Intercultural Education on the Move: Facing Old and New Challenges

Conference Proceedings

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organized by the

International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE)

and

Hellenic Open University (HOU), Greece

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&

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Conference Strands

Strand 1: Intercultural/Multicultural Education

Strand 2: Inclusive Education

Strand 3: Diversity & Human Rights

Strand 4: Migrant & Refugee Education

Strand 5: Digital Learning in Covid-19 Pandemic

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Paul Gorski - Associate Professor of Integrative Studes, New Century College at George Mason University, Founder of Equity Literacy Institute, Educating for Equity and Social Justice

Prof. Miquel Àngel Essomba Gelabert - University of Barcelona, former Commissariat at the Ministry of Education

International Experts Panel

In memory of Professors Jagdish Gundara, Michele Kahn, and David Coulby

Panel 1: Intercultural and Multicultural Education: Old and New Realities

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Panel 2: Intercultural and Multicultural Education: Research Priorities in the Field

Miri Shonfeld, Sang- Hwan Seong, Rachel Lotan, Luisa Conti, Nektaria Palaiologou, Achilleas Kostoulas, Eleni Samsari, and LRM Students

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Opening of the International Conference

On behalf of the International Scientific Committee, as its General Chair, we would like to extend a warm welcome to all attendees of the International Conference, "Intercultural Education on the Move: Facing Old and New Challenges," which is organized by the Hellenic Open University together with the International Association for Intercultural Education.

We are deeply honored to have 280 participants from over 20 countries, presenting 190 papers across five main thematic areas, as well as multiple special panels. These presentations cover a variety of thoughts, perspectives and experiences. The IAIE International Conference focuses on the numerous challenges that educators worldwide have faced and continue to face in recent years. Some challenges, such as global climate change and the growing diversity in schools and classrooms, have been on our radar for some time. Others, like the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, which has displaced millions of people from their homes, have presented educators with new and unforeseen obstacles. Addressing these challenges places a significant responsibility on the shoulders of educators, who are engaged in preparing future generations to be thoughtful, critical, and responsible global citizens. The central topic of the International Conference "Intercultural Education on the Move: Facing Old and New Challenges," was to reflect on intercultural education and migration policies. "Intercultural Education on the Move: Facing Old and New Challenges" provides a platform for researchers, scholars, and practitioners to share, reflect upon, and discuss how the field can effectively tackle these challenges and progress forward. Our hope is that this conference will inspire new initiatives, ideas, and research that can benefit society and foster a safer, more inclusive, and more equitable world.

Greece plays a very significant role in contemporary discussions about migration and education has found itself at the forefront of Europe's asylum and migration challenges, with a significant increase in arrivals on the Aegean islands during the past five years. Asylum seekers, including many vulnerable individuals, often endure incredibly difficult conditions before, during and after their arrival in Greece. This also relates to the many educational challenges that these individuals, families and communities have. Educational paths have been profoundly disrupted. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated an already challenging situation, particularly in terms of access and inclusion.

This IAIE Conference is dedicated to the memory of Jagdish Gundara, Professor at the University of London and former IAIE President, who passed away on November 10th, 2016, and to the memory of Michele Kahn, Professor at Clear Lake, Houston, who passed away on May 21st, 2019. Both had a lasting impact on the IAIE and will be forever remembered for their commitment and their many contributions to the field.

We are honored to have the participation of delegates from the Ministry of Education and Religion. Specifically, Mrs. Zeta Makri as Deputy Minister has sent her speech regarding the enrollment of migrant and refugee children in Greek public schools. Additionally, the Deputy Minister for Higher Education, Prof. Angelos Syrigos, has sent a note, and Mr. Passias George, General Director of International and European Issues, Homogeneia, and Intercultural Education, has graced us with his presence at the Conference's opening at the Hellenic Open University Headquarters in Athens.

Representing the Ministry of Asylum and Migration, Deputy Minister Mrs. Sofia Voultepsi participated online, delivering a speech on the situation of migrants and refugees in Greece, with an emphasis on the Ministry's policies.

The Conference was inaugurated by Prof. Efstathios Efstathopoulos, Vice President of HOU Academic Affairs, and Prof. Emmanuel Koutouzis, Dean of the School of Humanities.

The first day, October 1st, 2022, commenced with a panel of international experts. We were honored to have Paul Gorski, former Associate Professor of Integrative Studies at New Century College, George Mason University, and Founder of the Equity Literacy Institute, deliver a keynote speech on educating for equity and social justice.

On the second day, October 2nd, 2022, we had the privilege of hosting Prof. Miquel Àngel Essomba Gelabert from the University of Barcelona, a former Commissariat at the Ministry of Education, as our keynote speaker.

Following the keynote addresses, a panel of national and international experts followed, discussing research priorities in the broad fields of multicultural and intercultural education

We would like to once more express our gratitude to all participants!

Nektaria Palaiologou, General Chair, HOU & IAIE Vice President & Barry van Driel, IAIE President

Athens, 2nd October 2022

Note for the Proceedings

This volume includes the full papers related to the presentations of the International Conference 'Intercultural Education on the Move: Facing Old and New Challenges'. These were submitted as whole manuscripts on the Conftool Platform and reviewed by the International Scientific Committee of the Conference.

For relevant references, please always mention the ISBN from the National Library of the Netherlands as follows:

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We hope that this volume offers valuable insights into the current challenges that Intercultural Education faces today, given the refugee crisis, the war in Ukraine, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

As editors of this volume, we would like to thank all the international colleagues who submitted their contributions at the International Conference for the interesting panels, sessions, and discussions that followed.

Also, we would like to thank our colleagues-members of the International Scientific Committee for their valuable assistance in the review process.

Cordially,

Nektaria Palaiologou and Eleni Samsari

Patras, June 2023

Knowledge construction through the use of ethical dilemmas

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the need of transformative learning in the educational environment of prison in Greece. Teaching through the use of ethical dilemmas is relevant to the demand of improving learners' skills and knowledge. The paper, given the challenges of teaching in such an environment, argues that constructivist theory is a suitable approach for developing ethics. The paper presents the procedure followed and its results. It explains issues of constructivist theory, ethic and diversity education and how they can be applied in the educational environment of prison.

Keywords: transformative learning, prison, constructivist theory, ethic education, human values.

Introduction

Teaching in prison is an important part of the educational process since several challenges emerge from students' cultural, national, ethical, linguistic and socioeconomic diversities. Taking into consideration teachers' cultural awareness, what needs to be accomplished in such educational environments is to add diversity and multicultural content into the whole process.

It is important to educate students in a culturally responsive way, as well as to facilitate knowledge construction drawing on experiences developed while teaching. The complexity of the educational community calls for attention to ethical issues. It is undeniable that students in all disciplines need to have chances to gain knowledge, improve their skills, examine their own way of thinking, the existing assumptions and values (Thambu, Prayitno, & Zakaria, 2021).

Need for Transformative Learning

Teaching in prison demands transformative potential of teaching human values and rights. Despite the idealism people bring with them they also feel afraid of incarceration. Also, they think they are seen as failures. They are politically conservative and unaware of liberal views even for their punishment and the fact that being imprisoned is a violation of fundamental human rights (Saxton, 2010).

The complexity of prison community calls for explicit use of ethical issues and transformative learning (Koulaouzides, 2017). Through transformative learning teachers prepare better new decision makers. Students learn how to take ethical decisions, how to choose between a right and a right in contrast to a right and a wrong, they become aware and sensitive of their decisions and actions and analyze benefits and drawbacks, multiple viewpoints, assumptions and values under any new situation given (Driscoll, van Esch, & Sable, 2009). It is clear that knowledge will be acquired after conflicting responsibilities and identifying that ethics are not static.

The field of diversity in adult learning has advocated that each individual's experiences reflect the learning process, the attitudinal and behavioral change (Mezirow, 2003). Since the aim is assessing alternative perspectives, developing reflective and critical thinking and accepting new ideas, transformative learning goes beyond (Popovic & Koulaouzides, 2017). While applying new patterns, focusing both on insight and knowledge concerning all perspectives, people take action.

Ethic Education and Transformative Learning

Ethic education focuses on learners' potential enabling transformative learning. Several methods can be used in the learning process one of them is the Ethical Dilemmas which particularly show how actions emerged from beliefs, experience and information people already know. What is needed is reflection to realize that existing beliefs influence what information people choose and what actions they take (Driscoll, van Esch, & Sable, 2009).

During the process learners reach to conclusions, rethink the assumptions that underlie their beliefs, feelings and actions, evaluate the consequences of their assumptions, recognize and examine alternative ones and assess the validity of them through effective and reflective dialogue (Yuan, 2017).

Human Values and the Importance of Ethic Education in Greek Prison

Teaching in prison demands transformative potential of teaching human values and rights. The classes in Second Chance Schools in Greek prisons are part of adult education and are nationally, culturally, ethically, religious and aged differentiated. Motives, incentives and the reasons that have led students abandon formal education in a very young age feature the importance of immediate socialization and new opportunities (Anagnou, Vergidis, & Papaioannou, 2019). The most important goal of teaching these students had been to transform their way of thinking and acting through the use of ethical dilemmas since in most of the cases little had they experienced of rightness (Saxton, 2016). The majority of them had lost many of their rights and values by being rejected by the society and turned to criminality and then by being incarcerated.

Using ethical dilemmas during the educational process is practical and relevant since examples from daily, personal and working environment can be used. Such a relevance gives a not static and modern approach and through creativity learners deal with complex situations in a new way (Weyringer, Patry, &Weinberger, 2012). Ethical dilemmas are not similar to everyone's preconceived notions instead they are critically reflective and in a challenging way throw learners off balance (Sample, 2004). By giving new approaches openness and awareness are developed and experiences are interpreted in a new way.

Constructivist Theory and Ethic Education

Moral development occurs when someone needs to come to a conclusion on whether a behavior or an action is right or wrong but the emphasis is not on what he decides or how he finally acts but on how he responds (Sanders, 2022). The framework consists of three stages based on Kohlberg (1984) theory. The first one is the pre –conventional level in which rules, expectations and conventions of the society are not understood.

Behavior is regulated by punishment and obedience and the individual is criticized by the consequences of his actions. At the conventional level rules and norms remain important to maintain social order but through critical reflection the individual understands what is worth preserving. The final post conventional level goes beyond reflecting prior knowledge or pre-existing norms of the society, conflicting at the same time with fundamental assumptions. Moral values are designated by abstract principles and perspectives of all individuals.

The challenge of teaching ethics in prison corresponds to the aim of quality education which supports knowledge and sustainability (Hasselbarth et al., 2015). Helping learners explore facts from different perspectives, develop critical thinking, discuss concepts related to moral values and find reasoning for and against meets the demands of the evolving society which faces new social issues.

Analyzing the method of Ethical Dilemmas

The procedure consists of 11 stages, they are similar to problem solving and they relate to the discussion of the ethical dilemma, knowledge acquirement and their combination (Patry, 2007). At the first stage, the dilemma is introduced and must be understood by students. However, the possibilities for constructing dilemmas are limitless. Culturally valid dilemmas need to be presented in the form of short stories with specific characters in order to engage students. The successful dilemma is still one that contains choices of nearly equal strength: the students who are for and against each solution must be nearly equal in number.

At the second stage, students spontaneously make their first decision on the dilemma, without justifying it, also the number of positions for or against is documented. As long as the dilemma is properly formulated, the positive and negative opinions will be same in number. In this phase, students have the first opportunity to recognize that their decision needs to be based on more data.

At the third stage, discussion is held in groups during which students argue for or against the different solutions. Here comes the opportunity to test the viability of ideas, as students receive feedback on how they justify their views. In fact, matters of viability arise due to unaccepted arguments by classmates, so students are led to abandon their first views, form new ones and finally realize that additional information is required.

The fourth stage is the starting point of knowledge acquisition. More particularly, ideas are exchanged about what kind of knowledge is necessary to discuss the topic in greater depth. Students find out that they do not know enough and they discuss the process through which they can obtain the required information (internet or library searches, review of data).

At the fifth phase knowledge acquisition is approached constructively, since students themselves search for information and exchange the details they have found. The role of the teacher is coordinative, encouraging and advisory. The viability of the new ideas is continuously tested and the problem is sometimes readjusted or even changed.

At the sixth stage, students present and exchange the information gathered to the whole class, so that all students have the same level of knowledge. At the seventh stage, after analyzing the new data students discuss the dilemma as they did at the third stage. At the eighth stage, all the results are presented based on the exchange of new information. At the ninth stage if the level of knowledge is still insufficient, stages four to

eight are repeated and students search again. This could be repeated a number of times depending on time constraints.

At the tenth stage, the solution to the problem is presented after the final composition of the ideas, possibly through didactic techniques such as role-playing, publishing a newspaper or writing an article.

At the eleventh stage, generalization is the successive goal. Dealing with similar topics, students broaden their perspectives. Generalization is often a result of students' initiatives, who may bring into surface new moral dilemmas.

Material

In Florina, the temperatures that prevail in winter are among the lowest in the country. Until a few years ago, the residents were mainly heated by burning oil, however, the significant increase in its price, combined with the acute economic crisis and the resulting unemployment, turned them to heating solutions that particularly burdened the environment. Moreover, in the wider area of Western Macedonia, power plants using lignite have been operating for many years, so air pollution is already intense in the area.

Petros and Maria, Giorgo's parents who is a 3rd High School student, have low incomes and can't support financially their three children. After the increase in the price of oil, Petros and Maria started using wood to heat their house and then coal, which is more economical. In order to save even more, they sometimes burn in the fireplace furniture that is no longer needed. George's teacher, spoke to them in class about the problems caused to the environment by burning all these materials and asked them to write a letter to the local newspapers, calling on all residents to stop using them. Also, she proposed to hold a relevant protest event in the central square. What should George do? To participate in the actions of the teacher or not, since there is an economic crisis and nothing else can be done?

Results

The dilemma is personalized and refers to a situation familiar to many. It is also culturally-ecologically valid, since it refers to an existing situation that strongly concerns the inhabitants of the area, given the high air pollution (Pneumatikos, 2010). Economic poverty also affects Greek families to a great extent and often inhibits their qualms about using harmful heating media.

What needs to be highly marked is that not all classes reach to the same conclusion and that is what makes the whole process interesting from the first stage till the last. The search and exchange of information is interactive and knowledge is constructed without being addressed to it systematically.

Conclusion

The field of potential application of the method is very wide and can be used in all academic subjects. It promotes the adoption of cognitive attitudes and behaviors that facilitate human coexistence, strengthen social solidarity and shape active citizens. Teaching ethics is important because of the changing cultural environment.

Furthermore, exploring the constructivist pedagogy knowledge is built on evidence (Dziubaniuk & Nyholm, 2020). Practically, teaching methods and frameworks applied in the educational process highlight their value.

The principles of teaching ethics go deeper than a discussion of what is right or wrong. The implementation of such courses improves students' capability to see the perspectives of a society and helps them better evaluate their decisions. Transformative learning and constructivist pedagogical approaches are effective and deepen understanding through interactive teaching methods.

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Language teaching practices for bi/multilingual students: The case of LRM students

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate language teaching practices for bi/multilingual students applied in Greek Public schools. The students of LRM (Language Education for students with Refugee and Migrant background) programme (HOU) filled out an online questionnaire. Teachers were invited to express their attitudes towards applied language practices, their teaching strategies, and materials which they considered appropriate for bi/multilingual students.

The findings showed that the 42 participants valued the use of effective language teaching (ELT) practices. It was argued that bi/multilingual students could benefit the most from them. Nevertheless, most of the participants underlined the institutional shortcomings such as the lack of appropriate educational material. Finally, the researchers, based on the questionnaire data and recent research trends, came up with suggestions that could improve the bi/multilingual language education policies of the Greek educational system.

Keywords: mother tongue, bilingualism, utilization of mother tongue, educational practices, bilingual practices, LRM students.

Introduction

Studies in multilingual classroom contexts have shown that language teachers focus only sporadically on students' prior linguistic skills (Myklevold, 2021; Haukås et al., 2022; Vikøy & Haukås, 2021). Previous research suggests that students exposed to authentic situations -organized by schools- to use their languages, benefits both migrant/refugee students and the whole school environment (Haukås et al., 2022). Such pedagogical proposals include inviting people of various linguistic backgrounds to the classroom, online exchanges with language learners from other contexts and interacting with people around the world (Krüsemann, 2017; Haukås et al., 2022). This study focused on the most preferred practices for bi/multilingual students, used by the LRM students.

Multilingualism as a wider concept involves the development of the linguistic abilities of all European citizens maintaining the quality of education and making students aware of multilingual education. Considering the views of Roiha and Sommie (2021) it can be pointed out that multilingual context refers to a particular environment, where more than a single language is used in education and other sectors.

Over the last years, a large number of asylum seekers have entered Greece. School authorities had to implement effective, appropriate education following Greek law, and European and International directives. The significance of the notion of multilingual education was raised, as it enables refugees to achieve better

career objectives and advancements. In the view of multilingual education for refugee and migrant children in Greece, children are placed in Reception Classes (for those residing in urban areas) or DYEP (for children living in camps). However, students are facing several issues such as no proper access to education, insufficient school enrolment and language issues (RSA, 2021).

Multilingualism and Teaching Practices

Numerous good teaching practices are suggested for multilingual environments. Some examples are the use of books and songs in various languages, and the work on Linguistically Appropriate Practice. Previous research (Haukas et al., 2022) suggested that while teachers were generally positive about multilingualism, they were rather hesitant in using multilingual strategies and techniques. On the contrary, they seemed to foster, mainly, monolingual teaching. It has to be noted that the notion of differentiated teaching (Tomlinson, 2017), has over the last years, played a significant role in our understanding of multilingual education. It has become obvious that there can be no "one fits all" approach, let alone a textbook, to serve the learning and linguistic needs of the children. Differentiated teaching is based on the belief that teachers should first identify the students' needs and then try to design and implement activities that serve these specific needs. In Greece, over the last years, there has been a growing interest in the issues of multilingualism especially since multilingual teaching is associated with inclusion issues (Skourtou, 2008; Androulakis et al. 2017; Gkaintartzi et al., 2019) It was also suggested that teachers specialised on multilingualism (LRM students) seemed more positive in utilizing children's L1. Furthermore, promising practices of holistic refugee and newcomer education are suggested to be upscaled and institutionalised (Koehler et al., 2022).

Research Methodology

"Likert type Scale base questionnaire analysis" was used in this study, followed by *"open-ended"* questions. 42 teachers participated in the study. They were all students of LRM programme, which aims to introduce current issues of second language learning and teaching to immigrant/refugee children. The course focuses on three dimensions: psychosocial, pedagogical and didactic. They came from a variety of educational settings, (pre)primary and secondary.

Data presentation

As far as the close-ended questions, the answers showed interesting results. 71% of the participants said that there were no Reception Classes in their school, and 88% claimed that there were no interpreters at their school. 55% of the participants claimed that they had witnessed positive attitudes and actions by their colleagues. 38% witnessed indifferent attitudes, while 7% claimed that their fellow teachers were rather negative to refugee and migrant students' inclusion processes. When asked whether the inclusion of migrant and refugee students had been achieved, 48% of the participants said that the inclusion process was successful, while 52% believed that there were still several actions to be taken. Following, the participants were asked to respond, if the Greek State had assisted them in the inclusion process of refugee and migrant students. Half of the participants claimed that

Greek State had assisted in the inclusion of the children, and 5% claimed that the Greek state was not helpful at all. The rest 45% expressed that the Greek State should be more supportive of refugee and migrant children. Almost 76% of the participants stressed the importance of extra, appropriate, teaching materials at schools, to promote multilingual and bilingual practices. On the other hand, less than 5% of responses described the lack of extra educational materials in foreign language teaching for students of refugee and migrant backgrounds.

In the open-ended questions, teachers' responses were varied. They claimed that extra study material would facilitate the inclusion of refugee/migrant students. Additionally, well-designed curricula in schools and interaction with parents were also considered equally important. When invited to describe the teaching challenges regarding refugee/migrant students, they mentioned a lack of communication, the absence of a common language and inadequate study materials. Teachers suggested specific strategies, such as differentiated learning, translanguaging, multimedia courses, code-switching, and identity texts. Mixed group and peer learning activities were considered best practices for the development of intercultural communication skills. Additionally, the dramatization and inclusion of all students in the discussion were also mentioned. When asked to suggest successful material for refugee/migrant children, participants named, vocabulary activities, bilingual materials and educational guides and supportive materials. They suggested that teachers and school counsellors should be responsible for designing such teaching materials.

Discussion

This study indicated that multilingual teaching practices play a vital role in today's school. It was suggested that most of the participants aspired for assistance from school counsellors and experienced teachers in the form of books or language material. They were prepared to use extra material but did not seem prepared to design the material themselves. This attitude is probably related to the fact that Greek textbooks are centrally produced and distributed to all schools around the country and there is one single textbook for each school subject. This idea contrasts the notion of understanding the needs of multilingual students, before designing the appropriate material. It also contradicts the notion of differentiated education, where there is no "one fits all" material that would apply to the needs of every student in the class, regardless of their language level, interests and readiness (Tomlinson, 2017).

Teachers could name several techniques and practices that they used every day. This is different from what Haukas et al. (2022) suggested, that teachers were positive about multilingual education, but could hardly name specific strategies that they would put into practice. Gkaintartzi et al. (2019) concluded that teachers who specialized in multilingual education were positive in using strategies to assist multilingual learners.

Considering the results of the study, the authors have some suggestions concerning teaching materials. Since the eighties multilingual books had been used all over the world, serving the needs of refugee/migrant families. In Greece over the last decades bi/multilingual books have been published, such as the book of Nikoloudi (2005). Other teachers prefer to use or even create multilingual digital stories (https://storyweaver.org.in), with the help of families or interpreters, who can assist in translation. Therefore, affordable, portable and easily distributed material can be produced. This could accommodate the needs of a

population that has limited resources and is on the move. Concerning drama activities, over the last years, there has been a production of material that promotes language and communication skills as well as identity assertiveness, through the use of persona dolls. We need to refer to the work of Al-Jubeh & Vιtsou (2021). Finally, games and digital games have been developed to address the needs of students from different linguistic backgrounds; some examples include Akelius (https://languages.akelius.com), wordwall (https://wordwall.net/el), Stintaxi, (https://www.stintaxi.com), as mentioned in Tzikouli (2022).

Conclusions

In this study, bi/multilingual education has been promoted by collecting relevant information and first-hand data from teachers who were working with bi/multilingual students in Greece. From this study, it can be concluded that effective practices can help in enhancing the quality of bi/multilingual education. Through the support of teaching methodology, learners would be able to communicate with students with different L1. The ability to speak the L2 language would equally be helpful for students, to obtain better communication skills, which would help them in social inclusion and future employability prospects.

Language teaching has a fascinating, long history under which many debates have been executed for identifying the best method for teaching different languages. This primary data collection has helped in understanding current changes in language teaching practices and the multilingual community in Greece. Through primary data collection, it has been identified that extra educational materials such as audio-visual learning and implementing a smooth educational system, help in dealing with potential challenges and developing strong teaching strategies for ensuring better learning of students. It emphasised an understanding of how language teaching is being implemented in Greek schools.

It was obvious that teachers who had a specialisation in language teaching to students with migrant/refugee backgrounds were much more able and confident to recall strategies and practices they use in the classroom. This indicated the need for the Greek state to employ teachers who have a specialisation in multilingualism for classes that are targeted to assist newcomer students with very limited knowledge of L1. The ability to communicate beyond language barriers would equally be helpful for students to obtain better sociolinguistic skills, help them in future employability prospects and promote international understanding among nations.

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Human Rights Education and globalization: Vision for an inclusive and equitable society

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Abstract

Admittedly, given that we live in a globalized society, education should be grounded in human rights norms and principles encompassing non-discrimination, equality, diversity considerations, mutual respect and understanding. Hence, by drawing on existing evidence, the present paper seeks to examine the value of Human Rights Education towards the development of inclusive and equitable societies and the associated challenges. To this end, the paper elaborates on human rights norms and standards mainly based on official documents of human rights bodies at the United Nations level. These sources tend to provide further clarification on the content and realization of Human Rights Education.

Keywords: education, equity, globalization, human rights education, inclusion.

Introduction – Statement of the problem

Admittedly, given that we live in a globalized society, education should be grounded in human rights norms and principles encompassing non-discrimination, equality and diversity considerations. This reading explains why Human Rights Education (henceforth HRE) lies at the center of all efforts to develop, maintain and promote a culture of human rights and a society that embraces dignity, inclusion, acceptance, mutual trust and equality; enhances social cohesion, democracy, conflict prevention and resolution, and understanding of diversity (Aurora, 2016; Osler & Starkey, 2005).

