

# QuaMMELOT



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## La pedagogia dell'accoglienza

*Ragazze e ragazzi stranieri  
nella scuola dell'obbligo*



EDIZIONI ETS

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## INTERCULTURAL DIDACTICS EXPERIENCES

The idea that the reality of schools will be increasingly inhabited by different ethnic groups and that this process will lead all of them, teachers and students, to be beneficiaries and bearers of a cognitive heritage that can evolve more appropriately to the times, more responsive to both personal expectations and those of society, this is an idea shared only by minds who agree to decentralize, to relativize their identity, their culture. The ability of schools to respond effectively depends on the willingness of teachers to change the traditional culture and to rework it in the light of the pressures of new presences, with the conviction that the result of such a reworking will constitute a new heritage, more complex and complete, for all students and not only for newcomers, both for the content and for the methods used. It is not new to say that what teenagers are depends on the stimuli and responses they receive during school hours, the ability to work in a proactive and collaborative way.

Educational communication has two sides: on the one hand, the interpersonal side, i.e. the relationships between the subjects and, on the other, the side of the disciplines, i.e. the contents. In the learning process (from the ways of learning to its products), knowledge that does not coincide with scholastic knowledge must also be taken into consideration. When we talk about knowledge we refer not only to cognitive knowledge, that is to say rational knowledge, because man does not only communicate with reason, but also with all the other forms of knowledge that put him in relation with others: it is knowledge that passes through emotional communication, creative knowledge, perceptual knowledge, which are then the most immediate that pass through the senses, in daily communication. They are all knowledge that can be displaced with respect to school knowledge (P. Orefice, *Il lavoro intellettuale in educazione*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1991, p. 157). It is a matter of restructuring the cognitive fields, the appropriate value orientations for each school level and inserting them into the experience fields for kindergarten and the disciplinary curricula for primary and secondary school. The three proposals have been observed in multiple areas of intercultural intervention: schools, reception centers, university training centers (laboratories of the Faculty of Education, University of Florence) and, despite the limited methodological-didactic system, are considered significant for the ability to suggest and stimulate disciplinary curricula for primary and secondary schools.

The didactic path, *Il Sé e l'Altro (The Self and the Other)* addressed to the boys and girls of the first level secondary school, aims at overcoming the present connotation of traditional teaching centred on the cognitive and denotative aspects of the linguistic-relational competence of the learners, in order to privilege the emotional, connotative and proxemics aspects of this competence. These factors, in fact, less visible than the first ones, but strongly present and conditioning, are of crucial importance for the development of a correct ability to relate between human beings and, however, usually do not fall within the traditional teaching criteria. The failure to manage a level of pre-logical and pre-rational communication, affective, immediate, somatic and pre-linguistic, can produce circles of exclusion, misunderstanding, violence acted as well as verbal, and a non-resolution of conflicts. It cannot be based on moralistic attitudes, nor on personal psychological compensations that would be even worse, but it must necessarily be based on facts, objective data and, therefore, scientific data. There is therefore a need to know what are the conflicting problems that determine discrimination social and cultural. We can mention some of them but, as we know, there are a lot of cases. First of all, there are identity problems. Every type of difference, even the one that in a class seems normal, presents as one of its fundamental problems that of identity: it wonders "who am I" compared to the others. The conflict situation determines a whole series of defense mechanisms that the teacher must keep in mind in interpersonal relations and therefore in the organisation of teaching (P. Orefice, *Il lavoro intellettuale in educazione*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1991, p.160).

