commonly used or dialectal expressions and standard Italian since this highlights the migrant's readiness to learn the language. The direct experience of the student can become an opportunity to introduce cultural issues in a perspective of comparison with their own uses and origins, considering the classroom as an intercultural place, where one may learn to make the best use of linguistic resources to relate and to integrate into the host's contextual environment (Celentin, 2017).

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[11] Researches carried out in the 1970s by a group of German scholars (Meisel et al., 1981) analyse these elements' importance how some characteristics in the interlanguage used by migrant learners depend on their attitude toward the host group. In Italy, the developed model has been integrated into Giotto-Kit.

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