Aims of the paper

This paper, building on existing evidence and a systematic document analysis, seeks to examine the concept as well as the value of HRE towards the development of inclusive and equitable societies and the associated challenges. To this end, the paper elaborates on the human rights norms and standards mainly based on official documents of human rights bodies at the United Nations level, as well as at the Council of Europe level. These sources tend to provide further clarification on the content and realization of HRE. We then proceed by exploring the employment of HRE in times of globalization as a prerequisite for inclusive and equitable societies, where the human rights of all are respected, protected and fulfilled. Finally, as a conclusion we highlight that the right to education, and education in general shall be aimed at the deployment and empowerment of the individuals' personal and cultural identity, as well as at the sense of individuals' dignity; enable all persons to participate effectively in a free, as much as possible, from prejudices and discriminations society; promote mutual understanding, tolerance, solidarity and humanity among all nations and all racial,

ethnic or religious groups. Thus, the findings of this paper could positively affect law, policies and practices in the field of inclusive education with focusing attention on the diversity spectrum.

Discussion

A. Theoretical Framework: The Contours of Human Rights Education

Although there is a general consensus among States that HRE constitutes a significant component in shaping one's identity and personality, yet HRE "did not become the subject of a concerted global campaign until the mid-1990s" (Cardenas, 2005, p. 366). At this point the question arising is: which are the most significant features of the combination of "human rights" and "education"? It is important to point out that HRE can be broadly interpreted. Consequently, the term "Human Rights Education" provokes different interpretations. Specifically, this interrelation entails five areas of practice and research: i. teaching about and for human rights, namely universality and inalienability, indivisibility, inter-dependence and inter-relatedness, equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, accountability and the rule of law; ii. education as a human right in itself; iii. human rights in education; iv. education and training of professionals confronted with human rights issues; v. educational and social work aspects of the rights of the child (Cardenas, 2005; Hodgson, 1996; Lenhart & Savolainen, 2002). Interestingly, it is acknowledged that the notion of Human Rights Education encompasses three aspects: (i) learning *about* human rights; (ii) learning *through* human rights; (iii) learning *for* human rights (UN Declaration on HRE & Training, 2011).

In fact, the term "Human Rights Education" is often employed in a broad sense in order to include "peace education", "global citizenship education" as well as "education for mutual respect and understanding", all based on internationally agreed human rights standards (Aurora, 2016). Without doubt, HRE constitutes a lifelong process aimed at fostering: i. knowledge and skills, learning about human rights standards and mechanisms, as well as acquiring the skills to put them into practice in daily life; ii. behavior and action, encouraging action to defend and promote human rights; iii. values and attitudes, developing values and reinforcing attitudes which uphold human rights (Aurora, 2016; Pillay, 2012; UN Declaration on HRE & Training, 2011).

B. Standard-Setting Framework: Education as a Human Right

Education, after its first proclamation as a human right in article 26 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) under which the aim of all educational activities is set and the principle of free educational choice is defined, was further codified in three international agreements, which stand for the strongest anchoring of education as a human right in international law. In particular, the UNESCO *Convention against Discrimination in Education* (1960) in article 3 elaborates on the elimination and prevention of discrimination in Education. Moreover, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966) enshrines the right of everyone to education in article 13 in the sense that State parties are to prohibit and eliminate racial, ethnic or religious discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to education. In a similar vein, the *Convention on the*

Rights of the Child (1989) in article 29 declares the right to education for all children. Meanwhile, at regional level, in 2010 the Council of Europe developed the *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education* as a significant reference point against intolerance, exclusion, violence and discrimination, providing a common framework for action for member States to implement democratic citizenship and HRE, disseminating good practice and raising standards throughout Europe and beyond (Council of Europe, 2010). On the basis of the above, we may conclude that Education plays an essential role in the promotion of the core values, such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as well as the prevention of human rights violations.

Results – Implications

Human Rights Education and Globalization: Looking ahead

Of note, Katarina Tomasevski, the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, elaborated on the freedom to use one's language and particularly the State obligations concerning education, involving the regulation, funding, and provision, should be informed by a range of human rights standards upon which education should be based, such as the principle of non-discrimination. To emphasize the pivotal role of State duties regarding the realization of the right to education, the Special Rapporteur has interpreted them from the angle of a formation of four interrelated and essential right to education elements to be applied with regard to all education – related services, namely "availability", "accessibility", "acceptability" and "adaptability" (Tomasevski, 2004).

In a similar vein, the International Commission on Education for the 21st century, chaired by the former president of the European Commission Jacques Delors, proposed that Education, as a lifelong process, is determined by the application of four pillars, namely i. learning to know, as well as learning to learn by joining general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a number of subjects; ii. learning to do, in order to obtain not only an occupational skill but also, in a broad sense, the competence to be confronted with many difficult cases and collaborate with groups of different people; iii. learning to live together, by unfolding an acceptance of other people and by acknowledging the interaction between different persons working in the same projects and learning to resolve conflicts with respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace; iv. learning to be, to develop one's personality and identity and to be able to act with greater autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility (UNESCO, 1996).

We can discern from the above that there is a general consensus among academic, political and pedagogic circles that Education plays a critical role in empowering people to counteract to the processes of globalization; to admit the tight linkage between their lives and the lives of others, globally and locally; to understand, accept and appreciate the society they live in, with its diversities and differences; to actively participate and work with others in the quest for a global, multicultural, cosmopolitan, fair and just, inclusive and equitable society. Significantly, active citizenship can integrate diverse populations.

Nevertheless, not all potential paths to the development and implementation of inclusive and equitable education in the current education – related services are consistent with human rights requirements. Simply

advocating in favor of an educational system for all without due attention to equity and inclusive considerations in its design and implementation is not sufficient from a human rights perspective. Hence, the incorporation of a human rights approach to educational curricula can be a powerful statement of commitment on the part of responsible stakeholders, if accompanied by clear objectives, monitoring systems, educational structures, as well as respective teaching attitudes and teaching techniques. Within this context, a framework for action, encompassing non-discrimination, equity, accountability, accessibility, acceptance, tolerance, inclusiveness and participatory decision-making, which will constitute a roadmap towards building a solid human rights basis for the deployment of inclusive education to the actual benefit of all persons without discrimination, needs to be developed. Obviously, as is well established, the right to education, and education in general shall be aimed at the deployment and empowerment of the individuals' personal and cultural identity, as well as at the sense of individuals' dignity; enable all persons to participate effectively in a free, as much as possible, from prejudices and discriminations, inclusive and equitable society; promote mutual understanding, tolerance, solidarity and humanity among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups.

Without doubt, the implementation of such a framework requires constant regulation, continuous oversight, coordination and vigilance in terms of setting up an inclusive enabling environment for all under which inequality, exclusion, xenophobia, hostility, bullying and harassment, extremism and discrimination against "the other – the foreigner – the different" do no longer generate, when it comes to the development and implementation of HRE. As P. Thornberry and M. Amor Martin Estebanez pointedly argue "…the process of Education has a profound impact, positively or negatively, on a young people's sense of identity. Education has in fact been described as a powerful instrument for the achievement on social engineering…" (Thornberry & Estebanez, 2004, p.108).

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The right of Roma children to inclusive education in Europe: Moving the case forward

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Abstract

Across Europe Roma children still constitute one of the most marginalized and often discriminated against groups, encountering several barriers to the full enjoyment of their right to education with severe repercussions on their life course. Against this backdrop, this paper examines the realization of inclusive education for Roma children through a human rights lens towards identifying a framework for regulating and evaluating the general education system to this end. The paper argues that the realization of the full potential of inclusive education for Roma children constitutes a human rights imperative towards achieving optimum education accessibility and inclusivity for all children.

Keywords: right to inclusive education, Roma children, discrimination, school segregation, human rights.

Statement of the problem and purpose

Across Europe children from Roma communities systematically encounter several barriers to the full enjoyment of their right to education and to equal participation in society (FRA, 2014). For several decades Roma children face significant vulnerabilities, marginalization and ethnic-based discrimination in education, involving school segregation, harassment and bullying, with severe repercussions on their life course (Rutigliano, 2020; UNICEF, 2011). In fact, it is maintained that large equity gaps exist in the quality of education received by Roma children and their non-Roma peers (UNICEF, 2011). As a result, evidence highlights that early dropouts and low enrolment in secondary education remain a persistent and a common issue for Roma students (Rutigliano, 2020). Thereto, such an alarming situation clearly unveils that the right of Roma children to inclusive education is being highly denied. Against this backdrop, the purpose of this paper is to examine the realization of inclusive education for Roma children through a human rights lens towards identifying a framework for regulating and evaluating the general education system to this end. The paper is based on a systematic legal analysis of human rights doctrines and literature research relevant to the topic under discussion. These sources tend to provide useful interpretation material for the type of measures required for upholding the right of Roma children to inclusive education and promoting equal education opportunities. Ultimately, this paper aims to the enforcement of the right of Roma children to inclusive education and calls for a critical appraisal of the current structural barriers emanating from national law, policies, curricula and strategies when inclusive and intercultural education is under consideration. The findings from this paper can contribute to the field of promotion of diversity in educational settings and of equal educational opportunities for all children, while addressing challenges connected to human rights of all children. Essentially, this paper can contribute to

evaluating whether there are sufficient regulatory guarantees of inclusive education for Roma children at country level, especially when Roma children continue to suffer violations of their right to education.

Results and Discussion

A. Structural barriers to inclusive education for Roma children in Europe

Importantly, the UNESCO in its policy guidelines defines inclusion in education as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children 'through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children' (UNESCO, 2009: 8-9). In a similar vein, in 2015 inclusive education emerged as a critical issue in the UN General Assembly's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in the Sustainable Development Goal 4 where explicit emphasis was placed on States' obligation to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' (UN General Assembly, 2015).

Meanwhile, educational segregation of Roma children in schools still remains a disturbing practice across Central and Eastern Europe depriving Roma children of their right to education (FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, 2015; Rutigliano, 2020; UNICEF, 2011). Critically, research reveals three main types of Roma segregation in schools that result in inferior and unequal education of Roma children, involving: (1) placement in special schools and classrooms for children with disabilities; (2) placement in separate classes within mainstream schools based on ethnicity and (3) placement in 'ghetto schools' (Harris et. al, 2017). In fact, since the 2000s, due to this worrisome situation several cases were brought before the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) leading to infringement procedures and sanctions under anti-discrimination and human rights law – like the Court's landmark case *D.H. and Others v. Czech Republic* (ECtHR, 2007; Harris et. Al., 2017; Rutigliano, 2020, p.44). At the same time, Roma school desegregation strategies and efforts encounter various obstacles which can be attributed, inter alia, to: (1) an ill-fitting curriculum; (2) the persistent discrimination against Roma communities, teachers' negative attitudes and stereotypes that Roma inclusion will cause a deterioration in the quality of education, or otherwise impact negatively on others in conjunction with the lack of good institutional foundations at the local and national level; (3) the lack of trained and rights sensitive school personnel combined with the lack of knowledge about the nature and advantages of inclusive and intercultural education for all; (4) the absence of administrative measures concerning segregation at school and school inspectorate level; (5) the lack of disaggregated data and research, necessary for accountability and program development, hindering the implementation of effective desegregation policies and interventions to promote inclusive and intercultural education; (6) the lack of genuine political will tightly bound with the lack of technical knowledge and capacity in implementing the right to inclusive education including insufficient education of all teaching staff as mentioned earlier; (7) the inappropriate and inadequate funding mechanisms to provide incentives for inclusion of Roma students, inter-ministerial coordination, support and sustainability; (8)

the lack of effective legal remedies and accessible complaints mechanisms for violations of the Roma right to inclusive education (FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, 2015; Rutigliano, 2020, p. 26).

B. From standard-setting to practice

Against this backdrop, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) recognizes in Article 26 that everyone has the right to education, involving the right to free and compulsory elementary education and to equal access to higher education as well as a prior right of parents to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. Hence, it becomes evident that a combination of claims exists, requiring both non-interference and positive state action in the realization of the right to education, while comprising two aspects of the right to education, the 'freedom' and the 'social' aspect (Nowak, 2001; De Beco, 2022). Equally important, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966) elaborated further the content of the right to education by way of standard-setting. Particularly, ICESCR enshrines in Article 13 read in conjunction with Article 14 the right of everyone to education and contains a number of specific state obligations to develop affirmative action relating to primary, secondary and higher education, underlying at the same time the principle of equal access to education. Within this context the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1999: para.6), the oversight body for the ICESCR, has particularly emphasized that education must be, inter alia, accessible to all without discrimination, acceptable and responsive to the needs of students within their diverse cultural and social settings. Furthermore, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) under Article 28 stipulates the right to education of every child on the basis of equal opportunity, while in Article 29 it recognizes the aims and objectives of education in terms of promoting the fullest possible development of the child's personality. These CRC provisions constitute a significant legal basis given their contribution and interrelation to other substantive rights and principles enshrined in CRC, involving the non-discrimination principle (Article 2), the child's best-interests principle (Article 3), the right to life, survival and development (Article 6), the right to express views and have them taken into account (Article 12). Notably, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2001: para. 11), the body responsible for overseeing governments' compliance with the CRC, in a General Comment on the aims of education acknowledges education that promotes respect for differences while at the same time challenging all aspects of discrimination and prejudice as a reliable and enduring antidote to ignorance, unfounded fears of racial, ethnic or other forms of difference, the exploitation of prejudices and the teaching of distorted values. Additionally, the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) declares the right of everyone to education without discrimination and on the basis of equality of opportunity. Notably, Article 2 of the Protocol 1 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1952) stipulates that 'no person shall be denied the right to education' while requiring States to 'respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions'.

In virtue of the aforementioned key provisions of human rights standards that set out a framework for action it is plausible to discern that Roma inclusiveness in education constitutes a human rights imperative.

Essentially, moving the case of Roma children forward requires the active participation of the intended beneficiaries in the decision-making processes so as the experiences and concerns of Roma children become a critical component of the design and development of educational policies combined with continuous regulatory monitoring and enforcement on the part of the States.

Implications

From the preceding analysis it becomes evident that there is a need for a paradigm shift and it is incumbent upon States to ensure that the realization of the right to inclusive education for Roma children no longer remains an elusive goal. Overall, it must be conceded that the general educational system should be framed as a matter of equity in consistency with human rights standards that have the potential to unlock the unlawful discriminatory barriers often confronted by Roma children, while ensuring access to and completion of quality education for all children.

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Corporeal denial, human rights and spatula violence: An examination of the body in the school

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Abstract

How much is the right to have the individual experiences of our bodies fully recognized, a basic human right? What kinds of corporeal realities (individual and collective) are validated and acknowledged in schools, and what experiences are erased and silenced? In this presentation I examine the body as the primary site of the human experience. I present the body as a contested site for human rights, and share examples of normalized pain and reified (everyday) violations of bodily autonomy that are simply par for the course in schools. I draw from the work of Paulo Freire (1998) who called on educators to deconstruct the sources of pain that are normalized in everyday life. As well as from Michel Foucault (2010) who exposed the ways that the human body can be disciplined, regulated, subjugated, and encouraged to strictly control self and others. I also pull-in the insights of educators who have dared to challenge corporeal silencing (e.g. Johnson, 2004; Kipnis, 2015) and those who demand that we pay attention to bodies in schools (e.g. hooks, 1994; Darder, 2010). In addition, I reference my own work (White & Ali-Khan, 2020, Ali-Khan & White, 2022) to highlight connections between pain, shame and forced invisibility. I share examples of how corporeal control creates a landscape of unequal terrain - i.e. a space in which the most vulnerable (and diverse) students (black, brown, queer, and othered), are harmed the most - but none are left unscathed. My aim is to highlight how practices of disembodiment work against our collective humanity and the greater good. Through this lens I present the subjugating of bodies in schools as both an attack on diverse bodies, as well as a form of "spatula violence" - i.e., a broad-based practice of oppression that harms us all. I present for discussion the idea that our collective squeamishness about bodies functions to cordon off our most fundamental human right, the ability to be fully and honestly in the world, with and for each other.

Keywords: body, sex, menstruation, schools, human rights.

Introduction

Are the bodies of teachers and students seen and honored in schools? Is recognizing the needs and desires of bodies a basic human right? Addressing the general scope of these questions I examine the body as primary site of the human experience, and as a contested site in educational space. I share examples of normalized pain and reified (everyday) violations of bodily autonomy that have been – in my experience - simply par for the course in classrooms at multiple levels. My aim is to raise for discussion questions about if/how bodies are understood and discussed in inter/multi-cultural education and how we might wish to reenvision and reframe how we think and talk about the body and the rights of the body, in educational spaces.

Aims and methodology

My aim is to share an emerging framework for understanding common practices of bodily propriety in schools and to raise questions about where we have (or might want to carve out) the freedom and space to think about corporeality in intercultural education. Drawing from multiple strands of my own work on the body in academic space (Ali-Khan, 2016; Ali-Khan, 2022) and my work with a colleague (White & Ali-Khan, 2020; Ali-Khan & White, 2022), I pull out/on a few discursive threads of corporeality in order to weave an image of the body in schools. I draw from both autoethnographic work and teacher self-narratives, placing these in the contexts of broader work on corporeality. My aim is to examine and highlight some experiences of adolescent and teacher bodies in school spaces. Methodologically I employ both autoethnography (a method of conducting ethnographic research that begins with the self) and teacher narratives. Autoethnography allows me to access a deep phenomenological layer of lived experience. Autoethnographies offer a lens through which to relay, relate and analyze lived experience, and to explore both inner and outer worlds (c.f. Pelias, 2003; Poulos 2010) therefor they can be particularly useful for addressing and understanding how bodies are lived in and through in social space. In this research I also utilize teacher narratives - centering this work in educational space – (c.f. England & Brown, 2001) and critical ethnography - focusing on the ways that power circulates in cultural contexts (c.f. Carspecken & Apple, 1992). Together these methodologies offer a framework through which to pose questions about corporeality in schools more broadly. My aim in sharing this research is to prompt fellow intercultural educators to ask questions about how much they acknowledge - or ignore - their own bodies and the bodies of their students in their professional practice. From this I further ask colleagues to consider understanding these issues through the kinds of critical frameworks that question the cost of silencing.

Theoretical framework and findings

Ideologically I draw from those who call on educators to critically examine praxis including for example Paulo Freire (1998) who called on educators to deconstruct the sources of pain that are normalized in everyday life and Michel Foucault (2010) who exposed the ways that the human body can be disciplined, regulated, subjugated, and encouraged to strictly control self and others. I also pull-in to my analysis the insights of educators who have dared to challenge corporeal silencing (c.f. Johnson, 2004; Kipnis, 2015) and those who demand that we pay attention to bodies in schools (c.f. hooks, 1994; Darder, 2010).

What emerges in this body of work, is a picture of the body simultaneously tamed and silenced in ways that reflect cultural decorum as much as they do as corporeal control. In this presentation I offered examples of the ways that bodies are often summarily *dealt with* and marginalized in schools. Using a few specific examples (some of which are mentioned in the following section) I highlight here how students and faculty can be prohibited from disclosing sexual identity or non-heteronormative family structures and/or are discouraged or penalized for bring questions of basic bodily functions, including but not limited to mensuration and sex into the classroom. I draw from multiple examples of the kind of corporeal policing that occurs in the name of decorum in order to bring into focus how corporeal control circulates a landscape of unequal terrain -i.e. a space

in which the most vulnerable (and diverse) students (women, LGBTQIA+, adolescent, black, brown, queer, and othered), are harmed the most, but none are left unscathed. I begin autoethnographically, with an n of one.

As a woman, I own a body that has ached and vaginally bled in classrooms in ways that are typical and far from unique. In schools, the needs of my body through menstruation were silenced, and as a new high school teacher I obediently visited this silencing on my students. I would like to say that this shame did not last long and that I questioned it as soon as I become comfortable in my role as a teacher, but sadly this was not true. It took years for me to realize that the cost of not allowing students to speak openly about this was not just shame but also missed educational opportunity as students who were afraid of speaking up, simply didn't come to school on *those days* every month. When I bring this up to teacher education students now, I point out the inhumanity of the common practice of "one at a time" bathroom passes and economic hardship of period poverty – this teaching is often met with a mixture of visible relief at my bringing up a topic that is important to some of my students in their lives, and visible discomfort (sometimes in the same students). This relief/discomfort reaction is not limited to mensuration, discussions of sex and sexuality are equally fraught. To offer an example, in my teaching I discuss the patriarchy and try to open the door for students to understand how it circulates, I give many examples, among them I include my own – far from atypical – experiences with sexual assault in college. In this case the tension inherent to touching the topic of the body, is both mine and my students. I came to this type of full disclosure teaching through a realization that students in similar positions needed to see that they are not alone (the #metoo movement which occurred a few years after I began to speak out, validated my position, and students who have responded positively to me also confirms the need for this type of disclosure). In published work (Ali-Khan, 2016) I share how difficult and frightening it was to speak of these taboo topics and how, both personally and pedagogically, I knew that I needed to teach through my discomfort, yet I struggled to find the words and the courage to do so. I had few role models in this, yet my body in classroom space demanded my attention. Ultimately it seemed hypocritical for me to teach about women's needs without naming them, and cowardly to not offer an example when I had (in myself) one so readily available. I have learned that I am not alone in trying to navigate talking about the body in schools, and in other research (White & Ali-Khan, 2020) I join forces with an accomplished colleague, teacher educator and former high school teacher who (despite his considerable skill and experience) similarly found himself trying to alternately address, tiptoe around, and dodge, student questions about sex as they came up through the reading of novels in a high school English class. Like me, he was unprepared to talk about the body, despite an obvious pedagogical need.

In each of these examples the body emerged and came into being in pedagogical space and this becoming required response. Combined these publications and this research turn has led me to broader questions about why as an educator I felt discomfort at talking about common experiences and why my colleague (John White) felt the same when trying to address student questions. I use these research moments and experiences to suggest that the rules around propriety and bodies in schools have worked to shame students who have "inappropriate" questions or needs (in ways that are perhaps more pervasive with young women but by no means limited to them). My colleague and I argue that these practices of silencing have become reified

and need revisting (White & Ali-Khan 2020; Ali-Khan & White, 2022). This line of inquiry leads to broader questions about how bodies are understood, experienced, corralled, freed, silenced, disciplined, and brought into being in schools. I believe that we owe it to our students to examine if and how we understand their bodies and we owe it to ourselves to examine our own corporeality. I further believe that open and honest admissions of what bodies do (at the very least) should be considered a basic human right, it should also (at the very least) be a consideration in teacher education.

Contribution to the field/discussion

I know that conversations about bodies are tricky, uncomfortable and often taboo. I hope that my contribution to the field through this work is that it pushes the boundaries of our collective (oft stated) aim in intercultural education (and in educational space in general) to *forge new paths*, *see anew* and *think differently* (to use the language and aims of most educational conferences) about schools, educators, students and the perimeters of the world we all share. I believe in these aims, yet the silences around the body persist and it is not widely addressed in educational literature or conferences. I think that it is time to question the cost of the kind of decorum that make it impolite to bring up the needs of bodies in schools, so that we can - at the very least - shift it from de facto practice to one that has been subjected to pedagogical scrutiny.

I know that the stories I share, the frameworks I employ and the questions I ask invite educators to ask, may be uncomfortable. I also know that both students and educators who highlight their bodies, and ask these kinds of questions, run the risk of being (at best) marginalized (at worst vilified). Yet I argue here that practices of disembodiment work against our collective humanity and the greater good. Using critical pedagogy as a lens focused on harm reduction, I present the subjugating of bodies in schools as both an attack on diverse bodies, as well as a form of "spatula violence" - i.e., a broad-based practice of oppression that harms us all. The instances of silencing and discomfort I draw from and share here are intended to pull colleagues - in the worlds of intercultural and multicultural education - into thinking seriously about their own bodies as well as those in their sphere of influence. Salman Rushdie (2021) recently wrote that the final victory of the censor is the moment when people cease to imagine a non-censorial society. Must we censor discussions of our bodies in educational space? The question weighs heavily on me. Ultimately, I present for discussion the idea that our collective squeamishness about bodies functions to cordon off our most fundamental human right, the ability to be fully and honestly in the world, with and for each other.

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Investigating global competence in Higher Education teacher training programs

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the newly-emerged notion of 'Global Competence' which is defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2008) as the capacity 'to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development'. The paper focuses on the tool used in order to investigate whether the initial teacher training program of the English Department of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUoA) incorporated global competence, either implicitly or explicitly. The tool is in essence a checklist including several themes related to global competence as derived from the literature, the most important of which being: a) computer and media literacy, b) the acceptance of different cultures, values and beliefs fostering in this way multicultural approaches, c) adaptability according to the various communication circumstances and d) cooperation with others.

Keywords: global competence, multicultural education, investigation tool, teacher training programs.