In particular, the entire community of belonging of the subject who set them up is held responsible for each social event: community understood as the sum of formal and informal social groups (school, friends, family, network of knowledge), with which the subjects enter directly and indirectly into a relationship. Problems of acceptance also arise from the environment; hence the need for actions to have an impact on the environment itself, because clearly it is not only the subject who has difficulty in being accepted, but also the environment is put in crisis where it finds a different one, because its ways of being are questioned, the ways of organizing its life because, normally each of us, when it is inserted in an environment, adopts a series of automatisms, even in the ways of thinking and behaving that, in the presence of the different, get jammed. Where there is a different subject, there is a cultural gap, there is a difficulty of insertion and acceptance, so it is the same environment that needs to be restructured. On the part of the environment it is easy to put in place resistance, stereotypes, prejudices and any other type of defense of the status quo. The current models of individual self-knowledge, within the subjective mind, put as a preliminary conception of a multiple and discontinuous structure. The self emerges from a mutually constitutive process between the "mental" and the "social"; it does not emerge, however, as a monolithic structure, but in

the form of successive and complementary stratifications constituted by multiple identifications (Kurt Lewin realized that from preadolescence, through adulthood to death, human life is a continuous restructuring of the self through the "passage of groups". The boy, the man, the elderly, constantly migrates from one group to another. This "passage of groups" leaves a deep furrow in the individual personality, which is then forged and built on the relationships woven within the micro social aggregates. (P. Àmerio, *Individui e gruppi nell'ottica cognitiva psicosociale*, in G. Trentini (a cura di), *Il cerchio magico. Il gruppo come oggetto e come metodo in psicologia sociale e clinica*, Franco Angeli, Milano 1987. Franco Angeli, Milano 1987. E. Di Mabilia-G. Lavanco-C. Novara (a cura di), *Barbaro o straniero. Una lettura psicomodinamica delle comunità multietniche*, Franco Angeli, Milano 1999).

The mental/individual is closely connected to the social/relational. The intervention on the single person acquires sense and specificity within a network, group intervention perspective of reference. The feeling of 'we', the cognition of the dynamic interdependence between the individual, the group and society, is the main quality of a social group. The subject moves in the social sphere, not under the pressure of pre-established internal factors, but on the basis of theories about himself and about the social sphere created by the mind through continuous elaboration. It is not the social that imposes itself on the individual, nor vice versa: the subject lives immersed in the social world, constantly modifying it in accordance with his own active experience. Action is the operative bridge between the two instances, mediated by social microsystems: the school class, the school, friends. The *Parole per conoscersi (Words to get to know each other)* path concerns the way of learning and communicating the Italian language through the use of the disciplinary laboratory as an organizational didactic model based on the strategy of learning by discovering. Communication, in fact, finds in the laboratory the natural seat to attribute a training function to verbal and nonverbal language; socialization finds the opportunity to be realized through the structural repertoires of a space that allows to promote individual, couple and small-medium-large group activities; exploration finds a cognitively well equipped seat for the realization of the curriculum provided for the disciplinary linguistic area. A school rich in workshop spaces not only awakens the needs of the most deprived and marginalized students who need to communicate and socialize more, but it also becomes capable of generating new and original needs. In this perspective, the laboratory becomes a place of production and cultural transformation, as a didactic environment for research-discovery, creativity and becomes, at the same time, a specialized classroom and a diagnostic-emancipatory context. The laboratory becomes the place where to deepen the concepts and contents of the single disciplines but also the combination of thought with the action of thinking and doing.

## **PATH “THE SELF AND THE OTHER”**

The aim of the course is to encourage a process of strengthening the sense of self and one's own image in adolescents with the greatest difficulties and to ensure that this improvement favours, within school life, better harmony and the ability of individuals to work. Among the priority objectives, the project foresees to enhance cultural differences, in view of a better knowledge of the other, so that diversity is a profitable enrichment for all and to promote the socio-cultural integration of the students using emotional stimuli compared to a type of learning centered on the "feasibility" and "enforceability" of the work. A learning that has been done in a certain emotional-environmental situation, in fact, remembers better if you can reconstruct that same state.