Methodology

The aim of the research and the research questions

The research attempts to determine whether and to what extent the concept of global competence is implied or explicitly stated in the theoretical courses and the workshops of the pre-service teacher training program offered in the English Department of the NKUoA. In addition, there is an attempt to explore to what extent the notion of global competence has been instilled in the future educators and how it has informed the choices made by one of the curriculum planners. The program which is called Πρόγραμμα Παιδαγωγικής και Διδακτικής Επάρκειας (ΠΠΔΕ) is incorporated in the four-year curriculum of the English Department and is addressed to university students who aspire to become EFL educators in both the public and the private sector.   The program consists of theoretical, compulsory and optional, courses as well as practical workshops and practice in real school in an effort to prepare competent and effective EFL teachers. The idea of global competence is relatively new and has emerged from the continually changing world, i.e. a world that is becoming a "global village" (Held, 1995 as cited in Sadruddin, 2013, p. 1). People all over the world are required to work together with 'mutual consent' (Albrow, 1990, p.9) while social and moral values are constantly being transformed and questioned at the same time (Sadruddin, 2013). Taking the above into consideration along with the realization

that education has a very important role to fulfill, learners must be prepared to understand these global interconnections (Tye, 2009) and it is the responsibility of the educators to lead them to this direction. In light of this and bearing in mind the fact that higher education programs and curriculums should be subjected to evaluation in order to be reformed or enhanced for the benefit of both the educators and the learners, the study addresses the following questions:

- Is the concept of global competence dealt with in the basic teacher training program of the Department of English Language and Literature of the University of Athens and to which extent? More specifically, are there elements of the notion in the theoretical and practical courses offered in the four semesters as part of the basic pre-service training program?

-Are the future EFL educators exposed to the idea of global competence and to what extent?

-Are the curriculum designers aware of the notion of global competence and to what extent has it informed their choices while planning the program?

The ultimate aim of the study is to suggest a tool of investigation of the notion of global competence for future pre-service training courses in other curriculums of higher education aiming to prepare future Foreign Language (FL) educators.

Research tools

Given the aim of the study which is to explore the extent to which a notion is implied or explicitly stated in a training program the qualitative analysis of data is selected as the most appropriate one. The qualitative tools used are the document analysis on the basis of a checklist with ideas and topics relevant to global competence and the interviews with students and one of the curriculum planner realizing in this way the triangulation strategy which tests validity through the concentration of information from various sources (Patton, 1999). The checklist with the global competence themes is created on the basis of the theory drawn from various sources. According to these, a globally competent educator who can in turn prepare globally competent students:

1. is familiar with ICT activities and is able to use technological tools (blogging, video conferencing, video sharing and use of smartphones) effectively

2. is frequently engaged in research

3. participates in cross cultural experiential learning opportunities

4. is willing to communicate in various languages and not only in English promoting the idea of being plurilingual

5. communicates with diverse individuals fostering the idea of intercultural awareness

6. promotes the skills of a virtual teacher in a virtual classroom

7. is aware of global issues such as racism, nationalism, protection of the environment, immigration and justice and works towards sustainable future

8. encourages lifelong learning through travel and volunteer work

9. supports teamwork/pairwork and in general, collaboration

10. promotes mediation and differentiated instruction

The aforementioned topics are also considered for the development of the interview questions for the undergraduate students and one of the curriculum planners.

Outputs and results

All in all, the results from the document analysis and the interviews demonstrate a convergence as far as the presence of the notion of global competence in the specific teacher training program is concerned. The courses of the program, both the theoretical and the practical ones, include activities, exercises, tasks and projects that are associated with the idea of GC. The participants are exposed to the ideas of ICT, research and lifelong learning, the skills of a virtual teacher, the knowledge of global issues, the virtues of collaboration and solidarity, the notion of intercultural awareness, the practice of mediation and the implementation of differentiated instruction. The courses and workshops included in the program require that future educators engage in collaborative activities (through pair work and team work), use technology on a daily basis either to conduct a lesson themselves or participate in the courses of the university, get involved in forums and lead discussions on current issues of great concern and select and engage in Erasmus programs that promote solidarity, unity and cooperation among nations. Additionally, undergraduate students are encouraged to get involved in activities that promote mediation as an effective way of communication and become familiar with differentiated instruction as an alternative way of teaching to people with diverse needs and preferences. Therefore, it can be inferred that the participants in the specific program receive education aligned with global competence that will enable them to form globally competent learners in the future.

Similarly, as far as the curriculum planner is concerned, the themes of intercultural awareness, lifelong learning, knowledge and discussion of global issues and collaboration are echoed in the design of the program. The designer views global competence as an umbrella term, which includes various competences, in line with the general efforts to globalize and standardize education. Her answers manifest that global competence and the themes associated with it have implicitly informed the decisions concerning the overall design of the program, i.e. the selection of the theoretical courses that comprise the ΠΠΔΕ and the workshops that constitute the practical part of the participants' program. In addition, the designer indicated that future courses will include courses on democratic values in education, intercultural competence and awareness for primary and secondary school students and cross linguistic mediation. These objectives are associated with GC and indicate that the specific teacher training program will be more globally competent oriented in the future.

However, the findings indicate that the theme of plurilingualism is present only in two of the theoretical courses while experiential activities are promoted in a limited number of workshops (only three out of twenty-two).

Overall, it can be inferred that most of the GC themes are explicit in the ΠΠΔΕ training program and the participants are exposed to the notion at a satisfactory level. This means that this newly emerged notion that enables educators to prepare 'global citizens and sustainable development actors' (UNESCO, 2016, p.1) can be included in the curriculum of other training programs of higher education and curriculum planners can use the checklist with the GC criteria while designing their courses and activities.

Discussion

The research's findings indicate that ΠΠΔΕ's structure and aims incorporate GC and the future EFL teachers of the English Department in the University of Athens are exposed to the notion of global competence to a satisfactory extent.

However one recommendation could be for the specific program to conduct online workshops in cooperation with other programs (domestic or foreign) fulfilling in this way the fifth theme concerning the communication with diverse individuals. Additionally, the program could include activities that promote the use of other languages apart from Greek and English, creating in this way a more multicultural, plurilingual approach to EFL teaching and learning. Another idea could be to include activities that introduce the Sign Language to the participants, promoting in this way equality and access to education for all people.

As far as the incorporation of global competence in higher education in general, research on the extent to which other basic training programs include, implicitly or explicitly, the notion of global competence could serve as a useful tool for the promotion of the concept in more fields of higher education. In addition, the checklist could be used as a basis for other departments. The themes of global competence included in the list could serve as criteria for the construction of pre service teacher training programs (theoretical and practical courses) not only in foreign languages departments but also in other departments as well. Future teachers, either these be EFL teachers or mathematicians, history teachers, Greek language teachers, to name but a few, need to develop the skills required to become globally competent. Issues like racism, mass immigration, injustice and violation of human rights along with the shift to online education should be of concern to all educators who aspire to prepare learners with critical thinking and the capacity to live together in harmony in globally connected communities.

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The multicultural context in Eastern Sicily: Experiences, orientations and integration practices

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Abstract

In times of great migrations, the religious dimension represents one of the harshest terrains for the emergence and persistence of ethnic and cultural clashes, for which school and society have the certainly not easy task of preparing future citizens for an open confrontation in which the integration processes are to be considered as an opportunity not only for immigrants but also for the societies in general. The intercultural perspective requires a precise project aimed at acquiring and allocating development of open, critical and flexible thinking; a thought capable of "migrating" to other cultures to recognize and understand differences and similarities.

Keywords: migrations, school, synergy, knowledge, otherness.

From global to local: The context of migrations

When dealing with intercultural education, it is appropriate to reflect on the numbers of immigration in Italy and Europe first, which show in 2021 for the European Continent 23, 7 million citizens from the Third Countries and 37.5 million people from non-EU Countries, while in Italy the data show 5 million and 171 thousand foreign citizens, 190 thousand of whom reside in Sicily, a region that represents a crossroads of hopes and life plans for many immigrants. Considering Eastern Sicily in detail, foreign citizens residing in the provinces of Messina, Catania, Syracuse and Ragusa are a total of 56900, the majority of them, 34612, residing in the Metropolitan City of Catania (Istat, 2022). Therefore, the theme of integration becomes of fundamental importance, both to recognize rights and dignity, and to prevent social clashes, fears and growing hatred, mainly for reasons connected to the cultural fundamentalism that is consolidating in the West, especially in Europe. Fundamentalisms, especially those linked to religions, in fact, by definition represent a small and limited space of life and thought, and the importance of not being involved in their dangerous vortex is found above all in personal skills and curiosity to understand, to deepen, to safeguard that hermeneutic dimension linked to the independence of thought, the objectivity of facts and the phenomenology of other cultures and of the encounter with them, perceived as an opportunity and not as *a call* to defend the identity considered monolithic and unchanging.

Interreligious dialogue is of equal importance as interpersonal one; indeed, it is complementary to the extent that it allows to further deepen a close confrontation, certainly difficult but oriented towards personal enrichment, peace and conviviality.

Effective politics and interventions for integration in Italy

The *Integration Agreement* in Italy, provided for by l. 179/2011 and came into effect in March 2012, is really an instrument that, coherently with semantics, provides for a meeting of will, a form of attention and a profound reciprocity between the Italian State and the foreigner, so that a path of real and participatory integration is recognized. What has just been mentioned is related to the instrument of the *Agreement* from a regulatory point of view, as well as from a bureaucratic-administrative one, however, given its true nature and the tools by which it intends to pursue the principles for a substantial integration of the foreigner, (planning courses of language, civic education and work training), it is useful to analyze some phases in a pedagogical perspective, as beyond the strictly legal dimension of duties and guarantees, the ultimate reference are people with all of their own unrepeatable human and cultural characteristics. The *Integration Agreement* by analytically contemplating a whole series of civic, linguistic and work training courses for the foreigner who signs it mutually with the Italian State, it fits fully the policies of active citizenship and civic engagement, as a pedagogical instrument for a real integration, in full respect of human rights and all the social communities, according to what established primarily by the *Italian Constitution* and by the UN *Declaration* of 1948.

From a bureaucratic-administrative point of view, the *Agreement* has a duration of two years with the possible extension of another year, and at the time of signing the foreigner who enter for the first time in Italy is assigned 16 credits, which can also be increased with the attendance of civic education and language courses, or by registering with the National Health Service, or admitting to professional training courses and even registering a rental / purchase contract for a residential property, and also by carrying out economic and entrepreneurial activities. However, it is significant to consider both the hypothesis in which is the foreigner himself who requests the suspension of the *Agreement* for family, personal, health or work reasons, or the option for which it expires upon reaching the 30 or more credits determined, which would correspond to an adequate level of integration. Anyway, the integration level must be verified by periodic exams at structures indicated by the Ministry of the Interior, which certify the achievement of a level at least A2 for the Italian language and a sufficient level of civic culture. The latest update available about the *Agreement* at a national level is from 2016, and data show 243,049 subscriptions, with numbers then gradually increasing year after year, reflecting the effectiveness of the arrangements of the law and the coherence of the project at the basis of migrations.

From this point of view, the *Agreement* has a fully pedagogical *télos* and undoubtedly represents an important *praxic tool* of education for active and intercultural citizenship, since as stated by Abdallah-Pretceille (Abdallah-Pretceille, 1996, p. 90) «intercultural is above all a practice; it is with respect to this that it is necessary to situate oneself and try to conceptualize and theorize the intercultural», and it is by placing the accent on interaction and intersubjectivity free from ethnocentrism and any dogmatism that we can really plan a path of valorization and mutual enrichment recognizing the otherness.

The path to full integration in Italy, therefore, will consist of two articulated, parallel tracks, complex, but necessary for full protection of the potential of the person in full compliance with the national and international reference laws, especially in safeguarding the fundamental rights essential for dignity. The paths that provide on the one hand the purely normative integration and, on the other, the one most responding to the social dimension, can thus be depicted according to the framework proposed here:
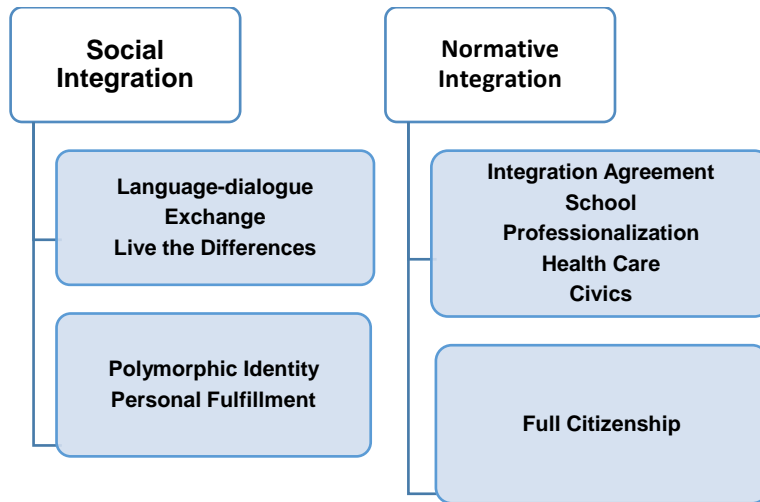
Figure 1. *Integration framework in Italy*

In the Metropolitan City of Catania, a fundamental place of economic and cultural exchange in the Mediterranean, the Mosque of Mercy, the second largest mosque in the South of Italy after the Roman one, represents an example of full integration, as it helps in the transition between belongingness to the native, strong, characterizing culture and the stimulus to share the models and values of the new reality; in this phase, the Mosque has a non-negligible task, which consists in supporting the conservation of the previous culture and identity, and at the same time in guiding and promoting openness to the new, to the otherness.

The present and the possible future for communities in integration

In perfect harmony with the provisions of art.17 of the Treaty On The Functioning Of The European Union and of the National Pact for an Italian Islam published in 2017, The Mosque of Mercy, as a part of the *Comunità Islamica di Sicilia* – C.I.S. - *Islamic Community of Sicily* - thanks to the Imam doctor Kheit Abddhelafid, is a constant example of true integration in the multicultural, social context, since it combines the process of normative integration with the social one as well, with a «clear reference to the articulation of *belongingness-awareness-responsibility-participation»* (Annino 2015, p. 183) orientated to the recognition of the otherness. The Mosque (C.I.S., 2022, p.2) offers more than 400 regular meals a month for the needy of all ethnicities, and most of them are Italian citizens, and also it regularly organizes after-school activities for more than 100 children of all ethnicities. Furthermore, the C.I.S. organizes

socio-cultural activities in which the children of the whole community participate in theatrical, sport and musical events to promote interreligious dialogue.

The C.I.S. also activates periodic blood donation events in collaboration with AVIS and, in line with its objectives, offers charity and assistance services to all the needy of the community; it has activated a *Help Desk* too at the Mosque, to which many refugees and asylum seekers turn to ask for assistance and guidance in the translation of documents and in the handling of practices related to their status. The tightening of personal relationships in the presence of the concept of "diversity" (Annino, 2022, p. 23) «as a negative emphasis on personal and cultural characteristics, highlights how the feelings of belongingness in an exclusive and excluding perspective take root with greater conviction thanks also, and above all, to support-targeted and deeply seductive *media* campaigns to the ears of people who are just waiting to have confirmations in this sense to enhance their own categories of "enemies" in the face of threats of possible disintegration of the "traditional order"». An integration process certainly presents difficulties at various levels, among which undoubtedly emerge the problems related to communication, knowledge of languages, shared codes, the representation of meanings in the contexts where the interaction between associates takes place.

It is clear therefore that in an era of strong multiculturalism and complexity, intercultural education faces the new frontiers of constantly changing cultures, to correspond to the expectations of generations of young and very young people, increasingly projected into a scenario where geographical distances are blurred and the encounter with otherness is much more frequent than before.

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Challenge based learning 360 filmmakers: Perspectives and advance positive action toward the Sustainable Development Goals to empower learners as creators and changemakers

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Abstract

By creating 360 ° video stories, students can learn about the production process, develop important skills such as communication, collaboration and perspective taking, and discover new possibilities and professional passions. Authentic projects with a real-world audience can also help increase student motivation, persistence, and pride. Immersive journalism in the form of virtual reality VR headsets and 360 ° video is becoming increasingly common and is highly touted for inducing a greater presence than traditional text, who experienced the stories using VR and 360 °, the video outperformed those who read the same stories using text with images, not only in results related to presence such as being there, interaction and realism, but also in the source of perceived credibility, story-shared intention, and feelings of empathy. Furthermore, we found that the senses of being-there, interaction, and realism mediated the relationship between the narrative medium and the reader's perceptions of credibility, memory of the story, and the intention to share the story. These findings have theoretical implications for the psychology of virtual reality and practical applications for immersive journalism in particular and interactive media in general. In a five-question survey about water conservation and how involved one time before starting the project and a second time before the survey were on the topic on a scale Likert from 1 to 5 where, 1 is very satisfactory and 5 unsatisfactory. Obtaining grades of 3.81 with standard deviation of 1.20 and grades of 4.25 with standard deviation of 1.19 at the post-survey. Comparing the results of the pre-survey *and the* post-survey shows that the students after having done this project felt that they know more in depth the problems of their community regarding the issue of water sanitation and its responsible consumption. Students mentioned that they felt more interested and committed after the experience. this is shown by the increase of the grade between the presurvey and the post-survey increasing from 3.81 to 4.25

Keywords: Digital storytelling, citizenship, 360 Videos, media literacy.

Introduction

By creating 360 ° video stories, students can learn about the production process, develop important skills such as communication, collaboration and perspective taking, and discover new possibilities and professional passions. Authentic projects with a real-world audience can also help increase student motivation, persistence, and pride. Immersive journalism in the form of virtual reality VR headsets and 360 ° video is becoming increasingly common and is highly touted for inducing a greater presence than traditional text (Camarero, Varona, & Fedorov 2017) who experienced the stories using VR and 360 °, the video outperformed those who

read the same stories using text with images, not only in results related to presence such as being there, interaction and realism, but also in the source of perceived credibility, story - Shared intention, and feelings of empathy. Furthermore, we found that the senses of being-there, interaction, and realism mediated the relationship between the narrative medium and the reader's perceptions of credibility, memory of the story, and the intention to share the story. These findings have theoretical implications for the psychology of virtual reality and practical applications for immersive journalism in particular and interactive media in general (Kang, 2013). In a five-question survey about water conservation and how involved one time before starting the project and a second time before the survey were on the topic on a scale Likert from 1 to 5 where, 1 is very satisfactory and 5 unsatisfactory. Obtaining grades of 3.81 with standard deviation of 1.20 and grades of 4.25 with standard deviation of 1.19 at the post-survey.

Development

Theoretical framework

By creating 360 ° video stories, students can learn about the production process, develop important skills such as communication, collaboration and perspective taking, and discover new possibilities and career passions. Authentic projects with a real-world audience can also help increase student motivation, persistence, and pride. Stories are a useful tool for learning, but also for promoting cross-cultural social change, this when the student who is usually the listener is transformed into the speaker and into the active subject when telling stories. It is worth noting that according to the literature reading, writing and telling stories can contribute to the emotional well-being of young people because in each narrative there are characters who with strategies and actions solve problems, relating it to their personal life. (López-Hidalgo & Fernández_Barrero, 2016).

Description of the innovation

Students often live immersed in their own problems and concerns, within what we sometimes call their bubble, they find themselves oblivious to the problems of their community and their country without realizing that They play a very important role in being able to become agents of change, it is intended that through the methodology teaching based on challenges give the student the tools to become creators of immersive 360 narrative videos of virtual reality in which they expose a problem and shared with other students and the community to advocate for positive causes. Promote citizenship and the socio-emotional and intercultural competencies of students so that they are trained as leaders with a human sense of their community who can be agents of change in their social environment. (Benítez-de-Gracia & Herrera_Damas, 2018).

Implementation process of innovation

The project was carried out in an interdisciplinary way in the subjects of Matter and the environment, Ethical and citizen commitment and Computational logical thinking with the students enrolled in fourth semester at the multicultural program of PrepaTec Morelia.

As a first step the students used design thinking to generate the Proposal of the video using a research matrix and the CANVAS model from Digital Promise (Figure 1). They also chose to promote one of the 17 sustainable development goals of the United Nations (Lu 2015). For this project the students focused on the problem of water in their city Morelia Michoacán, working with the sustainable development objectives # 6 Clean Water and Sanitation and # 12 Responsible Production and Consumption.

Figure 1. *CANVAS Digital Promise Matrix*

The third step was to work on a Mini-Film so that the students became familiar with the Gear 360 equipment, for this an excursion was made to the center of ecotourism at the Yunuen Island that is 30 minutes by car from Morelia. Yunuen Island is located in Lake Pátzcuaro, Michoacán México inhabited by a Purépecha indigenous population. The island's community organization operates the ecotourism center that has built absorption wells for water treatment, a reforestation project and the production of compost for growing vegetables (Ortiz-Gómez, 2012). Once on the Island the students filmed their video and got acquainted with the 360-video camera and had the chance to see the community efforts to keep the water of the island and the lake clean.

The fourth step was to create the production guide, the information of the production guide was taken from the My World 360 Digital Promise page to ensure that the product meets the specifications in order to participate in the initiative https://global.digitalpromise.org/360-story-lab / my-world-360 / program-guide /
The guide was worked on in three stages:

1. Initiation and Personalization of Project

    1.2. Development of ideas

    1.3. Experience a 360 °

    1.4 experience. Make a 360 ° photo essay or a mini film (Figure 3)

2. Pre-production

    2.1. 360 ° script creation

    2.2. Storyboard

    2.3. production team

2.4. Production Plan

3. Production

3.1. Recording

3.2. Editing

Once the videos were ready, they were sent to the United Nations Showcase through Digital Promise's My World 360 °

Outcome evaluation

A survey was generated with self-report statements for the initial set of items, all of which were written to allow for subject responses using a 5-point Likert format, ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Neither agree nor disagree", 4 = "Agree", a 5 = "Strongly agree".

Before starting the project, the survey will be applied to the students and once the project is finished, they are applied again and the before and after results were compared to see if there was a significant change. (Figure 2 and 3)

Demographics

Number of students in the generation who completed the survey: **18**

Semester: **4th**

Percentage of students from bilingual schools or programs: **47%**

Experience abroad: **29%**
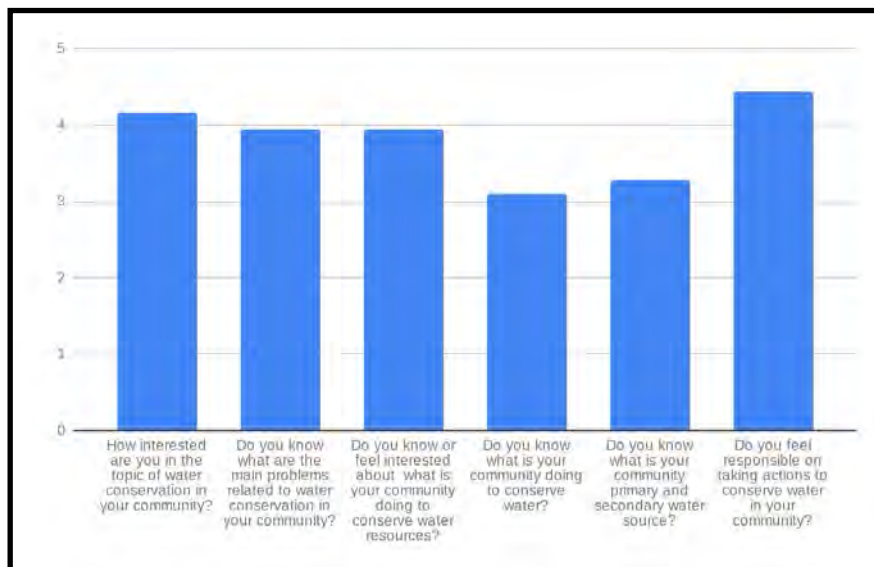
Figure 2. *Pre-survey results*
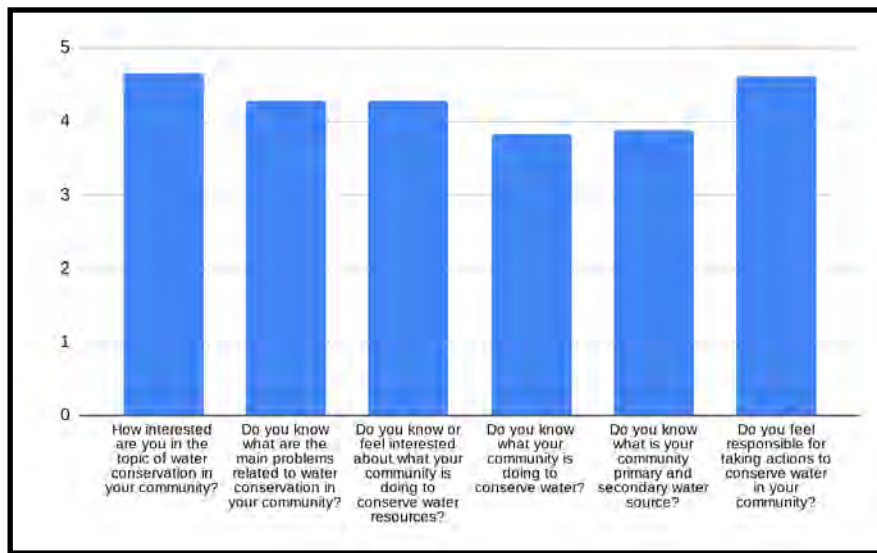
Figure 3. *Post-survey results*

	Grade	Standard Deviation
Pre-Survey	3.81	1.2
Post-Survey	4.25	1.9

Table 1. *Comparison of the results of both surveys*

Conclusions

The use of virtual reality to advocate a community problem can have several ethical implications, since students are integrating their own ideas and their perception that can also integrate stereotypes, fears, perceptions, among others.

When making journalistic videos for awareness campaigns, we as teachers and students have a great moral responsibility that the information generated in these videos is reliable and adheres as closely as possible to the truth, avoiding bias and manipulation of any kind. In short, the moral responsibility of our life is transferred to the sphere of the creation of 360 journalistic videos.

Comparing the results of the pre-survey *and the* post-survey shows that the students after having done this project felt that they know more in depth the problems of their community regarding the issue of water sanitation and its responsible consumption. Students mentioned that they felt more interested and committed after the experience. this is shown by the increase of the grade between the resurvey and the post-survey increasing from 3.81 to 4.25

The objectives of promoting citizen participation as well as improving understanding was achieved by the students as well as the students understanding of global problems that affect their community and other

communities, by developing technical production skills through the use of new video 360 ° immersive techniques.

Acknowledgments

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Gamification: Serious games to promote multicultural attributes at Prepatec Morelia High School

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Abstract

Video games are very popular with students and at the same time have been shown to be a method by which students can identify with different situations and global topics. Through these games, young people relate to the character of the story and make it their own and try to do their best to achieve the objectives of the simulation, this generates in them different emotions and reactions that helps them to deepen in these issues having a different vision. It is worth mentioning that these platforms create a friendly environment where the user can experiment without fear of making mistakes and motivate them to repeat the actions many times promoting learning. Different organizations have created what we know as serious games that simulate global problems, such as migration, inequality, corruption, poverty, inclusion among others, and pose real situations that have the ultimate goal of encouraging students to respond more actively to these situations and make them become agents of change within their community. In PrepaTec Morelia with a group of 24 students from the multicultural program in the second semester, several of these simulations related to the theme of social inequalities were played to promote the multicultural attributes that it is desired that they acquire in this program. At the end of the activities, a satisfaction survey was applied to the students of this multicultural group taking the subject of Thinking Skills in the January-May 2021 semester, In the satisfaction survey with a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is very 5 satisfactory and unsatisfactory, results of 1.98 Were Obtained with a standard deviation of 1.5. The students like the activity and make them feel more empathetic towards social inequalities.

Keywords: Serious games, multicultural attributes, gamification, empathy, game based learning, simulations, global empathy, social inequities.

Introduction

If video games and virtual simulations are so attractive to young people, how can we better harness these forms of entertainment to foster emotional intelligence and empathy so that students can display a more active and attentive response to relevant social issues? How can computerized simulation games help foster global empathy and interest in global civic learning / action? How might simulations help students empathize and identify with the lives of global others? Video games and virtual simulations are a simple and effective vehicle for connecting students with the lives of people from various social groups. These tools are effective in promoting empathy within a social justice context because they present compelling narratives that draw players to a given situation. (Ripoll, 2018).

In the second semester Thinking Skills class of PrepaTec with a group of students of the multicultural program, the issue of inequality was addressed through Serious Games to promote the empathy of the students and work on the attributes of the program (Figure 1).

Figure 1. *Attributes of the Multicultural Program PrepaTec*
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Development: Theoretical framework

Video games have been used to support ethical education, human rights education, to overcome problems in intercultural communication for learning about different cultures, mastering cultural differences and connecting people from different countries of origin increased levels of culture self-awareness expanded intercultural empathy contributing to the development of culture and thoughts about geocultural spaces. (Gómez, 2017).

Therefore, the adoption of video game technology could be a natural progression for an educational system that strives to engage students in learning about complex subjects. Video games become valuable tools to educate in an innovative way. A video game on intercultural issues, diversity and inclusion could present adolescents with an alternative application of this popular medium. (Gómez-Prada 2019).

Educators can benefit from video games that address topics such as immigration, xenophobia, racism, inclusion, human rights, stereotypes, and prejudice. Video games offer a virtual space with knowledge embedded in meanings, relevant, and constructed game worlds. This space combines enjoyment and learning by telling a story in a way that captures and maintains the attention and interest of the players. (Ripoll, 2018).

Description of the innovation

Use of video games and virtual simulations with social themes to promote intercultural skills of students in PrepaTec Morelia in order to achieve the following objectives

- Help students to empathize and identify with other people from other countries and cultures
- Promote emotional intelligence in a more relevant way
- Create interest in global civic learning
- Encourage the 4Cs: creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and communication.
- Fostering global empathy

Innovation implementation process

The issue of inequality was addressed with the group of 24 students from the multicultural program of the second semester of PrepaTec studying the Thinking Skills subject in the January-May 2021 semester. Each time a topic was addressed, the students had as an activity to play a serious game that was previously chosen to be related to the topic of the class. (Table 1) all related to Inequality.

The interactive games that were used were:

- **Layla and the Shadows of War play** https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.liyla.war This game offers an emotional perspective on the high price they must pay individuals when there is war

- **SPEND** http://playspent.org/ that deals with economic inequalities in America

- **RIGGED** https://bellwethereducation.org/publication/ rigged on the difficulties that underprivileged teens in different countries face in graduating from High School

- **TWINE https://twinery.org/** Twine is an open-source tool for interactive, non-linear storytelling.

- **3rd WORLD FARMING** https://3rdworldfarmer.org/ helps to experience deprivation suffered by farmers in third world countries

- **SYRIAN JOURNEY** https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32057601 on people forced to migrate due to the war in Syria

The thinking skills class is a four-hour week course during the semester, the project was worked having 3 synchronous classes and one asynchronous class, where the students worked on their game prototype with the TWINE tool.

Class	Modality	Topic	Serious Game
1	Synchronous	Economic Disparity	**SPEND**
2	Synchronous	Access to Education	**RIGGED**:
3	Synchronous	Poverty and Agriculture	**3rd WORLD FARMING:**
4	Synchronous	Migration and Refugees	**LYLA AND THE SHADOWS OF THE WAR SYRIAN JOURNEY**
5	Synchronous	Indigenous population	**TWINE TOOL**, prototype of a serious game based on the life of an adolescent from a Purépecha community
6	Asynchronous	Community	**TWINE TOOL**

Table 1. *Class Topics with the Simulator used for each of them*

Once the project was finished, a round table was held with the students about this experience and they answered a satisfaction survey, the students also recorded a video reflection lasting one minute using the tool Flipgrid in which they answered the following triggering questions:

- Did your perspective on social inequality change?
- Did they help you to reflect and better understand inequity?
- Did you experience empathy for people who suffer from inequality in any of its forms?
- Did you feel called to be an agent of change?

Evaluation of results

At the end of the project, the students answered a satisfaction survey that yielded the following results in the group, half are women and half are men, 83.3% like to play video games against 16.7% who It is not to their liking, 25% of students dedicate 1 to 2 hours a week to video games while 8.3% more than 8 hours a week. (Figure 2).
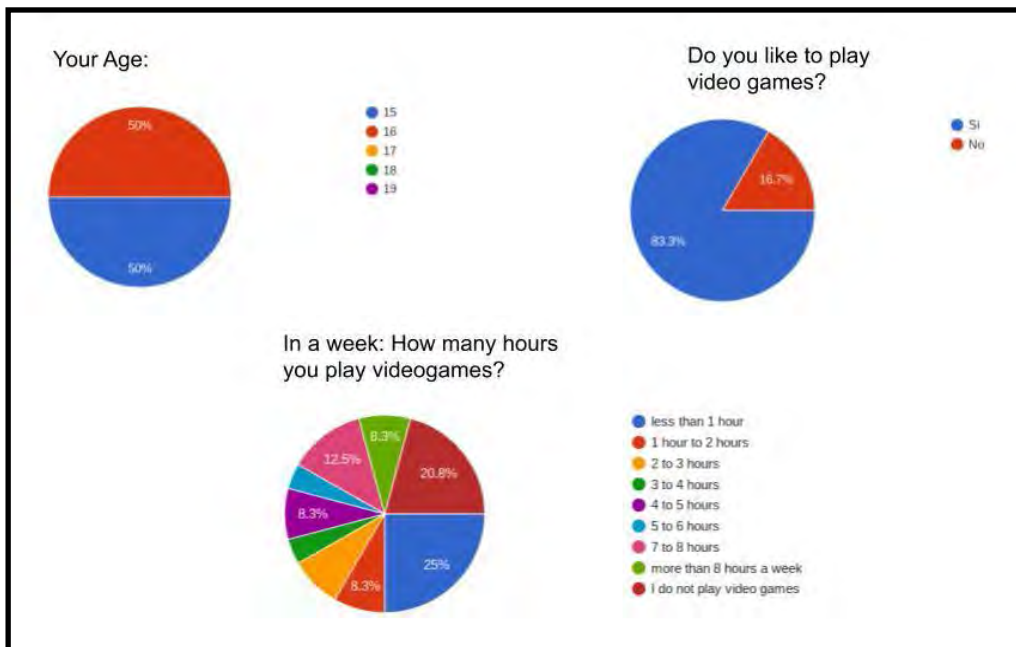
Figure 2. *Data from the survey, age of the students, whether they like to play video games and how many hours they invest in playing them*

In the survey the students were asked, what was the feeling they experienced primarily while they were playing, the results showed that 37% of the students answered that this feeling was mostly empathy, followed by 29.2% who said they felt frustrated by not being able to achieve the objectives of the simulation. information that was obtained through a round table with the students (Figure 3).
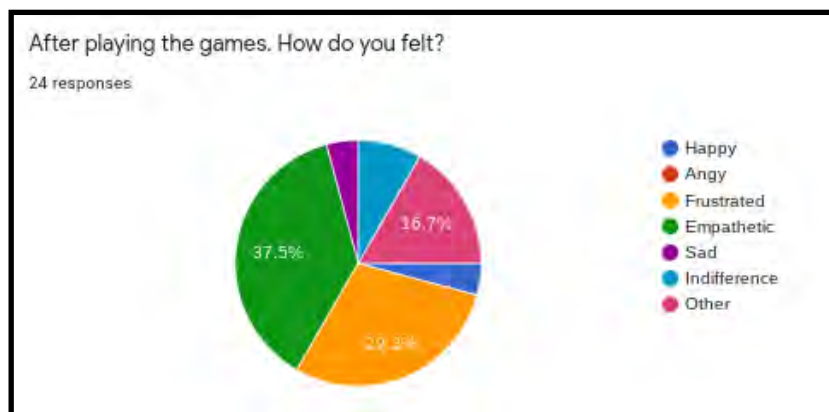
Figure 3. *What emotions do students experience while playing*

The results of the satisfaction survey using a 5-point Likert format, with 1 being satisfied and 5 dissatisfied, results of 1.98 were obtained with a standard deviation of 1.5.

Conclusions

Through this project using serious games the main objective of the project was achieved, which was that students will use their critical thinking skills but at the same time they can connect and empathize with people who suffer inequalities in any of its forms. Although the simulations sometimes managed to create frustration in

the students, they also managed to connect with the students and make them reflect on the inequity that exists. During the pandemic students remained at home most of the time but through these simulators they were able to open the door to other realities that sometimes seem to be foreign. The attribute worked in this project was Cultural Sensitivity but also helped students to develop other attributes such as appreciation of diversity and acknowledge others perspective.

The students enjoyed the activity, and it was something new for them. In the survey they were asked if they would like to have an activity like this again and 62.5% were happy that they totally agreed. (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. *Percentage of students who liked the activity*

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Bilingual students in specialized 'booster' education programmes: Views and attitudes of secondary education teachers in Greece

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Abstract

The overrepresentation of bilingual students in special education (Hulse & Curran, 2020; Zhang & Katsiyannis, 2002) is a phenomenon attributed to teachers' attitudes and weakness to manage bilingualism in class, which arguably results from their insufficient training (Cummins, 2015; Fernandez & Inserra, 2013). The present research aims to examine how teachers perceive and deal with bilingualism in relation to dyslexia in public education in Greece. Our qualitative and quantitative research findings show that secondary school teachers in Greece have insufficient knowledge regarding the relationship between bilingualism and dyslexia and call for reconsideration of relevant educational policies, including effective teachers' training.

Keywords: bilingualism, learning disabilities, dyslexia, teachers' views.

Theoretical Framework

The Greek educational system has attempted to treat all students equally, including those of an immigrant or a refugee background. For this purpose, specific educational structures were introduced in public schools over the last two decades (e.g., Reception Departments and Tutoring Departments, Educational Priority Zones). Nevertheless, the efforts to implement intercultural education and preserving students' cultural identities have failed to a great extent (Markou, 2011). A vital issue to consider in education is the unnecessary inclusion of bilingual students with a migrant background in specialized 'booster' educational programs after being unduly characterized as students with dyslexia. In Greece, the relevant law underlines that students with low school performance which is causally linked to external factors, such as those related to linguistic and cultural diversity, *should not* be referred to special education services (Law 3699/2008). There are, in fact, common features between bilingualism and dyslexia, which involve difficulties in different aspects of learning, hence low school performance (Alevriadou et al., 2012; Goldstein, 2004; Kieffer & Vukonic, 2012). Crucially, however, the causes of bilingualism-related weaknesses differ from those of dyslexia. The deficits associated with bilingualism stem from external factors (Vender et al., 2021), whereas the learning deficits resulting from dyslexia are exclusively linked to endogenous and genetically predetermined factors of a neurological nature (Dulude, 2012). The inaccurate assessment of bilingual students as a dyslexic is a result of a) the presence of common characteristics between dyslexia and bilingualism (Artiles et al., 2005; Deponio et al., 2000; Kieffer & Vukovic, 2012; Klinger & Artiles, 2003); b) teachers and authorities' inability to distinguish between dyslexia

and bilingualism (Case & Taylor, 2005); and c) the inability of valid assessment due to the use of tests which are not weighted towards minority populations (Wright & Baker, 2017; Zhang & Katsiyannis, 2002).

Methodology

Aim and research questions

Our study focuses on the views of secondary school teachers on the relationship between bilingualism and dyslexia in the Greek context of public education. The research questions are:

1. How do teachers understand the concept of bilingualism in the context of migration?

2. What characteristics do teachers attribute to bilingual students born to immigrant parents in Greece?

3. What practices do teachers use to teach bilingual students in general classes?

4. To what extent do teachers associate bilingualism with dyslexia?

5. To what extent do teachers consider it necessary to refer bilingual students to "booster" education programs due to their learning and communication difficulties?

Data collection and analysis

a) A quantitative study based on a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was conducted with 123 participants who were teachers of secondary education in Greece. The collected data were analyzed with SPSS; b) A qualitative study was also carried out to explore the issue in more depth. The qualitative study was divided into two parts. The first part (Study 1) was based on written accounts given by 71 teachers, while the second part (Study 2) employed semi-structured interviews conducted with 5 teachers. Thematic analysis was used for the analysis of the collected data.

Main results

Quantitative research

Concerning the first research question, an essential percentage of the teachers stated that they had no opinion about bilingual students' learning characteristics. Almost half of them agreed that a bilingual student is disadvantaged in second/foreign language due to bilingualism, yet s/he can learn foreign languages easily. Focusing on bilinguals' learning characteristics, most participants observed differences between bilingual and monolingual students in written and oral language skills. In addition, they mostly stated that they agree with factors reported in the relevant literature, such as the effect of lack of practice in the second language, the discrimination against them, and the insufficient cultivation of the first language. Regarding the practices that teachers prefer for teaching bilingual students, most of them reported using students' pre-existence experience, including their linguistic knowledge. They also stated that they do not prohibit their students from using their heritage language at school, but they do encourage them to use Greek (the dominant societal language) at home. In reporting their views on the connection between bilingualism and dyslexia, almost half of the participants

erroneously believed that bilingual students often face dyslexia due to the interference of the second language. However, more than half of them disagreed with the statement that bilingualism is related to genetically predetermined mental abilities. In the last research question on the integration of bilingual students in special education programs, almost half of the participants stated that bilingual students enrich general classrooms, in which they do not disrupt the lesson flow, and that mainstream classrooms are beneficial for bilingual students. By contrast, they also mostly agreed with the statement that referring bilingual students to special education is necessary.

Qualitative research

In Study 1, only 15 out of 71 teachers (20%) stated that there is no relationship between bilingualism and dyslexia. Other responses included perceptions on the cause of difficulties in language skills, which was viewed as being different between bilingualism and dyslexia. The teachers who supported the view that there are common characteristics between the two phenomena also mentioned difficulties in writing and reading comprehension, spelling, and pronunciation in the performance of bilingual students.

In Study 2, the teachers discussed bilinguals' weaknesses in written and oral language. Crucially, they mentioned problems with bilingual students' behavior, for which they blamed bilingualism itself, the use of the heritage language, and peers' discrimination against them. The participants also commented on the discrepancy between academic and everyday language, among other issues. When they were asked if bilingual students should be moved to specialized 'booster' education programs, all of them agreed. Finally, they pointed out that bilingual students do need support, namely help in special classrooms with a limited number of students, due to deficits in the second language and that there is a need for teachers with special training.

Discussion

In both research studies the participants mentioned the difficulties of bilingual students in written and oral language, together with the conviction that the heritage language acts as a barrier to second language acquisition, which is responsible for bilinguals' disadvantageous image. However, the differences between the quantitative and the qualitative studies were interesting. Teachers in the qualitative research reported phenomena of indiscipline, impulsivity, and low self-esteem. The blame was put on discrimination by their peers and inefficient primary school teaching, but not on the behavior of the teachers themselves. Regarding the relationship between bilingualism and dyslexia, the studies demonstrated ignorance and confusion as teachers showed inability to distinguish between them. Interestingly, there was an important contradiction regarding the teachers' opinions on whether or not to refer bilingual students to specialized 'booster' education programs. Questionnaire responses revealed that, according to teachers' views, bilinguals benefit and enrich general classes. At the same time, they stated that bilingual students should be removed from general classes. Another contradiction emerged in the qualitative study as, according to teachers' reports, bilingual students are not students with dyslexia; nonetheless, they need support from a special educator because of language difficulties and inappropriate behavior.

The results highlight teachers' tendency to avoid responsibility and to distance themselves from classroom reality. They also revealed teachers' inefficiency and insecurity in managing diversity related to bilingualism and effectively supporting their students by making appropriate decisions. Apparently, bilingual students' inclusion in specialized 'booster' education programs is a decision that exacerbates the problems of negative behavior and reduced self-esteem (Zaga et al., 2015), which actually means that it is an inappropriate educational intervention (Anastasiou et al., 2011). Therefore, it is essential that teachers' viewpoints must be studied in combination with language professionals' and scholars' knowledge in order for appropriate language policies to be established (Lo Bianco, 2019).

In conclusion, lack of proper teachers' training has dramatic consequences, as shown in the present research study. It perpetuates the stigma against bilingualism and leads to misdiagnosing children, thereby wasting valuable resources that could instead be used with populations with actual learning disabilities. For all these reasons, there is an imperative need for teachers' training in both bilingualism and special education in order for them to be able to understand the real needs of their students and act accordingly. It is also vital to modify the relevant educational policies to allow for efficient education for bilingual students in accordance with the goals of intercultural education (e.g., Cummins, 2015).

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Instilling 'color' into 'blue' situations: Dealing with global issues through multiliteracies

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Abstract

This paper delineates an intervention within an English-as-Foreign Language (EFL) framework at a Greek primary school. The scheme intended to highlight attitudes and principles, raise empathy regarding destitution/ war/ immigration, awaken people against human-rights violation/ injustice, induce reaction. Multiliteracy expansion was attempted through projection of authentic videos and photos, expression of thoughts and feelings, individual search, data comparison, idea-negotiation, meaning-making through modality affordances, creation of artifacts, dramatization, evaluation. Outcomes indicate the ways education may shape global personalities and create autonomous thinkers.

Keywords: Human-rights, injustice-combat, multiliteracies, immigrants-refugees, drama.

Introduction

Being 'literate' transcends speaking or writing in a language; incorporating ideological, cultural or geographical aspects, it may extend to recognizing reality and combatting injustice (Hull & Nelson, 2009). Multiliteracy may facilitate comprehension and illustration of diverse angles and reaction types. Language can be a medium for individuals to voice beliefs, render own values and sensibilities, exhibit solidarity to underprivileged human beings, work towards their well-being. Acquaintance with history and 'sufferings of the past' may enlarge prospects for a different future (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

The paper describes an intervention during which Greek primary-school learners got updated on unpleasant situations regarding immigrants and refugees, related facts to human-rights, cultivated attitudes, responded vibrantly.

Literature review

A short literature review is presented first. *Literacy – Multiliteracies*. Cope and Kalantzis (2009) define literacies as doings that permeate communication in plentiful perspectives (linguistic, emotional, audio-visual, gestural, spatial, tactile*)*. Learners receive input, link it to prior knowledge, gather further information, define concepts, question things, seek functions, identify motives, articulate feelings, assume initiatives, suggest alternatives, result in conventional or creative products, disseminate.

The grammar of visual design. Colors are recognized as semiotic codes which may connote ideological positions. Assuming various meanings in diverse contexts, they can symbolize people/ places/ objects, impress, warn against hazards, present values (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Intercultural Education and Human Rights. Two educational trends aim at injustice-combat and attitude-change: a) *programs of multicultural* curriculum where briefing about minorities' culture may lead to tolerance/ respect and thus, in improved intergroup relations (local community-migrants), b) *anti-racism programs*, within which learners are encouraged to recognize racism, denounce individuals or institutions that engender or sustain inequity, and attempt to reduce it (Turner & Brown, 2008). Contact between ingroup and outgroup members may be achieved through interaction: getting to know each other, moderating ignorance, augmenting knowledge, differentiating behavior towards minorities, forming affective ties, reassessing stances (Allport, 1954). Bailin (1998) pulls upon three stages that may advance critical thinking within decision-making: a) *challenges* (tasks or problems) that call for resolution, b) *intellectual resources* that facilitate deeper elucidation, c) *response* via debates, written accounts, dramatic plays or tangible deeds.

Drama. Mime/ role-play/ improvisation transmit messages, reveal dilemmas, intentions, endeavors or aftermaths. Actors overcome error fear, interact with peers, form cross-cultural conscience. Judging within dramatization may be transferable to actual circumstances since inner imaging enables empathy and emulation (Brown, 2017). The project methodology follows hereafter.

Method

Research Question

Can multifaceted interaction (update, own search, data comparison, meaning-negotiation, impersonation) lead to stereotype-discrimination rejection, outgroup acceptance, reaction to injustice?

Participants – Context

The author works as an EFL tutor at a Primary school in Corfu, Greece. Group A: 10-11 year-old, level A1$^+$-A2$^-$ (CEFR, 2001): group B: 8-9 year old, Level A1. Pupils were roughly aware of current migration incidents from television. However, there was need for connection between school and humanity issues.

Aims and objectives

The venture pursued Greek Integrated Curriculum for Foreign Languages (2016). It aspired learner knowledge on Third-world poverty/ war/ migration, cultivation of stances and skills. Aims encompassed augmentation of self-reliance/ confidence/ ingenuity/ critical consciousness, approval of difference, tolerance towards immigrants/ refugees, demonstration of solidarity, vibrant rejoinder, metacognition.

Procedure

The procedure is laid out below. Group A met the problematic situation through a short video that showed destitute people in sacks without luxuries, complaining about troublesome gadgets. Fifth and sixth-graders specified author/ audience/ intended purpose, and possible prior knowledge on the subject. Learners guessed characters' thoughts/ actual sayings, and verbalized impressions. They acknowledged the sarcastic handling of

the 'poverty' issue through vocabulary contrasting the visual, and speculated upon deprived individuals' challenges. Next, they watched a Power Point Presentation (PPP) that featured destroyed infrastructures, men and women walking through vast fields, crossing the Aegean sea, carrying possessions and children, getting rescued from drowning, waiting for wired borders to open up. Participants attained new words, communicated their feelings, discussed photographers' goals/ audience, depicted people's status and origin. They determined in what ways (if any) those humans are different from or similar to us, and whether we (ought to) share equal rights. They also outlined what each semiotic mode offers to meanings.