Building a good emotional climate is facilitating, not only at the time of learning acquisition but also at the time of recall of previously acquired learning (by activating, through emotional memories, the neuronal networks sites of storage of learning content). It is therefore necessary to deepen a participatory perspective where there is no boundary between observing / learning and participating / acting. Change is a necessity and participation is a valid and desirable alternative to prevarication over ideas and people. Empathy is an effective strategy of interpersonal communication, valid and competent. Its advantage lies in the degree of well-being and understanding it leaves in all those involved, because it produces a real culture of dialogue, peaceful resolution of conflicts, non-violence, sharing. Educating to the empathic encounter is the attempt to recover the ability to interrelate freely and peacefully, building adaptive processes, bearers of individual and collective well-being and crossing the inability of verbal encounter. It is necessary to choose a way in which the aspects of the mind and heart are integrated in order to create a common and shared emotional grammar, capable of reducing the spaces of pathologically aggressive disorder and of expanding, instead, those of the empathic sphere of social bonds. Since the beginning of this century, an active education has carried out the principle of the social foundation of education and has underlined the centrality of the socioaffective dimension in the formative processes. Today the teaching-learning situations and the scholastic one in particular tend to pursue the development not only of sectorial aspects but of the global personality of the students. Fundamental in this respect can be considered the research carried out by K. Lewin (K.Lewin-R.Lippitt-R.White, *Patterns of Aggressive Behavior in Experimentally Created Social Climates*, in “Journ. Sc. Psycol”, 10,1939,pp.271-299) and M. Deutsch (M. Deutsch, The Effect of Cooperation and Competition upon Group, in “Human Relations”, 2, 1949, pp.129-152) which have highlighted that the social climate of the group exerts specific influences on the productivity and behavior of the students. "In particular, Lewin, Lippitt and White showed that the democratic climate favours collaboration,

confirmation and identification processes, autonomy and productivity of individual student, while the authoritarian climate generates competition, mutual hostility, insecurity, lack of autonomy towards the adult and lack of originality in problem solving" (L. Trisciuzzi - F. Corchia, *Manuale di pedagogia sperimentale Metodi e problem*, Ed ETS, Pisa 1995, pp. 172-173). The project is composed of four phases, aims to find effective ways to increase empathic, cooperative and collaborative relationships within school groups and concerns the attempt to reduce the social risk associated with the problematic conduct of subjects and their evolution in an antisocial sense. Today, the model of the circular interaction between the individual, the environment and society is widely shared and implicit in most studies in the psychosocial field. The first phase aims to investigate the situation of the existing relations between the students of the class using the sociometric text by J.L. Moreno (J.L. Moreno, *Who shall survive? A new approach to the problem of human interrelations. Nervous and mental disease*, Publ. Co., Washington 1943) chosen for the ease with which it is possible to investigate the relational affective aspect of the students within the class of which they are part. The configuration of interrelationships, which is obtained by using this criterion, refers to affective relationships that are based on psychological affinities and not on considerations of the individual's practical skills. The questions used are four in all, of which the first two refer to the principle of choice / repulsion identified by J.L. Moreno while the third and fourth questions, starting from a different perspective, are used to investigate the ability of the individual that students have to represent themselves within the class group (state perception). G. Bastin recalls that "a man situated in a group acts and reacts not according to a real sociometric statute, but according to the social position that he believes to be his, according to the perception that he has of the bonds that unite him to others". (G. Bastin, *Le tecniche sociometriche*, tr.it.,SEI, Torino 1963, p. 8).

*First question:* if you organized a party, who would you choose among your companions to bring him to your home?

*Second question:* if you organized a party, who would you not choose from your companions to bring him to your home?

*Third question:* among your companions, who do you think chose you at the first question to have a party at his house?

*Fourth question:* among your companions, who do you think pointed you to the second question so as not to invite you to the party at his house?

The set of answers obtained constitutes the so-called sociometric matrix, which is first and foremost a tool for analysis and not for synthesis (P. Guidicini, *Manuale della ricerca sociologica*, Franco

Angeli, Milano 1980, p.385). The tabulation uses a survey grid that aims to highlight for each learner the number of choices made, the number of refusals paid, the index of expansiveness, the index of perception of state in the choices, the index of perception of state in the waste:

<b>Detection grid</b>		
Name.....		
Choose classmates	<=>	ask to be states chosen by him/her
Reject classmates	<=>	believe they are refused by him/her
Believes to be chosen	<=>	the chosen one by ... mates
Believes to be refused	<=>	the refuse by ... classmate(s)
Choices made:.....		
Waste received:.....		
Expansivity index:.....		
Index of state perception in the choices:.....		
Index of state perception in the waste:.....		