In succeeding sessions each class (E & F) got separated in four subgroups so as to explore the terms 'refugee-immigrant', life quality in the 'Third-World' and reasons behind migration, basic Human Rights, the Greek Asia-minor refugee period. Members checked source reliability, compared recovered data to those from video-clip or PPP, and exchanged views on displacement as well as importance of human dignity and safety. Having discovered ancestors' shelter in Syria in the 1920s, they tried to get into refugees' shoes, understand despair and concerns on the road to a more prosperous future. Pupils sought explanations for occasional resentment towards immigrants. They commented upon universal policies, and suggested prevention measures or desirable attitudes towards the poor and the tormented.

Participants released their tension by sketching humble or derelict dwellings or war-disrupted environment. They hung their mini posters on a class board and then provided oral feedback on partners' artifacts. They conceded to impersonate unfortunate persons, so as to transfer a moral to peers, teachers or parents. Therefore, they selected various photos of poor people, inserted them on a PPP, and devised captions beginning 'I hate it when…' contrasting images.

In the same vein, a popular animated cartoon film was solicited to lift spirits up and empower 'tortured' persons to take matters in their hands. It depicted a community of adorable creatures with unique colorful bodies and flame-rising hair who—even upon danger—retained faith and kindness. Different colors implied different identities and abilities. While-watching, children replied to questions referring to characters' mood, habits, behavior and retort to menace. Group A specified likes/ dislikes, associating the theme to earlier topics. They also spotted video techniques, color and hugging significance. Group B conjectured connotations, and eagerly agreed to transmit joy and hope to represented migrants in front of an audience through simple but crucial words or phrases.

The official enactment got scheduled for Christmas. In the meantime, group A watched a famous clip, '*Do they know it's Christmas*', examined intended audience/ awakening scope/ connection to previous cases, and practiced singing it.

All school members gradually located photos of problematic situations and stuck them in carton boards as a big letter-plead to Santa Claus. They wrote positive wishes for disfavored persons (e.g. friendship, solidarity). Collages were then hung on the major hall (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. *Collage*

Moreover, class F learners decided to compose a unanimous letter to local authorities asking for open borders along fair and human treatment for migrants. In addition, all children gathered food and garments to be sent to national refugee-camp dwellers.

Each class commenced rehearsing, getting introduced to theatrical conventions. They selected outfits, setting and other accessories. Group A would appear in worn-out clothes, hurt and tired; boys in bandages, leaning on canes indicating war-inflicted disability, girls in headscarves, resembling feminine Muslims. Group B would be dressed in pure color shirts and trousers. Hats in a motion-like style would substitute film-heroes' hair. The background sets illustrated a wrecked town (Fig. 2). On performance day, group A on stage, rendered those going through hardships. Their lines contradicted their appearance. One after the other blissful types (group B) entered from below as if from another realm, embraced a 'tormented' person, uttered encouraging words and sat beside him/her. Group A sang the famous musical piece, and then danced together with Group B to the heartwarming film soundtrack tune. Throughout the scheme pupils appraised practices and outcomes.

Figure 2. *Stage show*

Results – Discussion

Project placement within an existing context generated broad interest. Information through videos and PPP inspired expression of individual likes or dislikes. Interpreting happenings according to sociocultural background defied their reliability. Juxtaposing verbalized complaints to genuine problems underlined their triviality. Guessing depicted persons' thoughts extended imagination. Verifying sarcasm boosted understanding of style impact. Feeling inside the poor houses helped classify the suffering ones 'into our world or another'. Getting to know audiovisual conventions contributed to recognition of their affordances.

Deciding on aspects to be clarified designated autonomous judgement. Looking for author/ purpose/ audience in sources cultivated critical thinking. Discovering global deprivation and refugees' hardships as well as reasons behind migration aroused diverse sentiments, skepticism and practical remedy options. Aligning current conditions to past Greek migrants' adversities was crucial to perceiving mistreatment. Parallelizing cartoon plot to examined areas sparkled viewers' affinity and moral comprehension. Converting initial laughter or indifference into a solemn attitude assured maturity. Sketching and writing ironic captions combined visual and linguistic elements. Accepting people regardless country, religion or race signposted embedment of human rights. Will to dramatize, to pass a point to the public validated reaction to injustice.

Consciousness of power to influence the social environment endowed pupils with more agency. Arranging a collage converted words and images into a coherent empathetic text. Composing a group letter illustrated collective thought. Exploiting gestures/ facial expressions/ outfits/ hairstyles, music, make-up and accessories signified awareness of minimal features that represent messages. Impersonating colorful creatures equated endorsement of their values. Filling the hall with color (Fig. 3), literally (hats and song sheets) and metaphorically (prevailing mood) dispersed sadness or melancholy. Singing '*Do they know it's Christmas*' manifested its everlasting capacity to unite people around a common goal. Dancing all together to a pop song strengthened bonding among the two 'categories'. Performing successfully elevated self-confidence. Collecting numerous charity products portrayed deep consideration. Desiring equivalent upcoming missions manifested enjoyment. Assessing steps and outcomes helped cultivate metacognition skills.

Learner active participation validated independency from the EFL tutor who orchestrated tasks, guided movements, and supported trainees.

Figure 3. *Instilling color*

Conclusions

The particular EFL project handled frustrating events through multiple practices. Learners—challenged by true incidents—took initiatives, looked deeper, parallelized with own state, collaborated, interacted with people and materials, analyzed functions and motives, contemplated, negotiated policies, empathized with the tormented, modified texts, assessed tools/ products/ strategies, disseminated ideas, skills and attitudes. They questioned status quo and came to accept humans regardless of country, race or religion. Freedom in language-image interpretation, displaying poverty and war issues as 'history of the world' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), triggered dynamic 'reading of the world' (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

The poor, the tormented, the optimist creatures became a source of inspiration, a way of resisting to injustice. 'Represented' relationships were transformed into 'enacted' ones (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Assuming cartoon characters' inner force and charm brought performers and 'tormented' individuals closer. The emblematic embracement, accomplishing fusion between refugees and pupils, joined 'local and global conversations' (Hull & Nelson, 2009). Children's general stance demonstrated profound understanding and intercultural concern. Constructing meaning along enacting a self, leveraging drama to express compassion to the disadvantaged, awakening public and triggering further reaction instilled color into blue situations.

The above indicate some of the ways multiliteracy may contribute to human-rights preservation or prejudice-reduction. It is free thinkers that may evolve into autonomous citizens who will form 'democratic societies'. Educators should bear such principles in mind when designing activities visualizing social change.

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Reflections on online pedagogical approaches in migrant and refugee education

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Abstract

Through duoethnography, we present some challenges we face teaching online, migrants and refugees who are situated in Spain and in Greece. In our interactions, we reflect on our practices, pedagogies as well as opportunities and challenges that online teaching with migrants and refugees presents. Furthermore, drawing on sociolinguistic concepts such as 'scales', 'chronotopes' and 'scale -making' and considering them in an open and transparent manner into our teaching planning, we try to establish positive communication with our learners. The aim of this paper is to promote a discussion on online pedagogical approaches, to explore them in the context of migrant and refugee education, and to make some suggestions with pedagogical, linguistic and intercultural implications.

Keywords: migrant education, refugee education, online teaching.

Introduction

Migrant and refugee education faces old and new challenges as education is provided either face to face or online. In the context of foreign and second language and culture learning, the situation becomes more complex as the engagement with another language and culture does not leave migrants and refugees' own language and culture behind. The aim of this paper is to promote a discussion on online pedagogical approaches, to explore them in the context of migrant and refugee education, and to make some suggestions with pedagogical, linguistic and intercultural implications.

Methodology

Through duoethnography, we present some challenges we face teaching online, migrants and refugees who are situated in Spain and in Greece. Duoethnography refers to the combination of two autoethnographic accounts where the voices of the researchers are foregrounded (Sawer and Norris, 2013). In our interactions, we reflect on our practices, pedagogies, as well as opportunities and challenges that online teaching with migrants and refugees presents. Our conversations were audiorecorded and transcribed for analysis and coding by topic. For this paper, due to word limit, our reflections are presented together under specific themes and not in a dialogue.

Theoretical framework

Drawing on sociolinguistic concepts such as 'scales', 'chronotopes' and 'scale -making' and considering them in an open and transparent manner into our teaching planning, we try to establish positive communication with

our learners. 'Scales' should be looked at as time and place elements that each of us negotiate (Blommaert, 2015); whilst 'chronotopes' are those invocable, semiotic elements of time, space, activities, beliefs, past, history and future that, usually silently, define us (Blommaert, 2015). Establishing a teaching and learning relationship with our learners can simply be a case of creating a unique 'scale' situation, discursively constructed between ourselves and our students, scale-making. In other words, in our lessons, we take into consideration our students' time, space, histories, and trajectories by creating a unique scale-making situation with them as we negotiate the norms, the rules, and the environment that should operate in our interactions.

Reflections

Pedagogical approaches – How we teach

The immigrant condition is not in itself a factor in learning. What we mean is, for example, immigrant students of Spanish or Greek are, in fact, students of Spanish and of Greek; they will activate the same cognitive mechanisms and processes as any other language learner (Villalba, 2018). These learners are in a situation of immersion, but we should not think that their exposure to input comes naturally (Villalba, 2018).

In lesson planning, some factors also need to be considered. First, exposure to input is limited in terms of topics, opportunities for language use and variety of interlocutors, as, in the online lessons the only people involved are the student and the teacher. Second, students encounter real-life situations outside lessons, where they need to capture meanings, but they do not have time to analyze the sequences with their structure and their grammar. In lessons, they appear to understand topics related to real-life situations, but they appear to produce fossilized language errors (Villalba, 2018). Third, their motivation is different from that of other learners. Learning the language is not the objective, but a means to reach another status in the host society (Warriner, 2021). Finally, learners are distinguished by anxiety caused by a lack of self-confidence. The language they use constantly identifies them and causes a conflict between what they are and what they project in the second language (L2) (Villalba, 2018).

In our practice, we do not only use the communicative or the task-based method. Rather, we principally focus on our students and their needs. We consider that our teaching approach must be a real-action-oriented methodology to help solve real problems and situations (Villalba, 2018).

All the classes are online and individual. WhatsApp is used as it is an internationally available freeware service that students can use to send text and voice messages, make voice and video calls, and share images and documents. However, there is a technology gap, as some migrant students seem not to be digital literate (Warriner, 2021). Therefore, we also need to take into consideration issues around technology, for example refugee and migrant students do not have the latest generation mobile; they do not have a contract with a lot of data; they have a difficulty in accessing the internet and connecting, in applying digital skills and using digital resources. Students seem not to take advantage of resources they could access, such as libraries etc.

Furthermore, according to our teaching experience, in WhatsApp you cannot share screen or chat at the same time. The class is limited to oral interaction. For solving this issue, we send material before the lesson, we produce voice recordings, and we write some prompts in the chat after the lesson.

Linguistic focus – What we teach

The focus here is on communicative functions as students are interested in specific topics related to public, professional and educational life. Processing an application with a lawyer, requesting an appointment at the medical center, preparing a CV for a job application are some of the tasks that students are engaged with during lessons. Grammar appears in context and the focus is on the meaning. Grammatical terms are avoided. Intonation is also taught as it affects not only comprehensibility but also credibility (Villalba, 2018).

Students' first language does not disappear. It is always present as a point of reference. Translanguaging is encouraged as it is recognized as a potential resource, both cognitively and socially for students (García, 2009).

Intercultural approach

In our intercultural interactions with students, we observe the construction and negotiation of cultural identities, references and practices in situ. More specifically, what we observe in our lessons is that our students move through and across linguistic and cultural boundaries, and the borders themselves "become blurred, transgressed and transcended" (Baker & Sangiamchit 2019, p. 472). This blurring happens because our students and we act out different roles while also dealing with fluid realities. We are also very conscious that fluid practices and processes transcend and transform; 'socially constructed language systems and structures engage diverse multiple meaning-making systems and subjectivities' (Li, 2018, p. 27).

Taking into account students' different perspectives on spatiotemporal and social/power dimensions, and recognising the relational, overlapping, dynamic and mediated nature of context (Canagarajah, 2013), lessons are open to negotiation in the sense that norms and context are unpacked, explored and discussed. Bearing this in mind, virtual places also present opportunities for intercultural communication (Dovchin, Sultana, & Pennycook, 2016). In our lessons, we explore cultural elements such as social guidelines, for example how we end a conversation or say goodbye, how to behave with the other sex and flirt etc.

Conclusion

In this paper, we present our reflections on our online pedagogical approaches in migrant and refugee education. The aim of this paper is to promote a discussion on online pedagogical approaches, to explore them in the context of migrant and refugee education, and to make some suggestions with pedagogical, linguistic and intercultural implications. Our suggestions could also be trialled out by other colleagues, and, in this way, we could open a fruitful discussion on different cases of best practice in online refugee and migrant education. In any case, in each lesson, each student should be considered as a unique participant, co-learner and co-teacher, challenging language hierarchies and stereotypes of language teaching and learning.

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Democratic values under construction: An action research in a preschool setting

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Abstract

According to Dewey (1916), democracy lies in community life. From a critical perspective, democratic values guide and shape life at schools. This paper discusses an ongoing action research project in a preschool setting and sheds light on the constructive process of exploring and sharing values. It emerges that democratically "living together" can bring about positive results in terms of promoting inclusive approaches for the whole community.

Keywords: democratic values, action research, constructivist learning, inclusive education, preschool.

Introduction

In recent years the socio - economic and pandemic crises have imposed new challenges on education oriented towards fostering respect for diversity, human rights, cultures and implementing inclusive practices. The importance of democratic "living together" in the field of inclusive education needs to be further examined. Our effort to include "others" in our lives is actually the effort that different people should make within a democratic community (Danforth, 2015). In this frame, we need "values, rules and norms to organize the community" (Veugelers, de Groot & Stolk, 2017, p. 16). In the field of preschool education, issues of democracy are mostly neglected. In order to be able to fill this gap, the study focuses on ways of shaping democratic life in a preschool setting.

Theoretical approach

Defining democracy in the field of education can be a challenging task. This study is founded on Dewey's most widely spread definition of the democratic concept in education: "democracy is more than a form of government but primarily it is a form of associated living, of conjoint experience" (Dewey, 1916, p. 101). Considering Dewey's definition, it appears that the essence of democracy lies in community life itself. For human beings to become members of a community, they need to find their own way to possess things in common and finally "to share aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge, a common understanding" (Dewey, 1916, p.5).

The study also draws upon critical theory, where democracy is approached as a way of life. Apple and Beane (1995) in their book *Democratic Schools* offer an outline of how democratic way of life in schools could be. Above all, they provide for critical perspectives about "democracy, not so much as an ideal to be pursued,

but as an idealized set of values that we must live and must guide our life as people" (Apple & Beane, 1995, p. 7).

From a constructivist point of view, in order to be able to implement the above approaches at schools, the community and its members should be given the power "to reconstruct them in order to grasp their meaning, reflect on them and finally give them new extended meanings by applying them to all fields of democratic life" (Reich, 2008, p. 77).

The research

Early childhood education for democracy has attracted attention mainly in the frame of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Clausen, 2015) but the field is not sufficiently explored (Taylor & Robinson, 2009). The research purpose is to determine whether a constructive process of creating concepts and shared values related to democracy can actually take place in preschool settings and whether it is feasible to put these into practice by creating a school environment with democratic and inclusive features.

In particular, an action research was conducted in one public kindergarten in school year 2020-2021 in Thessaloniki, Greece. It involved eighteen students of a preschool classroom and their teacher, who was also the researcher. Our research methods were mainly class observation and interviews. Additionally, documents such as worksheets and all kinds of work produced in the framework of the students' activities were collected as valuable data (Burgess, 1984); a research diary was also kept. The project's activities were implemented in the frame of approved European projects, securing in this way permission by the educational authorities. At the same time, parental consent was also given in terms of taking photos and recordings.

In accordance with the aim of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What was the students' understanding of concepts and values of democracy at the beginning of the project and how did they develop, as they were gaining knowledge?

2. Have the students accomplished to share their lives at school according to their shared democratic values?

3. Did the element of inclusion become an integral part of the students' understanding of democracy, as they were evolving their thinking and their practice? Were they finally able to be involved in a democratic and intercultural dialogue in terms of their wider local community?

The action research consisted of five research cycles. We started by setting the basis of democracy and moved on to activities to learn concepts and values of democracy. As a result, students constructed a conceptual map of their shared values. Afterwards, the focus was on putting the map into the lives of students, by approaching everyday life and wider community issues based on the proposed shared values.

Findings and results

In the beginning of the action research, students were not positive toward the central values of the project, so we needed to develop activities in order to set the basis for a democratic culture. Also, their conceptual understanding was rather limited but, as the project was evolving, they were effectively acquiring core values

and their interconnections. It was after three months of exploring concepts, meanings and features of democracy that students accomplished to construct a democracy map for their classroom.

Table I summarizes the seven fields of values that the map finally included and all the related concepts that the students mentioned as very important for their democratic life at school. An interesting finding is related to "celebrating diversity values". The initial negative reactions of students toward any kind of differences and possible changes were now replaced by thirteen positive responses about the value of diversity. "Diversity" along with "love" actually shared the first place within students' beliefs in terms of significance for a democratic classroom.

Celebrating diversity values	Rights respecting values	Peace Values	Participative Values	Democracy discussion values	Loving/Caring values	Community bonding values
Diversity (13)	Rights (7)	Peace (9)	No exclusions (3)	Express opinion (7)	Love (13)	Team (4)
		Compromise (3)	Participation (3)	Discussion (8)	Kind words (2)	Friendship (7)
		Coexistence (2)	Responsible roles (4)		Kind actions (3)	
		Inner Peace (4)	Collaboration (11)		Caring (7)	
		Nonviolence (9)				

Table 1. *Preschoolers' discourse about values in their life at school*

In the interviews conducted, many students expressed meaningful thoughts about the values they think are important for their classroom's democracy. Responses such as the following are indicative of their acquisition of the conceptual framework of the study:

Teacher: "Which values do you think are very important for our classroom's democracy?"

.....

Student: "To have democracy in our classroom, we need to have peace, to live together, to participate and not to allow violence. We all need to be a team without exclusions and to cooperate with each other. We always need to tell our opinion and never give up. We all should feel glad to be different. Every child should be happy and everybody should help each other. Good actions "move on from wagon to wagon". Therefore, we will coexist with joy and we will have "a chain of democracy", nice thoughts and ideas. We will have a beautiful life."

The next challenge we faced responding to the aim of the study was to enable students to shape their lives according to their shared values. Can we actually argue that the democracy map brought positive results in the students' lives? Based on our research data, it seems that the whole classroom started to live under the impact of the map soon after its construction. Students demonstrated willingness and consciousness to act accordingly. Not only students but also the teachers often highlighted how helpful the map was, both in terms of encouraging communication and everyday peaceful living as well as in terms of teaching activities.

A relevant democratic practice was our classroom's councils, where students managed to recognize and negotiate effectively different interpretations of values. Students were taking children's rights into consideration when trying to make decisions about their lives at school.

Table 2 summarizes an indicative example of students thinking about rights when arguing about issues that have to do with their school life. The students were asked to decide on the amount of time that the class should spend between sharing news and playing within the first hour of their school day, as there were students complaining for not having enough time to talk and others complaining for not having enough time to play.

More time to talk about my news	More time to play
"I didn't have the chance to talk the other day. It was awful".	"Some students don't have enough time to finish their playing".
"What is finally more important? We are supposed to protect children's rights in our classroom. And we are asking here to not allow somebody to talk?"	"Playing is more important. The more time we have to play, the better."

Table 2. *Having rights in mind when arguing*

Finally, students could critically reflect on ways of taking their values into consideration with regard to their wider community and how these values could be visible in their city. In Table III the speech bubbles contain the ideas students expressed for a child friendly city during our city's mayor's visit to the classroom. It is obvious that the students involved elements of inclusive thinking in their dialogue with the mayor, as they pointed out the importance of the city's attitudes toward the "others".
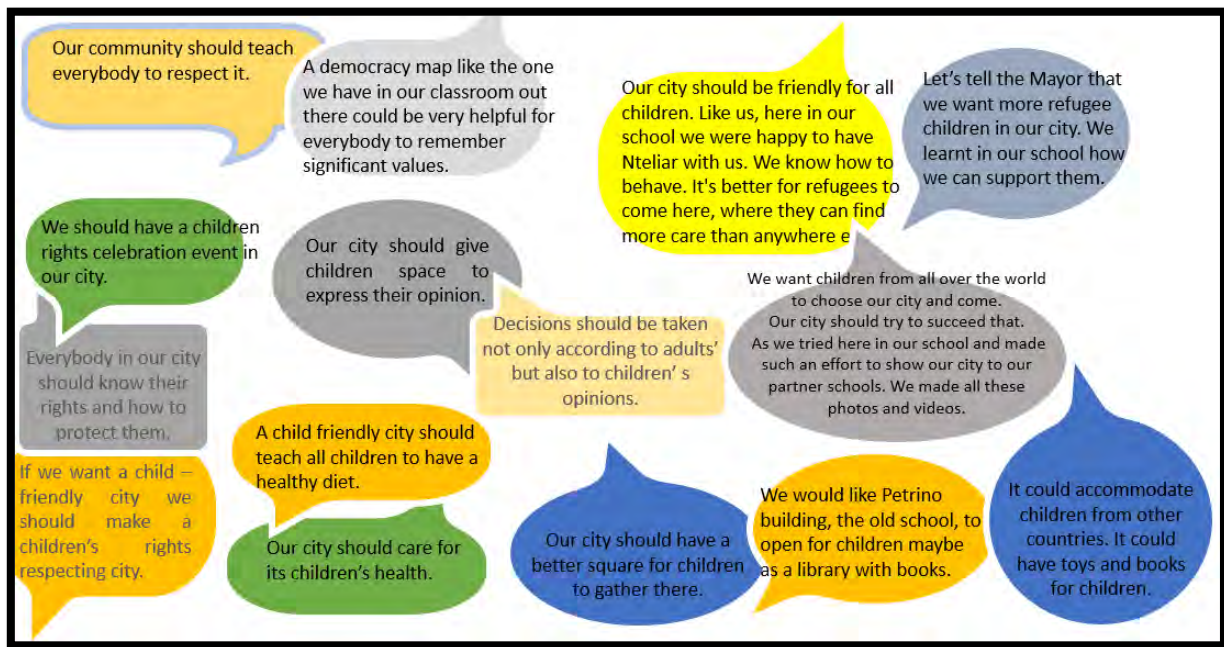
Table 3. *Students expressing ideas about their child friendly city*

Final considerations and discussion

Inclusive education enjoys many benefits through learning democracy. During the project, students valued the sense of community membership and cultivated respect to one another. They achieved an understanding of how democracy and intercultural issues are interrelated, the result being that inclusion became an integral part of their thinking and their practice within their classroom and their community.

Since there were also obstacles involved, we needed to constantly reflect on what seemed to be difficult for students and act accordingly. For example, it took them time to understand that diversity is to be celebrated. We also had to insist on exploring children's rights. Their understanding of rights was at first limited to those strictly concerning their everyday needs. There was a need to emphasize the right to be different, to be heard or not to be excluded.

In spite of difficulties, the research results eventually showed that preschoolers were indeed empowered to confidently speak up for a rights respecting, democratic and inclusive community, which is to be considered as the major benefit for them as future democratic citizens.

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Citizenship Education and International Pupil Mobility: Potential synergies and challenges in Italian Upper Secondary Schools

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Abstract

The paper presents the results of a section of the research "Civic education and international pupil mobility" in Italy, carried out by Fondazione Intercultura and Associazione "Per Scuola Democratica". The research investigates the didactical-organizational modalities through which individual international pupil mobility experiences can represent an opportunity for developing citizenship competence. The research involved interviews and focus groups with the teachers and principals of selected high schools, and with experts on inherent research issues. The results constitute the basis for a pilot project for the training of intercultural and democratic competence in Italian upper secondary schools for the school year 2022-23.

Keywords: citizenship education; pupil mobility; upper secondary education; democratic competence; Italy.

Contemporary social worlds are challenged by a number of important issues that the "pandemic acceleration" (Cone et al. 2021; Grek & Landri, 2021) and the tightening of global interconnections have contributed to make more pressing. These include the crisis of democracy or the post-democratic era; cultural diversity as a cross-cutting and structural element of European societies; and the emergence and spread of new forms of nationalism (Crouch, 2004).

The worlds of education are undoubtedly called into play amid these tensions. Indeed, the very ideas of justice, freedom and democracy are facing new challenges today. Scholars and practitioners are therefore required to construct cultural visions and actionable practices aimed at understanding and then mending worlds troubled by multiple democratic and educational criticalities (Dewey, 1916; 1938).

The issue of pupil mobility appears particularly relevant in this regard, as it is may be considered as a means to involve the entire school community, allowing the construction and development of intercultural competence, that is a determining component of the competence for a democratic culture (CoE, 2018). In particular, a speculative hypothesis could be made that individual international pupil mobility can constitute a resource for outlining innovative teaching approaches within the delivery of civic education.

This research draws on this premises and hypothesis with the aim at analysing and testing the potentialities of international pupil mobility experiences within the teaching of civic and citizenship education. Through this perspective, a new holistic approach could be developed in order to foster the enhancement of

democratic and intercultural competences in schools. Indeed, the overall objective of the project is to understand how to make the internationalization of schools one of the cornerstones of democratic citizenship education. A new and more comprehensive notion of citizenship has therefore been used that keeps the national and international dimensions together (UNEESCO 2015; CoE, 2018).

In Italy, the teaching of civic education is framed by Law No. 92/2019. Civic and citizenship education has always been considered a "Cinderella" subject in the Italian educational system (Dei, 2002). Several reforms about this curricular area have been carried out but with uncertain results (Palmerio, Damiani, & Caponera, 2021). With Law 92/2019, civic education was reintroduced in the Italian school curricula as an independent subject, with a specific time allocation and mark, to be delivered across the curriculum by selected teachers of the other subjects in every class. This Law has potential as much as limits, among which the absence of attention to the international dimension of citizenship education is one of the main. The Italian school system legally recognizes individual international pupil mobility for one year, usually during the fourth year of upper secondary school. These experiences of long-term learning mobility represent an essential element for fostering the intercultural competence (Barrett 2018) and for allowing an in-depth immersion and experiential learning of different cultural, civic, and political contexts.

The research design encompassed interviews and focus groups with the teachers and principals of selected high schools, identified by their sound experience of international mobility and/or in the promotion of civic and citizenship education. These focused on the modalities through which the mobility experiences can represent an opportunity for developing citizenship competences. The schools involved in the research were selected by Fondazione Intercultura ONLUS and by ANP - National Association of School Principals and High Professionals of the School, and were located in Northern, Central, and Southern Italy. Six institutes in Northern Italy (specifically, in Piedmonts, Lombardy, and Emilia), four Sicilian institutes for the South and one in the province of Rome have joined the research. Precisely, eleven principals of Upper Secondary schools participated in the interviews between June and October 2021, whereas four focus groups with teachers took place between November and December 2021. The semi-structured interviews with the school principals and the focus groups were conducted online, through Google Meet. In both cases, the questions to ask were discussed with and approved by the scientific research committee.

In particular, the goals of the interviews and focus groups were fourfold: (1) understanding how civic education is implemented; (2) framing how the international dimension of civic education is conceived; (3) examining how the students' mobility experiences are organized and managed; (4) investigating how the return from mobility is structured, in terms of procedures and valorisation of the experience.

Regarding the first aim, i.e., understanding how civic education is implemented, the interviews and focus groups have spotlighted some limitations in its delivery due to the Covid-19 pandemic and some issues related to the cross-curricular nature of the subject. In particular, either principals or teachers reported difficulties in the curriculum organisation, in the sharing of methodology and tools, and in arranging occasions to work collaboratively. Regarding the topics and initiatives, the interviewed principals reported a wide range of extra-curricular activities focused on several issues and involving different out- –of-school organisations.

The second topic of the interviews/focus groups was related to the international dimension of civic education in school curricula. Most of the schools involved in the project highlighted that Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and, more in general, the international dimension of civic education, is taught implicitly across the curriculum. All the schools reported to have included the topic of the Agenda 2030 in their programs, in line with the Law 92/2019, which identifies in this subject one of the main focus areas for civic education in Italy. The focus groups with teachers and the interviews with principals underlined a lack of connections between GCED, intercultural education and CCE.

In relation to the ways students' mobility experiences are organized and managed, the interviewees have described three different types of mobility. The first is the short-term mobility, which involves the exchange of a whole class between an Italian school and one abroad. The second type is the individual mobility of foreign students hosted by an Italian school. The third type is the long-term individual mobility of Italian students abroad through agencies and associations. Concerning this last kind of mobility, it is important to underline some aspects. To begin with, there are differences between the mobility experiences coordinated by the agencies and the ones arranged by associations, in terms of organization, costs, and choice of locations. Secondly, according to the interviewees, the relevance of students' socio-economic background is a strong factor that triggers students' choices to leave. Thirdly, the long-term individual mobility experiences are predominantly experienced by students from *liceo*, a type of Upper Secondary School usually attended by students from wealthier families in Italy.

Regarding the fourth topic of investigation, the return from mobility seems to be the most relevant phase of the experience abroad from the point of view of most schools. At this stage, the class council tests and verifies whether and how the returning student possesses the knowledge and competences to pass and be admitted to the next year class (the last one of secondary education). The assessment methods and criteria seem to differ by school. Moreover, returning students are used to reporting their experiences, but each institute has its own format and procedures to give value to it.

As the main evidence of the research so far, findings from the focus groups and the interviews spotlighted a weak relationship between individual international pupil mobility and civic education in the Italian upper secondary schools participating in the project. The institutes involved seem to interpret pupils' international mobility as a "private" experience, that remains and pertains to the individual student (and his/her family) rather than involving the school as a whole. The involvement of the classmates of the student who went abroad in his/her international mobility experience is therefore marginal. The class is mainly excluded from any elaboration, discussion, or reflection on the differences and/or commonalities between the Italian and other countries' contexts.

Hence, the results of this first part of the study pointed out the absence of structured learning paths that link international mobility experiences and civic and citizenship education, involving the whole class/school. Although it seems evident that experiencing and living in a foreign context can represent a key aspect for the development of students' democratic citizenship competences, the experience, by itself, is not sufficient for schools without a comprehensive educational path that can make the best use of its potential.

The next steps of this research are aimed at finalizing a pilot project which designs and develops such a path, devoted to the promotion of intercultural and democratic competences in selected Italian upper secondary schools for the school year 2022-23. This pilot project would attempt to appropriately follow the three stages (before, during, and after) of the mobility experiences combining the individual experiences of international pupil mobility with the collective ones of their peers who remain in Italy.

Note

This research is part of a larger ongoing research project in which various partners (Fondazione Intercultura and Associazione "Per Scuola Democratica") are collaborating.

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Re-conceptualizing intercultural education in a changing world: Facing discrimination and inequity at the micro and macro levels

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Abstract

This conceptual study focuses on the re-conceptualization of intercultural education in order to contribute to the strengthening of the transformative dimension of the intercultural approach with the aim to face discrimination and inequity both at micro and macro levels. This study tries to blend foundational concepts of two bodies of literature – interculturalism (dialogue, cultural exchange, and reciprocal respect at the micro-level of individuals) (Council of Europe, 2008; 2014; Barret, 2012; 2013) and social justice education (transformation and change at the macro-level of institutionalized imbalances of privilege) (Gorski, 2008; 2013) – with the aim to elaborate new conceptual educational tools and strategies to promote fairer institution of schooling, addressing inequities and tackling discrimination.

Keywords: discrimination, equity, intercultural education, social justice, micro and macro levels.

Contexts

The article focuses on the challenges in education to serve increasing culturally, religious and linguistically diverse students in the current sociological, political, and economic changing landscape. Globalization processes, international migration, digitalization dynamics, the war in Ukraine, the rise of anti-immigration and xenophobic discourses, further deepened by the global Covid-19 pandemic, are changing education within society, solidifying structural inequality and institutionalized systems of oppression that fuel discrimination and educational inequities. This changing context is pushing sociological, educational, and pedagogical research to seek new educational tools and practices to face discrimination and inequities (Bussu & Contini, 2021).

Approaches

In the current sociological and educational debate, there are many models and policies to approach the issue of diversity, discrimination and inequality. The assimilation paradigm (Park & Burgess, 1924), based on the universalistic model, conceptualizes the assimilation of people with different cultural and ethnic background with the dominant cultural model as an inevitable and mandatory process.

Multiculturalism, emerging in the 1960s as a reaction to the assimilation, emphasizes the recognition and valorization of cultural, religious and linguistical diversity. The multicultural debate aims to develop conceptual tools to manage cultural difference at a public policies level and to recognize the value of diversity. Multicultural policies are designed to provide intervention policies for minorities and to strengthen the

valorization of diversity in a liberal society. The multicultural debate seeks to promote the development of norms in the areas of education, housing policies, employment and advocacy for the languages and cultures of minority groups, pushing for the implementation of social reform policies whose aim is to deal with educational, employment and social integration disadvantages. It also focuses on developing general principles for public policy recognition of cultural diversity (Modood, 2007; 2018; 2019; Taylor, 1994; 2016; Kymlicka, 2007; Parekh, 2006).

In the past decade, growing governmental concerns about international migration led European institutions to promote interculturalism as new diversity management models capable of promoting social cohesion (Council of Europe, 2008). At the same time, academic debate defends interculturalism versus a discredited multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2016; Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010).

The goals of promoting intercultural dialogue and the competence to respect people with different cultural affiliation, to create respectfully interaction and communication and to establish constructive relationship between individuals are at the core of interculturalism and intercultural education (Council of Europe, 2008; Cantle, 2012; 2015; 2016; Contini, 2017; Contini & Pica-Smith, 2017; Zapata-Barrero, 2016; Zapata-Barrero & Mansouri, 2021). Interculturalism is designed to create policy change to manage diversity in our complex, interconnected and globalized societies and to strengthen social cohesion.

Moving to the educational translation of interculturalism, intercultural education is understood as "education towards diversity", whose aim is to develop the capacity of decentralization and critical thinking. It includes the dimension of construction of convergence towards common values and promotion of social cohesion. Intercultural education suggests rejecting racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and discrimination through intercultural connections, experiences across cultures and skills learned through dialogue. Intercultural competencies are understood as a combination of skills and mindsets which foster prejudice reduction and the respect of culturally diverse people (Barret, 2012; 2013; Palaiologou et al., 20212; Council of Europe, 2014; Pica-Smith, Veloria, & Contini, 2020).

In the book *The Intercultural Paradigm. Theoretical Questions and Educational Issues* (Contini, 2017) the author, conducting an in-dept analysis of the intercultural model and its pedagogical declination and the dynamics related to the operationalization of the intercultural education in schools, brings to the fore the need to strengthen the conceptual model of intercultural education in order to create more pluralistic, respectful and equitable spaces for all students (for review see also Contini & Pica-Smith, 2018). Positive intercultural relationships and contact may be effective in addressing discrimination at the micro-level of individual exchange if optimal intergroup conditions exist (Colòn et. al., forthcoming; Hellegen & Zapata-Barrero, 2022). In our current globally interconnected multicultural society, characterized by international migrations, digital technologies of communication and global dynamics, the development of intercultural competencies and the ability to establish positive and respectful relationships at the micro-level are fundamental to deal with discrimination.

The intercultural innovative key tools to fight discrimination are at the micro-level of individual competence and responsibility, that is to say: "to leverage the development of intercultural competence to

interrupt the vicious circle [...] between prejudice, discrimination, and inequality, in order to transform it into a virtuous circle" (Colòn et. al., forthcoming). On the other hand, the second dimension to consider is one at the macro-level of the public policies to reduce inequities. In fact, it sets the issue to deal with discrimination at an institutional macro- level, when the exchange happens between privileged and marginalized students in a context characterized by institutionalized unbalance of power.

Conclusions and significance

This document tries to blend conceptual tools of interculturalism and social justice, in order to strengthen action efficiency on a macro level to remove institutionalized discrimination, a dimension that is absent in the intercultural framework. The aim is to contribute to shape up both a new more transformative intercultural framework and to operationalize educational policies and practices related to the social justice education that can act at the micro-level of the individual but at the same time have the transformative potential at the macro-institutional level of society (Pica-Smith, Contini, Veloria, 2019; Colòn et al. forthcoming). This new transformative intercultural framework can arise from the synthesis of interculturalism and social justice and is directed to impact patterns of discrimination and contexts of inequality in order to promote more equity in schools and socially fair institution of schooling, as well as to educate the next generation that will be able to operate a social change thus creating a new and maybe unimaginable social organization.

The hope is that blending the micro and macro level policies and actions both at the micro-level of the individual and at the macro-institutional level of society may benefit the "cause of diversity" (Modood, Contini, Pica-Smith, 2020) and reduce discrimination and injustice.

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On the implementation of holistic learning in digital and intercultural settings

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Abstract

This paper aims to offer a renewed perspective on Interculturality and Intercultural Education, which not only fits the contemporary *postdigital* context, but also considers the historical turning point that brought us here. Intercultural Education will be presented as a holistic practice that fosters the development of the attitude, knowledge and skills that world citizens need in order to take the opportunities linked to the dynamic and multifaceted character of society, while coping in a sustainable way with its challenges. The digital will be considered as part of the hybrid lifeworld in which people become learners as well as participants of an artificial educational setting.

Keywords: holistic learning, interculturality, postdigital, simulation game, e-learning.

We, as a global society, are at a turning point in our history. Climate Change will either deeply alter life on earth as we know it, or we somehow urgently manage to change our understanding of life in a (post)industrial age. In this possibly overstated existential *either-or* scenario, a myriad of actors and factors play a role in glo*c*al dynamics, in which the local and the global interweave at all levels. We live in the VUCA society: it's *volatile*, it changes very quickly in unpredictable ways; it's *uncertain*, the past and the present loose significance in predicting the future; it's *complex*, the present is hard to understand and see through, and its causes and effects are more difficult to identify; it's *ambiguous*, reality follows multivalent logics, as it is fuzzy, not fully understandable or exactly determinable (Bolten & Berhault, 2018).

The VUCA society has been shaped greatly by digitalization, which zeros the relationship between time and space and opens a new multidimensional communication space that follows its own logic. The times of *Digital Dualism*, when virtuality could be seen as a concurrent dimension of physical *real*ity to be turned on and shut down at will, are past. The digital is still a reality that follows its own logic, but it never shuts down and the physical reality cannot be apprehended without considering its digitalization. In this sense, the present is *postdigital* (Cramer, 2014)*,* and reality is a *hybrid lifeworld*, at least to a great extent. Even considering the digital gap and the multiple barriers to an equitable postdigital life, this trend, led at the individual level by the wide commodification of smartphones, can be said to be global. Even if Schmitt's allegation of the Internet "as an insane project of audio-visual synchronization (Gleichschaltung)" (Schmitt, 2021, p.14, translated by Lenehan in Conti et al., 2023) cannot be but a provocation, the Internet is a medium which does spread cultures on a translocal level and to a certain extent fosters some sort of cultural homogenization. Let's think, for example, of how Netflix Series impact on the cognitive, behavioural and emotional level of their respective

worldwide audience, who at the end of the series have more in common than before. Taking up Assmann & Assmann's (1994) evergreen formula of culture, which defines it as the result of the interconnections developing throughout time among *communication, media* and *collective memory*. It is evident how the experiences done in the cultural hybrid digital space have an impact on the individuals and their local cultures. While geographical distance is less and less a valid indicator of cultural difference, location of origin is less and less a predictor of cultural homogeneity. Essentialist models of culture that root on a closed, static understanding of culture – typically: cultures as national cultures – are even less useful than what they have been in the past decades. Reproducing them means ignoring the heterogeneity that characterizes any territory, as well as the ubiquity of creative processes that make culture out of interculturality. Such models are not just conceptually wrong, but also concretely harmful to the construction of an inclusive society, as they lead to a distorted perception of the members of their respective community, which end up being divided into *us* and *them*, depending on their real or presumed 'date of arrival' (human beings have arrived in places, nobody's family have *always* been there). Even if contemporary reality is a realm where individuality takes more and more space, the complexity reducing, scapegoat creating *Othering* still operates successfully, as does the worldwide popularity of "retrotopia" (Bauman, 2017) and the authoritarian tendencies promising to shut down diversity (in the discourse: the non normal; in reality: all of us), as tangible symbol of our VUCA real life experience, shows. In order to build an inclusive society, it is therefore essential to break the practice of 'doing difference'. Central to this is the understanding that categorization of people is an intersubjective construction. For individuals, this means developing the ability to recognise the distorting effect of categories, to deconstruct them and to perceive the uniqueness of each person.

Intercultural education as a discipline must therefore go beyond the narrow elaboration of the relational and interactional patterns between actors of different nationalities in formal educational contexts. Leaning on Bolten's definition of intercultural competence as a more general action competence in uncertain contexts (Bolten, 2020), intercultural education must generally foster the personal development of the attitude, knowledge and skills that allow world citizens to enjoy the opportunities available while being in such a vibrant reality and cope in a positive way with the challenges of living in a postdigital VUCA world. Intercultural Education is today about giving world citizens the instruments they need to build together a sustainable future.

In this respect, intercultural education should be understood as *holistic* learning, facilitating lifelong learning lifewide, i.e. transforming ubiquitous encounters with newness in the hybrid lifeworld, in learning gains. Indeed, learning goes beyond formal settings, it is an educational journey throughout life where people, in their role of learners, conduct – at least partly – under their own responsibility, while displaying their own agency. If intercultural education as a transversal subject is about learning to cope with the uncertain and the unfamiliar, the dialogic, pedagogical approach is promising, as at its core lies the encounter with what is perceived as different, unfamiliar. The dialogic approach is characterized by an open attitude towards what is otherwise framed as a potential menace and foresees a regulating system of power relations that guarantees real participation and therefore genuine contact with real or presumed otherness. When people join dialogic learning processes, they need to feel comfortable with their role, with the others, with the process itself (Conti, 2021a).

This can be fostered by dialogic facilitation, which supports the process of power sharing and fostering a caring atmosphere, but also ensures the stability of these conditions through dialogic peer-learning formats such as the buddy-system. Group dialogic interactions allow participants to go beyond apparent differences and find unexpected ones, besides similarities. Intercultural Education as a practice should nowadays aim, therefore, to foster empowering participation in general. In particular, it should aim to strengthen the ability to identify real, contingent differences and to successfully relate to them, extending one's own knowledge and reinforcing one's own skills, as well as critically overcoming apparent differences, spotted on the base of cultural racism or other discriminatory ideologies. Indeed, when we have trapped ourselves in the "matrix of domination" (Collins, 1990), we risk hurting stigmatized people on the cognitive, affective and conative level (Conti, 2021b).

In all of this, digital media is the setting of these encounters. However, the digital space can also be consciously used towards the development of intercultural competence, as in the case of the simulation games Megacities and Bilangon, where students of different universities cooperate together towards a common goal. On the one hand, they overcome fears rooted in the uncertainty of the context and unfamiliarity of the other participants, as well as their prejudices in relation to international collaboration, on the other hand, they gain self-confidence, confidence towards unfamiliar contexts and apparently different groups, as well as a dialogic attitude and skills, that is the will and the ability to cooperate globally for reaching a common goal (Conti et al., 2022).

It is time for a clear turn in Intercultural Education: research and practice need to embrace the complexity of reality, without anchoring to categories that end up building walls where bridges are needed. It also needs to refrain from limiting its range of action to formal education, developing concepts for learners in their whole hybrid lifeworld. It should not ignore the changes brought up by accelerated digitalization to society, individuals and the meaning of learning. Intercultural Education is our chance towards a united, coordinated, social, just and inclusive world.

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Refugees' experiences in higher education and the Power of Resilience through their narratives

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore eight refugee students' experiences in higher education, and more specifically in a private American College in Greece. This study uses a narrative methodology based on the students' personal stories and in depth, semi-structured interviews. Using a thematic analysis, main themes were identified and discussed, such as stability and citizenship, financial and language barriers, racism and discrimination, sense of belonging or exclusion, gender or religion. Thus, this study's aim is to focus not only on their difficult route towards a better life and the struggles of the refugee students, but through their individual unique stories to give another perspective and challenge existing stereotypes that apply to refugees and focus more on their remarkable resilience to learn and evolve, setting them as an example of strength.

Keywords: refugee youth experiences, higher education, resilience, sense of belonging, integration.

Introduction

Education is considered one of the most fundamental rights of all humans and each level of education is of great value and gradually builds the skills needed for the refugees' smooth integration into the society. However, according to research done emphasis is given more on the basic and secondary education rather than on the higher education (Vasilopoulos & Ioannidis, 2020). The reason for that is that only a small number of refugees are interested in attending university courses, with lack of linguistic skills as the main drawback (Saiti & Chletsos, 2020).Tertiary education has certain requirements including high level of language competency, as well as secondary educational qualifications. As a result, refugees' uncertain circumstances, unstable legal status, lack of motivation and their educational gap hinder most of them from accessing higher education (Tzoraki, 2019). Only 3% of the 25.9 million refugees globally have access to HE in the host countries (HNHCR, 2019).

Methodology

Narratives are authentic and very powerful life stories showing parts of the refugees' lives that can liberate and uplift them and at the same time inspire the readers or the listeners (Harrel-Bond & Voutina, 2007). Giving refugee students the chance to tell their stories, you give them 'voice'. Through them, different perspectives are brought in the light of research and a more humanistic focus on the individual experience within the process of social change.

Participants

More specifically, the participants in this research are a mixture of male and female refugee students. Participants' ages range from 23-47 and some of them have already started a university degree in their countries of origin but they haven't managed to finish due to war conflicts and forced migration. Some of them enrolled to a Greek high school and some had only informal education before accessing HE. Their countries of origin vary, mainly from Afghanistan or Syria, Jordan, Turkey and Ghana.

Data collection

A demographic questionnaire has been given to the participants about their age, racial/ethnic identification, gender, birth location and any other languages spoken besides English. Then, the participants were interviewed individually in English. The data was collected through the recorded interviews and the notes kept. A reflexive journal is also another useful tool that was used and follow up discussions were arranged. The participants' confidentiality and anonymity were ensured (Gay et al., 2012).

Data Analysis

Themes were identified and the data was coded according to these themes using the thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Before the interviews, the participants were given a consent form that informed them about the study. The data was developed 'bottom up' from the narratives, systematized and coded, then analyzed in the light of the existing literature with direct quotes to illustrate the most important themes. Limitations and further suggestions for future studies were identified because the interviews weren't taken from a wide sample of refugee students from different educational institutions around the country, as in a larger scale research, but from a small number of refugee students studying in a private American college (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Validity of the research was increased with the participants' feedback (Gay et al., 2012).

Discussion

Each participant's journey was unique but there are some common experiences that most of them have. Although the short cultural distance may help refugees to adapt to the new environment relatively easier, their refugee identity and the negative images that are associated with it make refugees unwanted in most countries and inferior in the eyes of the others (Karipek, 2017). Some of their main challenges and difficulties are briefly discussed below.

Stability and Citizenship

Citizenship is essential for the students to better plan their future and have stability in their lives. Security enhances participants' belonging, while insecurity threatens and questions it. Leave is only guaranteed for a certain period of time and this uncertainty about their status can cause additional psychological stress to those waiting for a renewal (Dromgold-Sermen, 2020). All these systemic arrangements can put refugees in the limbo. Hasan (Turkey) refers to it as:

'There is so much psychological pressure; to apply for your residence permit, to wait, and to miss so many opportunities in the meanwhile. With the last regulations, it is so hard to renew your ID. It takes long and you have to live under fear and the risk of losing everything, your job, and your studies. You can't travel to another country; you cannot stay or work legally there for more than three months. You pay taxes but they do not want to make it easy for you, at least to make your presence here valid and legal, but they put you in the limbo. If they check you and they see that your residence permit is expired, what is it going to happen? You feel that you don't belong anywhere. Easily what you created in life, what you are building can be destroyed from one government's decision. They make you unstable and stop you from dreaming for the future. What keeps us as humans is making dreams for the future. If you want to kill a person kill the person's dreams and hopes.'

Financial Barrier

All of the participants admitted that the most important obstacle is the financial one. Employment is considered more important than education because of their survival needs. Many of them have to even support their families who live in different countries. A different set of constraints are evident in the case of Karimi (Afghanistan), a refugee single mother, who refers to the lack of support from the Greek State. Most students cannot fully integrate in the university life because of all these financial responsibilities too. Only those who have fewer financial burdens and the support from their families, such as Azimi (Afghanistan), can be more sociable and relaxed and these are usually rare cases. Most students believe that without additional financial support they may not be able to continue their studies. As Joinda (Afghanistan) correctly points out, 'when you help students enter higher education and you give them this unique opportunity, you also need to find ways to support them to finish it'.

Language Barrier

All my participants attended courses in Greek at some point during their stay, but their level of proficiency varies. Most of the participants through self-study and a daily interaction with people try to improve their language skills. Some others' experiences are different because they went to Greek schools and they got a lot of support from their teachers and peers. Despite the difficulties they managed to learn a completely different language in a different educational environment and system in a relatively short period of time thanks to their self-determination and persistence. Most of them declare that to a great extend speaking Greek is important in order to integrate fully into the Greek society. Applying in an institution, where all courses are in English, minimized the language barrier for the refugee students who were accepted in the program, as English is an international language spoken from most young people worldwide. Also, the fact that they study and work in international environments, with English to be the main language of communication with others, made the need of learning he Greek language less stressful for the participants of this study compared to the participants in other studies.