Through the elaboration of the table we obtain a large amount of information concerning both the indices related to the social status of individuals within the class, and the type of relationships existing within the class group as a whole. The expansiveness index is represented by the ratio existing between the total number of choices and the total number of wastes expressed by the subject.

When the expansiveness index is lower than 1 it assumes a negative value, while when it is higher than 1 it assumes a positive value and it can be said that the subject is affectively oriented towards opening up to others and is ready to experiment in new interpersonal relationships.

The index of state perception in choices is given by the relationship existing between the number of choices of which an individual believes to have been object and the number of choices actually obtained.

An individual has a good perception of the quality of his or her relationships when approaching others (choices) as the value of this index approaches 1. The index of state perception in waste is given by the ratio existing between the number of wastes of which an individual believes to have been the object and the number of wastes actually obtained.

An individual has a good perception of the quality of his relationships in the phase of estrangement from others (waste) as the value of this index approaches 1 and allows us to understand if there is a good ability to represent himself within the class group regarding the mode of estrangement-repulsion. In this way it is possible to detect the roles that take on a particular meaning within the



group of students.

The elaboration process then uses the sociogram of sociometric distance which reproduces the one existing between a given subject and all the other members of the group. The distance is calculated on the sociometric matrix by making the algebraic sum of the four indices: sociometric ratio from A to B, sociometric ratio from B to A, sociometric perception of A with respect to B, sociometric perception of B with respect to A. Each choice is assigned a value of +1, while each repulsion is assigned a value of -1. The individual sociogram is presented in the form of 9 concentric circles, at the center of which is located the subject. The first circle, from the center, is worth +4, the outer circle is worth -4. It is enough then to place all the other subjects of the group on one of these circles, to realize the sociometric distance between them and the subject of which the individual sociogram is being represented (A. Reffieuna, *Le relazioni in classe: il test sociometrico*, Carocci, Roma 2003).

The analysis of the individual sociometric situation allows teachers to acquire important indications not only on the experiences of individual adolescents within the class, but also on the attitude with respect to "being in class", as is experienced by everyone the emotional relational climate.

The second phase of the project makes use of the comparison of the imaginative experience of each guy with that of a peer to start in the a greater awareness of themselves, acquire diversity as a value and mature the pleasure of staying in school.

Students elaborate a description of themselves by drawing on their own world and imagination.

In this personal paradigm the awareness of the passage from the ego to the other develops, which is a guarantee for the construction of a climate of mutual recognition, respect and collaboration, especially in the presence of situations that can make integration processes difficult.

## **PATH “WORDS TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER”**

The intercultural linguistic literacy project "Parole per conoscersi" (Words to get to know each other) is a project for the first reception of prompt linguistic intervention, aimed at all foreign students in first and second level secondary schools. It aims to meet the educational needs of non-Italian-speaking students and, in particular, those relating to the delicate phase of reception and initial linguistic literacy, while respecting the culture of origin and trying to guarantee foreign students the opportunity to communicate effectively in Italian and to know the reality in which they now live. The project foresees the elaboration of a laboratory of prompt linguistic intervention through a wide involvement.

The objectives of the project are those of:

1. to provide a model of intervention articulated in the various linguistic levels to speed up the

integration of foreign students in their respective classes, taking into account their cultural peculiarities;

2. to outline a pedagogical and didactic reference framework for the teaching of L2, diversified for the three different school orders;

3. identify spaces and prepare materials for the activities of language laboratories;

4. provide tools to facilitate insertion and socialization.

The choice of laboratory teaching derives from the conviction that this type of activity is based on the intersubjective exchange between students and teachers in an equal way of work and cooperation, combining the skills of teachers with those in training of students. And the research carried out with this method is a didactic path that not only transmits knowledge but, very often, opens new paths of knowledge and produces new documentary sources.