Racism and Discrimination

Dealing with racism and inequality is a common experience inside and outside the campus for most of them. Some participants claim that some students sometimes may not be directly racist, but you will feel it in some way. Stereotypes and assumptions are often generalized, and Muslim or Arab refugee students are often associated with terrorism and other negative images that often presented from the Media. Refugees also have to deal with their "refugeeness" which means that often others see them as victims instead of whole people, reduced to that one experience (Mupenzi, 2018). Their visibility and acceptance, though, are desirable and play a role in how refugees acculturate and vice versa. Their refugee identity can be challenging because it is often stigmatized and they strive to find life balance because of that. Stigma and shame of the 'refugee' identity is something that students identified as a constant filter on how they interact with people within the university environment (Morrice, 2013). This identity is at times denied because it is linked with this negativity and causes them discomfort. Students often avoid telling other students that they are refugees in fear of being judged, so they try to stick to their student identity instead because with this way they feel safer. On the other hand, there are some other students who never experienced racist behavior and find forming relationships with others easy. Being a refugee in HE might be related to both belonging and exclusion depending on the diverse experiences of refugees (Morrice, 2013). The refugees' experiences in the university can be overwhelming (Joyce et al., 2010) and the university can be a culturally alienated place for some students or others may rely more on their student identity that helps them make friends, advance their language skills, or most importantly have a sense of worth and belonging (Morrice,2013).

Gender

Gender issues are approached in many studies concerning the refugees' education. Women are educationally more disadvantaged compared to men because of all these additional responsibilities due to natural and societal demands, and this calls for appropriate interventions that allow them access to opportunities that otherwise they will be lost. Most of their challenges are related to family and responsibilities with children, as Karimi (Afghanistan) told me, or working more hours to fulfill financial needs, so they have less free time available for themselves or to spend in the campus and socialize. Both Rasoul (Jordan) and Karimi mentioned in their narratives important issues related to women's education and well-being. Karimi mentioned through her life story an unwanted marriage at the age of sixteen and a family that wasn't encouraging towards her decision to finish school and continue her studies or work. Rasoul refers to women's rights and the patriarchal society in Jordan, like in most countries in the Middle East, which diminishes women and doesn't let them decide for their bodies and lives. Education is the key that help women fight for their lives, rights and dignity.

Religion

In most studies religion refers as an integral part of the refugees' identity, providing them a sense of belonging, hope, meaning and power for coping (Mupenzi, 2018). On the other hand, in the case of Hasan his religious beliefs as Alevi and part of a religious ethnic minority made him a victim of discrimination and exclusion in Turkey. Joidan (Afghanistan) refers to religion saying that 'Religion is something you were born with, it is in

your blood. It is hard to take it out and that is why you believe in it so much. It is scary to challenge it or cross it, because you won't be part of your circle anymore. I had to leave my family, my religion, so many places; I know how scary it is.' Although most of the participants in the study come from Arab countries in contrast with previous findings, we see that they are distant from religion as it is practiced. They search, learn and question and that is something which makes them more open-minded and adaptable to a new society, in a new era of inner spirituality where love and humanity are more important. Some extracts from their narratives highlight their opposition, or the way they see God and religion in general.

Conclusion

Refugee students become stronger and more resilient not only because of their individual unique experiences that regenerate them but also from the strength and motivation they get from their surroundings, family, professors, and social relationships. Refugee students are survivors and one of their strong characteristics is their strong optimism. They also have a strong sense of responsibility. Higher education helps refugees to develop a "critical consciousness" by giving students a voice in their own communities and empowering them to create change and help others (Mupenzi, 2018). When the war in Syria ends Ayman wants to write and direct stories. Through his stories, he wants to unite people and make them think about their mistakes. Joinda wants to raise awareness about human rights of refugee people with his documentaries and seeks for change that won't come in one day, as he says, but it will come through collective work and solidarity. Rasoul wants to go back to Middle East and defend women's rights, opening an NGO and starting a movement. Access to HE can help refugee students serve as roles models in their communities and inspire others.

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The challenge of equity at school: Pedagogical reflections and notes on the Italian case

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Abstract

The paper focus on equity in education. After a terminological disambiguation on the construct, we analyze the Italian school context, plagued by old and new inequalities: in addition to the classical causes (socio-economic and socio-cultural status), non-traditional factors of inequality emerge, produced by the school itself. School autonomy is a possible tool to act in the name of equity.

Keywords: equity; inequalities; school, Italy, interculture.

Equity: A polysemic construct

Equity is a polysemic construct: it is necessary to understand which interpretations respond to the principle of social justice, understood as an ideal that has never been fully realized (Bauman & Tester, 2002) according to which everyone must be included in the participatory processes of citizenship (Gerwitz, 2006), exercising self-determination despite the interdependence that binds human beings (Bell, 2007), having access to knowledge as a tool to be actors in History and possessing the indispensable capacities to critically analyze what is happening, identify forms of oppression and injustice and intervene to counter them (Hackman, 2005). It is a matter of affirming the value of schools in achieving an ever-higher degree of justice and democracy.

Equity as merit

Commitment and talent enable anyone to achieve any status; the influence of other factors is not considered (Savidan, 2007; Nagel, 1991).

Equity as negative freedom

There should be no external factors influencing people's schooling and careers (Abravamel, 2008; Colombo, 2012).

Equity as equality of opportunity

Starting conditions influence educational and life paths. Privilege must not become merit (Bourdieu, 1966; Rawls, 1971; Roemer, 2000).

Equity as equality of capabilities

The role of education is to increase the capabilities of the individual, ensuring that everyone has a level that allows them to live in dignity and exercise their agency (Sen, 2010; Nussbaum, 2001).

Equity as inclusion

We need to recognise the value of each person, guaranteeing autonomy and participation and institutionalising pluralism (Kanor, 2021).

Figure 1. *Interpretations of the equity construct*

The first two strands risk opening to social reproduction: school contexts are not in question and there is a risk of seeing students who do not achieve a certain level of results as disadvantaged. Positioning ourself within the last three strands to elaborate a theoretical-practical definition of equity specific to education and schooling is dictated by the desire to value pluralism without leading it back to an artificial idea of norm and homogeneity, to declare the need to decouple the interdependence between students' backgrounds and schooling paths and to emphasize the role of school so that each individual realizes his or her aspirations, having acquired the necessary skills to lead a dignified life.

Thus, equity becomes a horizon of meaning to affirm the need to guarantee excellence in education for all in terms of efficiency and effectiveness: everyone must acquire the capabilities for exercising citizenship in terms of participation in political, social, cultural and economic life on a local and global level. This vision calls for a new, more complex and critical reading that takes into account the contributions of intersectional theory (Hill Collins, 2019; Crenshaw, 2017), critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2020) and approaches derived from post-colonial studies (Ashcroft et al., 2014; Young, 2020): these are ways of reading inequalities and discrimination and considering pluralism as an everyday experience.

Italian school and equity

The Italian school responds to the idea of equity that we have outlined, at least on a normative level: the Constitution states that "the school is open to all", sanctioning its commitment to achieving substantial equality between citizens (Di Pol, 2016). From these constitutional principles an important legislative production has derived to give vigor to the ideal of equity in education, but the schooling of students remains plagued by deep disparities.

The socio-economic and socio-cultural background of pupils still weighs on their educational pathways (Eurydice, 2020; OECD, 2022), but today new factors of inequality emerge, defined as non-traditional because it is the school itself that creates them due to its own organizational culture and operating choices (Ferrer-Esteban, 2011). They affect both different institutions and classes in the same school, they depend on political and governance choices and the educational actions of teachers (Gobbo, 2008); combining with each other, they produce unprecedented forms of injustice that affect all students (Benadusi & Giancola, 2020; Gavosto, 2022; Granata & Ferrero, 2022).

The graphic elaboration (Figure 2), based on Brofenbrenner's (2009) ecological model and on the need, pointed out by Ogbu (1981), to consider the relationships between the various levels, enucleates the main non-traditional factors of inequality. At a micro-level we have almost unconscious actions that take shape in the classroom and produce differences in access to educational opportunities. At a meso-level we find governance choices and institute educational policies that are not attentive to distorting effects in terms of equity. Finally, at a macro-level we have a gap between legislation and implementation, with measures sometimes inconsistent with constitutional dictate.
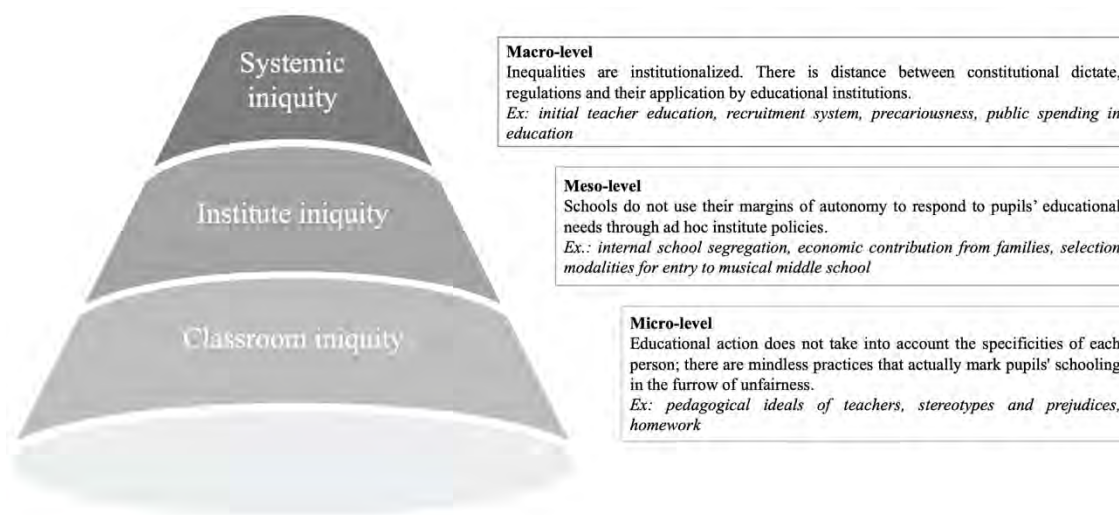
Figure 2. *Iniquity pyramid*

The presence of non-traditional factors of inequality that act under the radar and are hidden, insidious, very specific and difficult to detect because they can be very different from one context to another requires targeted solutions to meet the needs of individual contexts. The regulatory framework in which the Italian education system is set, i.e., school autonomy, proves to be very useful to act in a direction of equity and counter inequalities.

School autonomy for equity

School autonomy can be crucial in terms of equity (Campione, 2013; Cortigiani, 2010), with a key role played by school leaders who implement educational management through a distributed leadership model (Domenici & Moretti, 2011; Marzano, 2019). Schools make autonomous choices in the organizational, managerial, financial, didactic spheres consistent with the general aims of the education system to respond specifically to the educational needs of their students (Morzenti Pellegrini, 2011). They devise school policies that integrate the various actors of the school reality and of the territory, in the perspective of a school that becomes the nerve center of a wider community (Mulè et al., 2019).

School autonomy is a useful tool for reducing inequalities provided it is used in a non-bureaucratic manner, but under the banner of a specific and well-defined educational project (Palumbo & Pandolfini, 2016). It is a matter of acting on the daily experience of students, on what they experience in the classrooms through school policies and choices shared by all the actors that are part of the school community. In Italian schools, the School Council is the collegiate body that formulates school policies and is chaired by a parent: this is no coincidence, we wish to emphasize that the principle of educational co-responsibility is also valid at governance level.
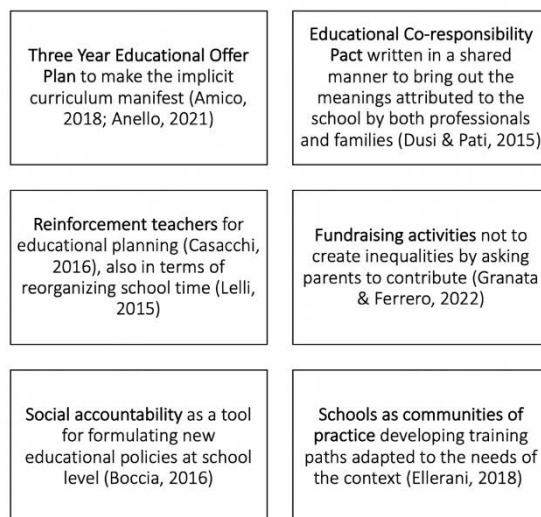
Figure 3. *Examples of the use of school autonomy for equity*

Despite this regulatory framework and of what the literature emphasizes, the Italian school continues to have a centralized structure with a prudential use of autonomy (Cerini, 2016). Educational planning put on paper is often not put into practice (Romano, 2016): expertise in the use of school autonomy belongs only to a few schools (Gavosto, 2022). Schools that engage in research paths and use regulatory possibilities creatively and unbureaucratically, as exemplified in Figure 3, achieve appreciable results in terms of equity and reduction of inequalities.

Conclusions

In this short text we have explained how equity in education an emergency in the Italian context is, plagued by old and new inequalities. School autonomy is absolutely a resource in this sense, but it must be used creatively and not bureaucratically.

Researchers and school professionals are thus called upon to act synergistically: exploiting the potential of school autonomy, specific research paths can be developed to reduce inequalities in individual contexts and act in the name of equity.

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Strategies for equitable participation in heterogeneous classrooms in initial teacher education

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Abstract

The classroom is a social system and the status of each student interferes with their participation in class, and participation is a good sign of learning. This study investigated the learning disclosure potential of four strategies that promote participation with 41 students from two Biology classes at a Brazilian public university. Data were collected through evidence of learning produced by students and indicate that students felt challenged and understood the value of active activities for their learning and participation.

Keywords: equitable classrooms, skillbuilders, complex instruction, affirmative actions.

Introduction

Students bring to the classroom different kinds of status that can impact their learning experiences promoting unequal patterns of interaction. These status are related, for example, to gender (boys interact more than girls), race (white students interact more than black ones), and previous school experience ("smart" students interact more than the ones with low performance) (Cohen & Lotan, 1995) .When it comes to the school environment, it is better to have high status than low ones. In this sense, when we conceive the classroom as a social system, each student's relative status among the others is a good predictor of their participation, and participation is a good predictor of learning (Cohen & Lotan, 1995).

Once that inside the classroom we observe different kinds of diversity among students, how can we promote conditions for equitable participation in spite of these differences of status? Taking into consideration students' diversity is essential to ensure the conditions for equitable participation in classrooms (UNESCO, 2021), as claimed in the UN's Human Declaration of Rights and listed as one of the goals in 2030 Agenda (Palmer, 2015).

In our investigation we evaluated how four strategies implemented by the teachers favored the participation among the students in Biology Teacher Education in a public university from Brazil.

Methodology

This investigation has the character of qualitative research (Patton, 2002). We intended to understand the phenomenon in depth, without the expectation of producing generalizations. The sample chosen was intentional and the data has a descriptive nature. They were organized through an inductive analysis. We were the researchers and also the teachers in question. In this sense, the authors were participants observers, guiding the research process and also the classes.

The participants were 41 students from two classrooms of the undergraduate course of Biology Teacher Education from one campus of São Paulo State University (Unesp), Brazil. The students from the 4th year were having classes during the day period and the ones from the 5th year were having classes during the night period. Both of them were attending the discipline subject named "Methodology and Practice in Science and Biology Teaching: Science-Society Relationships and Environmental Themes" in the first semester from 2022, during the return in person after the COVID-19 pandemic.

We identified some data from these pre-service teachers that can influence their status among the others. About their gender, 13 of them are male and 28 are female. Thirty five students self-declared them as white people in the registration form for the course and 6 self-declared themselves as black people.

Since 2018, affirmative actions adopted by this public university reserve half of the vacancies in the undergraduate courses for black and indigenous people and for students from public schools. This enhances opportunities for these groups but also increases differences in status in the classrooms. Eighteen of the students were admitted through the universal system of vacancies, 18 of them through vacancies for students from public schools and 5 of them through the vacancies for black and indigenous people.

Besides the differences of gender, race and system of vacancies, there are students that are working students and others that are full-time students, which impacts the amount of time and effort they can direct to their learning.

The strategies for equitable participation used were 1) Complex Instruction Skill Builders, (Four Stage Rocket and Many dots) (Cohen & Lotan, 2014): to develop abilities that will improve the quality of interactions); 2) Harvard Project Zero's Thinking Routines (Zoom in, KWL, +1 and 3,2,1 Bridge): to introduce and explore ideas, explore possibilities and analogies and synthesize ideas; 3) strategies for productive discourse (talk as a tool for learning) (Windschitl, Thompson & Braaten, 2018); and 4) assigning intentional roles for girls and boys to reduce male domination over intellectual activities.

We gathered our data from the evidence of learning students produced during the semester (products from group works, individual activities, final report of activities) and also from collective talks with the students about their learning experiences and evaluation questionnaires from the classes and strategies used. When looking for these data, we searched for answers for the question: "were the students able to equitably interact and learn?".

Results and discussion

The results observed after these interventions were four-fold: 1) increase in learning quality; 2) increase in efficiency in obtaining students' learning evidence; 3) Increase in the expression of students' opinions during dialogues around essential questions; 4) adaptation to the active learning model: students report some initial resistance to this kind of activity because of their learning experiences being mainly traditional, however, after the classes, they related appreciation for the interactions with colleagues and that it supported their learning.

We observed the increase in learn quality when the students related that they enjoyed the spaces they had for interaction and self elaborations, as we can see in the report from Student 1 (S1):

"The debate in groups was interesting, besides the time limit." (S1).

Teachers can't expect that students learn only by listening to them speaking the main contents of the class and copying lessons from the board and slides, in a passive attitude. Students need space and time to interact with knowledge and make it theirs, incorporating the new concepts and ideas in the way they read the world (Vygotsky, 2001). This result can be seen when students talk about the knowledge learned with their own words and interpret new problems using them. In order to achieve this, designing learning experiences using complex instruction can help. In these activities, they also can learn with each other, because each of them are knowledge resources for the others, as declared by S2:

"The dynamics in groups were helpful to clear some concepts from the text that were confused and with an academic language." (S2).

By the end of most of the classes, when asked if they would like to work with a given group again, all students answered affirmatively.

The strategies used also increased the efficiency in obtaining student's learning evidence. Frequently students were previously communicated about what were the evaluation criteria, so they could check if they were in accordance with them before delivering the activities, which enhanced the quality of the products. They also had plural and complementary modalities for showing learning, for example, through individual written reports, oral collective comments during debates, products elaborated in groups and some others.

During the semester, we could observe an increase in the frequency of students expressing their opinions. By the start of the classes, we identified some students whose frequency of interaction was low. Although they were paying attention during the classes, looking at the teacher, listening to their colleagues and delivering individual activities, they rarely shared their experiences, asked or answered during the talks among the whole group or in small groups. On the other hand, by the end of the semester we witnessed an increase of interaction from this particular group of students, who were labeled as "shy", sometimes, even by themselves. S3 said the following about we learning experiences:

"These activities were very creative, every of them had a direct connection with the learning of the concepts of the subject matter. These alternative resources stimulate our participation by showing a dynamic different from that we are used to in other classes." (S3).

We consider that the talk moves (Windischitl, Thompson & Braaten, 2018) enhanced the participation and accuracy in the students' answers. They also could perceive the more equitable patterns of interactions, as declared by S4:

"Everybody could participate and learn with what we debated in both activities." (S4).

Finally, although some students exhibited resistance in participating in these new activities, mainly complex instruction, by the end of the semester they could validate the its benefits, as declared by the following students:

"The methodologies used were diverse and wide. They were welcoming even in the face of challenges (such as group work and talking in public). I believe that they were important for developing necessary communication skills and could create a welcoming environment." (S5).

"The moments of discussion and sharing the internship practices were the ones that most contributed to participation and learning, in the sense of the freedom given for students to share their experiences and also in allowing the students access to other experiences and realities that they couldn't witness." (S6).

The tradition of the university these teachers in training come from has a very rigid model of teaching focused mainly on the speech of the teacher, while the students have almost no opportunity for participation, reflection and discussion of their ideas. In this sense, the moments for them to incorporate the new concepts are rare. The shift in the model of learning may cause discomfort in the beginning, but students are able to validate it and enjoy the benefits they witness in their learning quality through time.

Concluding remarks

The contribution of this work for the field of Diversity and Equity in Education is the documentation of some evidence that using some combined strategies (complex instruction, thinking routines, productive talks and assigning intentional roles) allowed more equitable patterns of interaction, hence, improving learning for a wide range of students besides the high levels of differences in status among them. Besides this, using different methodologies produced diverse and complementary tools for evaluating learning.

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Voicing and visualising the bi/multilingual lives of migrant families in Greece through family language portraits and narratives

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Abstract

This paper presents a case study which aimed to explore aspects of the bi/ multilingual lives and repertoires of families of Albanian migrant background in Greece by giving voice and visualizing their languages views and practices. Through the use of family language portraits and narrative interviews, the research findings highlighted the complex meanings and value of both languages, their lived experiences with multilingualism as well as the children's agency in shaping family language policy. Implications are discussed for intercultural language education.

Keywords: migrant families, bilingualism/multilingualism, school education, language portraits.

Introduction

The field of family language policy (FLP) has developed widely the last two decades addressing a wide range of issues, family types and methodological approaches while most recently the focus has shifted to the notion of family in the globalised, superdiverse world, as a space (Lanza, 2021). Multilingual families have attracted much interest within FLP research, focusing on language ideologies, practices and attitudes which affect language maintenance, family communication and children's bilingual socialization (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). More recent studies take on ethnographic approaches in order to study the multilingual family repertoire, and the multilingual practices that shape the speakers' lived experiences with multilingualism (Lanza, 2021).

Literature Review

The field of FLP has been greatly influenced by Spolsky's (2004) model. More recent work in FLP focuses on issues of identity formation, linguistic repertoires and agency. Previous studies among Albanian migrant families in Greece (Chatzidaki & Maligkoudi, 2013; Gkaintartzi et al., 2014, 2016; Gogonas & Michail, 2015) have indicated thecomplex meanings attributed to multilingualism, highlighting the perceived importance of Greek as a vehicle for educational success and social inclusion. The home language, Albanian, is considered as a core value for cultural continuity, communication with the wider family and connection with heritage. Although Albanian is still used within the (extended) families and the community, second-generation speakers seem to demonstrate a distinct preference for the use of the majority language (Chatzidaki & Maligkoudi, 2013). Within a context of competing ideologies and their conflicting discourses, it seems that despite the overall positive attitudes towards the maintenance of the home language, systematic language

management practices are not equally actively employed. Regarding home-school communication and parental involvement, it is shown that the parents invest in learning the Greek language as an asset for the children's academic, social and professional development (Gkaintartzi et al., 2016) while various obstacles affect home-school partnership. This research attempts to add to our knowledge base within this population by examining the language views and practices in depth of both parents and their children through a multimethod case study, employing language portraits as an additional research tool, which have not been used by previous research. It also looks into the children's voices too, which have not been fully considered in earlier studies, highlighting children's agency as an important aspect of FLP.

Methodology

The case study aimed to explore Albanian parents' and their children's language repertoires and language views regarding bi/multingualism, its importance for their identities and the multiple meanings they attribute to bi/multilingualism in their lives. It also aimed to study the ways they perceive Greek school language learning and its relationship to bilingualism. The research tools employed were semi-structured, narrative interviews with the mothers and children from 7 different families and language portraits. A language portrait (Busch, 2012) is a tool to express and visualize their narratives about languages and express the bodily and emotional dimensions of embodied multilingual repertoires.

The participants

Concerning the participants' profiles, seen in table 1. below, 7 mothers of Albanian migrant background participated in the case study.

Mother	Age	Years in Greece	Educational level mother (father)	Occupation mother/father
F1.Beziana	40	15	Primary	-
F2. Jesiana	40	20	Secondary (High school)	Housekeeping/ in construction
F3. Monta	52	24	University/Secondary (Lyceum)	Housekeeping/ in construction
F4. Arta	40	10	Secondary (Lyceum) (both)	Housekeeping/ in construction
F5. Agnesa	35	5	Secondary (High school) (both)	Housekeeping/ in construction
F6. Blinera	43	4,5	Primary/ Secondary (High school)	Housekeeping/ in construction
F7. Lentina	35	27	Secondary (Lyceum)(both)	Hairdresser/ in construction

Table 1. *Mothers' profiles*

The profile of the 7 children who participated in the case study is seen in Table 2. below.