Laboratory teaching, which can already be found in the pedagogy of J. Dewey's activism, cultivates three principles that are of particular interest: the aims of education must be based on the intrinsic needs of the learner; cooperation contributes effectively to 'freeing and organizing' the abilities of the learner and transforming them into skills; the educational value of activities lies in the connections and flexibility of paths recognized by the student as significant for themselves and expendable in the task of intervening in reality. The class in which foreign students are placed becomes an open class, to give them the opportunity to attend, in the morning, the language laboratory, where they will find other classmates who do not know the Italian language. In the laboratory, interactive lessons are preferred to the frontal ones. Each school prepares a class for this purpose, set up with a multicultural shelf, equipped with structured material such as, for example, dictionaries, atlases, various illustrative material, collection of traditional texts, audio and video cassettes, audio recorder, television and video recorder so that stimulating, from time to time, the visual, auditory, gestural, cognitive elements, can promote the contribution of each student, according to their abilities and preferences.

The realization of the project takes place throughout the school year and consists of three phases: the design, the implementation of language workshops and evaluation.

The linguistic-communicative objectives that the laboratory aims to achieve are concrete and measurable through targeted tests and trials. The objectives can thus be divided:

- Functional, related to "knowing how to do with the language"(P. Balboni, *Didattica dell'italiano a stranieri*, Bonacci, Roma 1994, p. 34). The aim is to acquire a language that is useful and functional to the needs of foreign students.

- Cultural, related to the knowledge of the cultural reality of the new country in which he lives and the countries of origin of others.

- Grammar, related to the knowledge of morphological and syntactic rules.

- Lexical, relating to the set of lexical morphemes that constitute a language.
- Phonetics, related to "knowing how to discriminate and reproduce sounds".

The first activity within the language laboratory is the entrance test, which is a tool that allows the teacher to better identify the linguistic-communicative objectives to which the laboratory programming should aim. The entrance test consists of eleven tests relating to the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) at a different level, in relation to the levels of the Framework - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

## TABLE

### DETECTION OF ITALIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS OF NON-ITALOPHONE STUDENTS

According to the Framework's reference parameters:  
COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES

In relation to the four skills:  
ORAL COMPREHENSION (LISTEN)  
ORAL PRODUCTION (SPEAKING)  
WRITTEN COMPREHENSION (READ)  
WRITTEN PRODUCTION (WRITING)

The ability to listen at a level of competence 1 consists of two different tests, one of those about closed questions, relating to the personal data of the students, the other about simple instructions and commands, relating to the life of the class, which the student must perform.

The ability to speak at a level of competence is detected through a test consisting of three open questions, relating to a proposed image to which the students must respond.

The teacher detects if the student uses common sentences and recurrent formulas for imitation, or expressions of a single word, or if he does not answer.

Reading and writing skills at a level of competence are detected through a test that takes place in two distinct moments: the first involves reading by the students. The teacher detects if the learner can recognize letters and words for visual discrimination, if he can decode the words even without knowing the meaning, if he reads and understands the most commonly used words. The second, relative moment to the ability to write, is based on a test related to the sentences read in the detection of reading skills and provides: the copy of some words and phrases, the repetition of some

words stored during the reading and writing of some sentences under the dictation of the teacher.

	LISTENING	TALKING	READING	WRITING
LEVEL 1	<p>Answer questions: yes/no closed questions</p> <p>Performs: easy commands and guidance related to life class</p>	<p>Use phrases of: one word, formulas or sentences for imitation</p> <p>Recalls Attention</p>	<p>Recognise letters and words (discrimination visual)</p> <p>Decoding words without comprehend the meaning</p> <p>Law and includes words well-known Copy</p>	<p>Writes words saved</p> <p>Writes words under dictation (also with bugs orthographic)</p>
	BOARD n. 1	BOARD n. 2	BOARD n. 3	BOARD n. 4

The following Boards no. 1 and no. 2 refer to the Listening ability and the Talking ability at competence level 1.

Board n. 1

Skill entry test-listen level: 1

Task:

The teacher asks the questions and bars the answer given by the student

1. Your name is.....?

YES

NO

2. Have you been in Italy for a long time?.....?

YES

NO

3. Where are you living.....?

YES

NO

4. Are you from .....?

YES

NO

5. Have you got any friends at this school.....?

YES

NO

6. Do you like animals .....

YES

NO

Task:

The teacher executes the instructions and indicates whether the student performed well or badly

1. Take the notebook and the pen

YES

NO

2. Give me a red pencil

YES

NO

3. Come to the blackboard

YES

NO

4. Go to the door

YES

5. Open window/close window

YES

NO

6. Stand up/Sit down

YES

NO

7. Get close to that boy!

YES

NO

8. Come to me

YES

NO

The ability to listen at a level of competence 2, is detected following two different tests. The first is made up of open-ended questions relating to the teenagers' personal data, to which the student must respond; the second test is made up of instructions and tasks relating to the life in the class.

The ability to speak is detected by a board that consists of two moments: in the first each student reads the proposed text, in the second the teacher asks questions useful to start a guided conversation on the subject and checks if the student responds by naming objects, places, people, if he can produce simple phrases, or if he participates in a real conversation.

The writing ability is detected through board no. 8, which consists of two tests: the first is composed of a series of statements to be completed with lexical and morphosyntactic elements missing, relating to the physical descriptions of people; the second test consists of a piece to be read individually, followed by a series of open questions: the first four referring to the text, the other three addressed to the tastes and preferences of the students.

	LISTENING	TALKING	READING	WRITING
LEVEL 2	Replies to open questions on known subjects  Executes tasks and instructions more complex	Indicates and calls objects, people, places  Produces simple sentences even if not correct  Participates in easy conversation	Reads and understands simple sentences  Reflects on the meaning of unfamiliar words	Writes spontaneously words and simple phrases on known situations (also with errors orthographic)  Writes captions Writes checklists Write data personal
	BOARD n. 5	BOARD n. 6	BOARD n. 7	BOARD n. 8

The ability to listen at level 3, includes a board reserved for the teacher of the laboratory, who fills it in by answering questions relating to the understanding of the Italian language by the students who have passed level 2 of understanding of the ability to listen.

The ability to speak is detected through a board consisting of a text that describes the members of a family, followed by a series of open questions.

The reading ability is detected through a board that includes a text that each student must read individually, followed by a series of questions, to which each student must respond in writing.

The writing ability is detected through a card that consists of a series of open-ended questions, on the theme of the preferred game.

The board detects the ability to write short texts spontaneously, even if with errors and uncertainties

in vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, grammar links.

	LISTENING	TALKING	READING	WRITING
LEVEL 3	Understands a large part of the language of peers and the communication of the teacher  Can understand the explanations even if helped	Can talk about personal matters  Can speak in class on known topics  Starts to use different language registers according to the interlocutor	Reads and understands simple narrative and informative texts	He spontaneously writes short texts, although with errors and uncertainties of vocabulary, dotting, spelling
	BOARD n. 9	BOARD n. 10	BOARD n. 11	BOARD n. 12

The European framework states that every teaching proposal must be centred on the learner and his or her needs, which are a constituent element of the learning process. The quantity and quality of the network of communicative exchanges within the relationship between teachers and students and between students and students, between the educational context and the extradidactic context, are decisive to develop the linguistic-communicative input that promotes the processes of elaboration in L2.

The project "Words to get to know one another" considers the teaching of Italian L2 as an important vehicle of integration that is an open approach, dialogue, exchange and comparison with the other, in a very delicate moment for teenagers, which is that of the transition from secondary school grade 1 to secondary school grade II, not often supported by families who do not have linguistic tools.

The language laboratory can operate in a small group, it allows emerging difficulties related to language, experiences, feelings and emotions. We can say, therefore, that the construction of one's own identity refers to the theme of encounter and the experience of otherness. The construction of the identity is not constituted by the simple fact that we are here and, every time we speak, we say "I". Identity is built from the recognition of the other. Individual identity has its roots in the dialectic between the self and the other (A. Genovese, *Per una pedagogia interculturale*, op. cit, p. 148).