Child	Age	Years in Greece	Educational level	Languages spoken
F1. Ana	17	11	Secondary (lyceum)	Albanian/English/French/Greek/Spanish
F2. Ildo	11,5	Since birth	Primary	Albanian/English/Greek
F3. Veriola (C1) Marsela (C2)	16 (C1)/ 14 (C2)	Since birth (both)	Secondary (lyceum)/ Secondary (High school)	Albanian/English/Greek/Spanish
F4. Bardana	12	10	Secondary (High school)	Albanian/English/German/Greek
F5. Ajola	8	5	Primary	Albanian/English/Greek
F6. Erjon	13	6	Secondary (High school)	Albanian/English/Greek

Table 2. *Children's profiles*

Data collection and methods of data analysis

The study took place on the island of Hydra, which was selected because of the large number of Albanian background migrants and the close relationship of the researcher, which ensured access and a relation of trust thus constituting a common ground. Convenience and purposive sampling were used (families with of Albanian immigrant background with children at school age). The interviews took place face to face in the period from December to March 2022. Within the interview event, language portraits were drawn by the participants, who were also asked to reflect on them. In total, five language portraits were created by the mothers and seven by the children. The verbal data was recorded and transcribed. Field notes by the researcher were used to complement the analysis process. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The language portraits gave rise to a biographical perspective and provided a detailed framework for analyzing participants' experiences and constructing identity at different levels. They were approached as visual narratives in the study along with the linguistic stories drawn from their interviews and were analyzed following a semiotic analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996).

Findings

The value of languages

Drawing from the data analysis, the children are socialized into the importance of both languages from the, often implied, attitudes and practices of their mothers, which are transmitted daily through their words or interactions. The Albanian language seems to function for the mothers as a symbol of origin and identity, as they characterize it as the language of the *"homeland"* and "*the country in which they were born"*. Also, some of them associate the value of learning the Albanian language with their visits to Albania, which relates to the functional value of the language. Few (F3 & F4) associate the value of learning the Albanian language with the general value of learning languages both as an educational and a social asset, showing a positive attitude towards multilingualism in general. It is considered important to maintain, mostly through its oral use within the family and the use of television programs as well. Greek language learning is considered a priority, which in some cases is implied as 'competing' to the home language. Accordingly, the mothers' and children's language portraits depict various languages within their repertoires with different degrees of competences and multiple associations. The children's linguistic repertoires embrace more language resources in more complex ways as seen in the language portraits below. The mothers, in their choice of colors, seem to follow the nation/flag – language association when portraying their language resources.

Figure 1. *Language portrait (F1) Beziana (mother)*
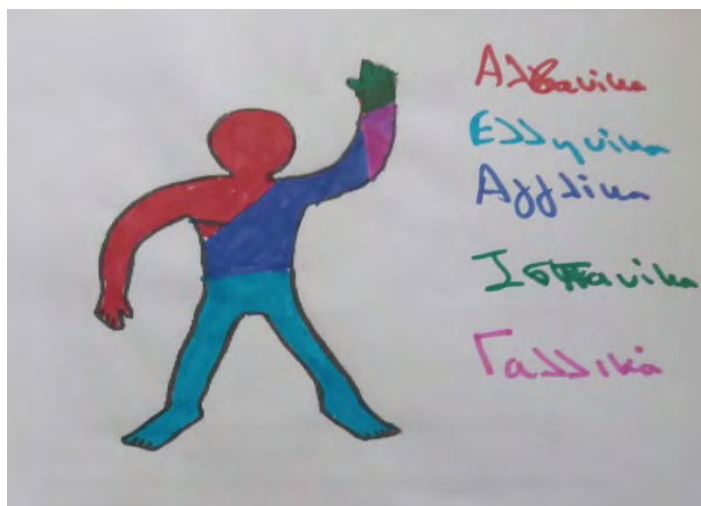
Figure 2. *Language portrait (F1) Anna (child)*

School language education: Language practices

In the school context, the children seem to choose to speak Greek in the formal context of the classroom or remain *in silence*, when they do not have the adequate language competence to communicate. The children do not speak Albanian- nor are they encouraged to do so - in the school contexts. They state that they *do not want* to speak Albanian at school. The feeling of "shame" was implied in some cases in their discourse. A covert policy which legitimizes only one language at school, the Greek, also emerges from the data. All participants stated that the teachers had never tried to include, embrace or make this language visible in class in any way. Implicitly and sometimes explicitly, the language/cultural capital is excluded, not taken into account as illegitimate or an obstacle to Greek language learning. In the following excerpts, a mother and a child narrate their experiences:

F2/M: "*The kindergarten teacher told us, that in order not to confuse the child, he should speak only one language (Greek). And then, when he grows up a little, you should start speaking to him in the other language (Albanian) as well.*"

F5/C: "*Okay, once I said something in Albanian and my friends were laughing. We do not speak Albanian, we speak Greek. But the teacher never said something like that to me [not to speak Albanian].*"

All the mothers responded that they have a positive communication with the school, viewing it, however, as a one-way, informative process on the part of the teachers. They also state that their children are treated by the teachers *"the same"* as all the others and thus they are not excluded or stigmatized. However, this approach which reinforces "*sameness*" in order to hide or cover difference, may ultimately lead to assimilation and impose monolingualism.

Discussion-Conclusion

Concerning the language views and practices of the mothers, positive attitudes towards bilingualism are expressed, revealing, however, a degree of ambivalence when seen in relation to Greek language schooling and learning. In general, the parents show openness towards their children's language choices and in many cases

their FLP is flexible, adapting to the children's choices and future aspirations. This children's agency is an important aspect of our findings, which has not been addressed by previous research. Their lives seem to be 'shared' between the two languages while their views regarding bi/multingualism appear to reflect the concept of "parallel monolingualism" (Heller, 1999). The 'invisibility' of their bilingualism is a result of the school's monolingual practices and attitudes (hidden curriculum). The parents seem to rationalize this pattern as "normal" or "expected" since it is a Greek school teaching Greek.

The mothers' language portraits seem to depict fewer languages and in less creative ways as compared to their children's, who develop more flexible multilingual repertoires. The analysis of language portraits and the narratives of mothers and their children provided valuable insights into their repertoires, experiences and emotions regarding languages, contributing thus to a fuller understanding of family language policy (Purkarthofer, 2021). The implications of the findings for intercultural language education relate to the need for awareness raising regarding the complexities of family multilingualism and children's agency, the importance of creating bridges of home-school communication based on equal communication, and the role innovative, multimodal methods can play in researching and expressing multilingual repertoires, focusing also on emotions associated with languages.

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The policies and practices of educational leadership for the management of the Covid-19 health crisis in Greece and other countries

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has shaken and affected education systems around the world. The traditional process of face-to-face teaching was replaced by the use of digital media during the period when schools remained closed. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the policies and practices implemented in Greece as well as in other countries in order to cope with the pandemic. Distance learning and the conditions that prevailed during the health crisis affected all students and especially those from vulnerable social groups such as the Roma and generally the financially and socially weak.

Keywords: health crisis, educational leadership, diversity, vulnerable social groups, distance learning.

The implementation of remote learning in Greece

The health crisis caused by the spread of the coronavirus has affected many areas of human life, including education. Educational systems around the world have been called upon to adapt to current developments. During the period when the institutions remained closed, distance teaching was used for all students in total in all three educational levels. According to UNESCO data, over 1.6 billion students in 190 countries were driven to distance learning by school closing (Harris & Jones, 2020). The result was to create digital classrooms where teachers and students interacted remotely. In this project there were many obstacles because the teachers did not have the necessary skills for the educational support of the lessons (Azhari & Fajri, 2022).

In Greece, during the first phase of the pandemic, on March 6, 2020 and up until the middle of May, the central management of the Ministry of Education decided to close schools. The suspension was applied universally to all types of schools. That is, from kindergartens to high schools, full-day schools and educational units for special education and training. During this time the school principals tried to carry out the distance teaching as indicated by the directives of the senior management. However, in many cases a lack of technological means was observed by both students and teachers which the school leaders tried to cover themselves through personal initiatives. For example, staff distributed printed material from school textbooks to students who did not have access to a computer or communicated with them using social media (Geropoulos et al., 2021). Principals at the local level faced many difficulties and tried to reduce the impact of the crisis on students and especially those belonging to the weaker groups. After all, the pandemic and the interruption of conventional lessons had enormous effects on the mental health of children and adolescents (Velasco et al.,

2021). Among the actions of the Greek Ministry of Education was to give directions to teachers and leaders regarding the psychological support of students.

During the second phase of the pandemic as well as the first in which schools were closed again, the main distance learning platform was Webex from Cisco. The amount of time the students remained in digital classrooms was longer as the remote educational process took place for about 7 months. In this case the instructions had been given to the heads of school units by the central administration before the opening of the schools on 24 August 2020. More specifically, there were ready-made online environments for synchronous and asynchronous learning. In addition, regarding primary and secondary education, the ministry made efforts to strengthen the technological equipment of schools with 70,000 portable devices as well as the national information networks. Additionally, other than Webex for the management of distance education, educational television for primary school students was also "recruited". Special care was even given to the financial aspect since zero data charges were ensured for students' access to the educational platforms from the providers (Ministry of Education). However, until that time the public technological equipment of the schools was not at a good level. According to data, only 2% of primary schools had modern computers and fast internet access when the European Union average is higher, at 37% (Anastasiadis, 2020). On the other hand, in higher education and university institutions, remote education was foreseen for classes with more than 50 students. Platforms from Google and Microsoft were used as teaching aids.

The process of distance education in other countries

Discontinuation of in person teaching was also implemented in other countries with the exception of Sweden and Iceland in which remote learning took place only in upper secondary and higher education. Different educational applications were observed in each country during the pandemic period.

Countries such as Japan, Italy, Poland, and the Philippines have used YouTube, DepEd, and other digital online libraries to further the educational process (Lapada et al., 2020). Of course, a similar lack of technological resources to that of Greece was also observed in other countries which were faced with problems. However, the central authority was responsible for the choice of educational media without local school principals having the opportunity to adapt the educational policies to their own needs. Countries that are developed did not have the same possibilities as states that are in a better financial condition. In Estonia where digital media was used before the health crisis, the educational leadership did not need much guidance towards the teachers because they were already familiar with them. On the other hand, in Australia and Romania, the use of Google Drive and Microsoft Teams was promoted, and in the Czech Republic, a website was developed by the Ministry that provided useful tools to students (Reimers & Andreas, 2020). Each country tried to appropriately take advantage of the technological means provided to it by the central authority in combination with other complementary ones which school principals mobilized at their discretion.

Discussion

There is no doubt that the use of remote learning as a necessary means to limit the spread of the coronavirus in schools has created both positive and negative effects on students and the rest of the educational community. The educational leadership in Greece, in the two periods when distance learning took place, made efforts to mitigate the learning consequences on all students and especially on vulnerable groups who faced the risk of being left out of the educational process due to their weaknesses (Geropoulos & Tsioumis, 2021). Each country individually decided on the methods it would follow, on which tools and means it would use to continue providing education to students. That is, a single line was not followed by all countries and by all educational institutions. As it has been established, the Covid-19 health crisis has not created new inequalities but has aggravated the existing ones (Sahlberg, 2020). However, apart from the negative consequences that the use of distance teaching had on students, the benefits of the pandemic regarding educational systems also need to be highlighted. Therefore, the practices and policies implemented during the Covid-19 health crisis may in the future form the basis for their more effective implementation. During emergency periods which disrupt normal conditions the greater burden of responsibility shifts to leaders and managers of organizations (Netolicky, 2020). For this reason, the teacher must take into account all the parameters during the decision-making process. Finally, it is necessary to emphasize the fact that the closing of schools resulted in unequal access of different social groups to information technologies, which affected the most vulnerable (Liu, 2021).

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Intercultural attitudes, interests, and practices: A comparative empirical analysis for a democratic society

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Abstract

The dimensions of openness, active citizenship, and global awareness are recognized in both pedagogical and sociological literature, as well as in transnational policy-making, as fundamental to the development and consolidation of cooperation, respect, and social cohesion. This research thus draws on OECD-PISA 2018 data for carrying out a comparative analysis of intercultural practices experienced by students in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. After synthesizing three indices on intercultural communication, cross-cultural openness, and intercultural respect, multiple regression models are performed to estimate the relationships between school-level practices, attitudes, and individual ascriptive variables. The results highlight how cross-cultural teaching and practices positively affect students' attitudes. Finally, the need for an integrated educational approach involving both families and communities is highlighted.

Keywords: intercultural attitudes and values, intercultural school practices, Large-scale comparative analysis, democratic citizenship.

Introduction

Attitudes of openness, active citizenship, and global awareness are recognized in both pedagogical and sociological literature as fundamental to the development and consolidation of cooperation, respect, and social cohesion (Sälzer & Roczen, 2018; Assirelli, 2016). As a matter of fact, they are also directly related to the "Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture" by the Council of Europe (2018). In this sense, the use of relevant large-scale data can both provide important insights into the current level of openness of 15-year-old pupils – who are indeed the adults of the future – and steer the construction of improved policies and interventions in connection with educational and socialization processes in school and broader social contexts (Bennett, 1986; Okoye-Johnson, 2011).

To this end, this research aims at performing a comparative analysis of intercultural practices experienced by students in relation to intercultural communication, cross-cultural openness, and intercultural respect (Kumagai & Lypson, 2009) in four European countries – France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. Each of the nations considered is characterized by specific intercultural education systems and models. The analysis of secondary data in fact allows to build and test the robustness of research tools and a preliminary analytical model.

Methodology

The research draws on the rich dataset provided by OECD-PISA 2018 (last wave available) which provides detailed but comparable information (collected through the "Student questionnaire") that allows highlighting similarities and differences across contexts (OECD, 2020).

The analysis proceeded through two main steps. First, a synthesis of groups of items through Principal Components Analysis was carried out. Thus, an intercultural communication index (7 items), a cross-cultural openness index (4 items), and an intercultural respect index (5 items) were elaborated. These indices were used to perform comparisons of national means with data regarding France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. In the second stage of the research, these indices were correlated. Furthermore, causal models (via multiple linear regression) were performed with the aim to estimate the effects of social background variables, relational variables, and school practice variables regarding the most reliable measure. This allowed estimating, albeit indirectly, the weight of these variables with respect to outcomes in terms of attitudes.

Intercultural communication, cross-cultural openness, and intercultural respect in four European countries

The first index we constructed concerns *intercultural communication*. This was synthesized using seven items: "Imagine you are talking in your native language to people whose native language is different from yours. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? I carefully observe their reactions; I frequently check that we are understanding each other correctly; I listen carefully to what they say; I choose my words carefully; I give concrete examples to explain my ideas; I explain things very carefully; If there is a problem with communication, I find ways around it". These items use a 4-points Likert scale (Strongly disagree; Disagree; Agree; Strongly agree). A good level of explained variance emerges (Table 1) and thus a good fit of the index (58,98%).

Item	Component
I listen carefully to what they say.	0,809
I frequently check that we are understanding each other correctly.	0,801
I explain things very carefully.	0,776
I choose my words carefully.	0,774
I give concrete examples to explain my ideas.	0,765
If there is a problem with communication, I find ways around it [...]	0,750
I carefully observe their reactions.	0,694

Table 1. *Intercultural communication index: Principal components analysis. Source: Elaboration by the authors on OECD-PISA 2018 data.*

This index shows strong heterogeneity among nations (Figure 1). France and, secondarily, Spain have above-average values. Germany is below average, while Italy appears strongly below average. This confirms known data in international comparison research (Assirelli, 2016).
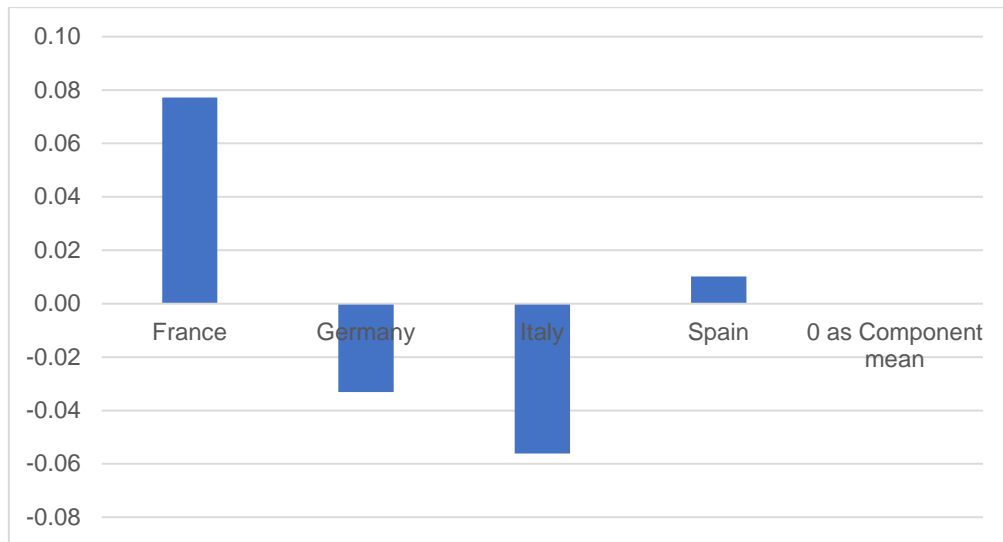
Figure 1. *Intercultural communication index: Variance among countries. Source: Elaboration by the authors on OECD-PISA 2018 data*

A *cross-cultural openness index* has also been synthetized using four items: "How well does each of the following statements below describe you? I want to learn how people live in different countries; I want to learn more about the religions of the world; I am interested in how people from various cultures see the world; I am interested in finding out about the traditions of other cultures". These items use a 5-point Likert scale (Very much like me; Mostly like me; Somewhat like me; Not much like me; Not at all like me) whose semantic order was reversed in this analysis in order for the statements to have increasing rather than decreasing values. In this case, the total variance explained (Table 2) is higher than in the previous scale (74,53%). As with the intercultural communication index, the intercultural openness index shows strong heterogeneity among nations (Figure 2). The pattern is similar to the previous scale, with a reversal in positions between France and Spain.

Item	Component
I am interested in how people from various cultures see the world.	0,911
I am interested in finding out about the traditions of other cultures.	0,875
I want to learn how people live in different countries.	0,865
I want to learn more about the religions of the world.	0,798

Table 2. *Cross-cultural openness index: Principal components analysis. Source: Elaboration by the authors on OECD-PISA 2018 data*
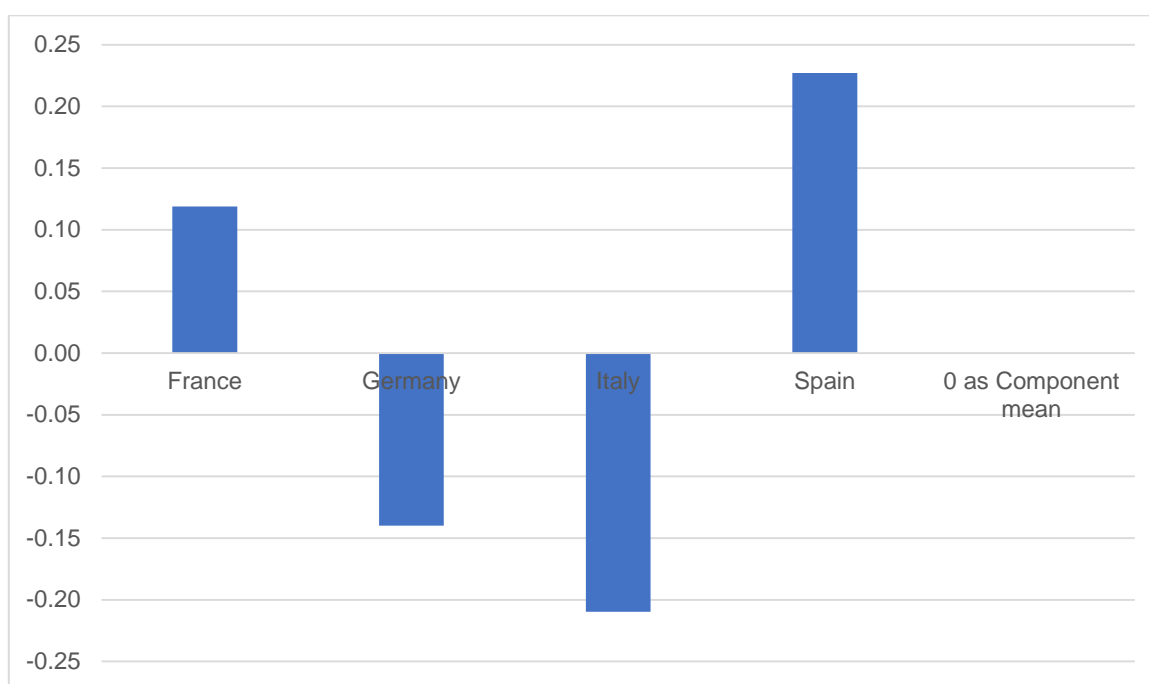
Figure 2. *Cross-cultural openness index: Variance among countries. Source: Elaboration by the authors on OECD-PISA 2018 data*

The last index that has been synthesized is the *intercultural respect index*. It is based on five item "How well does each of the following statements below describe you?: I respect people from other cultures as equal human beings; I treat all people with respect regardless of their cultural background; I give space to people from other cultures to express themselves; I respect the values of people from different cultures; I value the opinions of people from different cultures)". These items use a 5-point Likert scale (Very much like me; Mostly like me;

Somewhat like me; Not much like me; Not at all like me) whose semantic order was reversed for this analysis in order for the statements to have increasing rather than decreasing values.

This last index has the greatest internal consistency (Table 3). Although all three indices are statistically robust, this one is the most reliable of the three as it shows an explained variance of 80,795. This index also shows marked heterogeneity among nations (Figure 3). Among the nations considered, once again, the Italian case shows strongly negative results.

	Component
I respect the values of people from different cultures.	0,918
I give space to people from other cultures to express themselves.	0,917
I treat all people with respect regardless of their cultural background.	0,910
I respect people from other cultures as equal human beings.	0,881
I value the opinions of people from different cultures.	0,867

Table 3. *Intercultural respect index: Principal components analysis. Source: Elaboration by the authors on OECD-PISA 2018 data.*
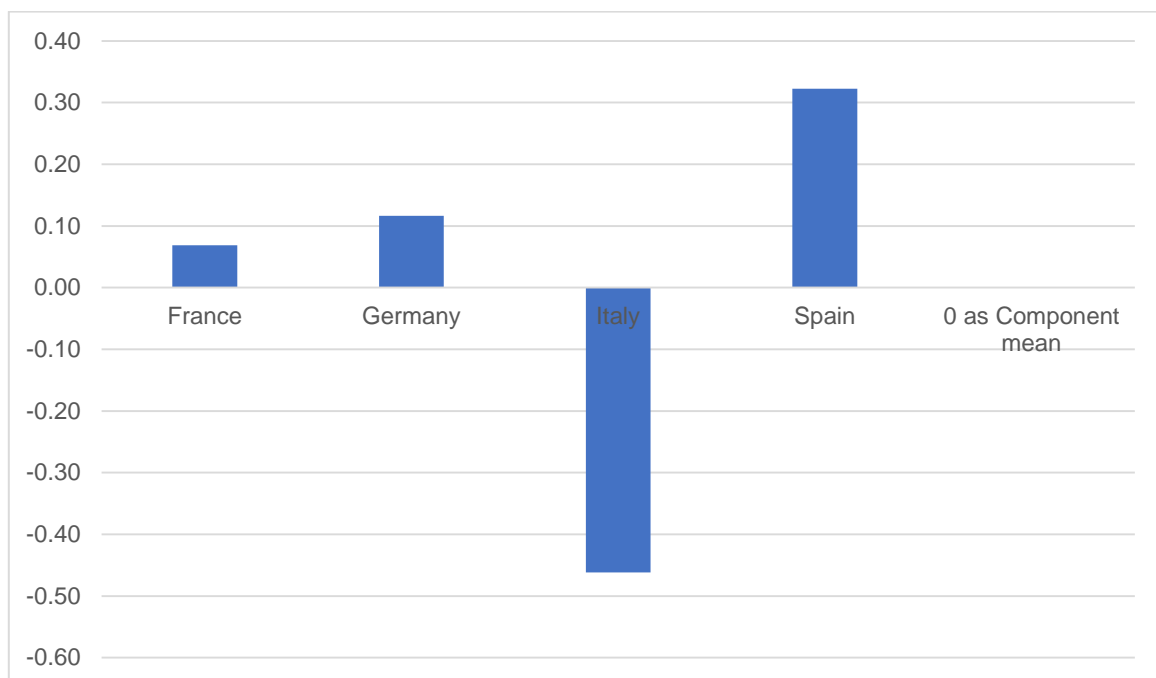
Figure 3. *Intercultural respect index: Variance among countries. Source: Elaboration by the authors on OECD-PISA 2018 data.*

Intercultural respect as a dependent variable

The intercultural respect index appears particularly significant due to its correlation with the other indices (r=,277 with the *intercultural communication index* and r=,438 with the *cross-cultural openness index*). For this reason and its synthesis power, at this stage of the analysis we opted for this index as the dependent variable. Accordingly, it was chosen as the dependent variable in a regression model (Table 4) in which the selected independent variables are the student's family background (measured via the ESCS index), gender, self-representation, relationship effects, and school practices. In particular, self-representation was measured through the item "Agree: I think of myself as a citizen of the world"; the relationships effect through the item "Contact with people from other countries: In your family; At school; In your neighborhood; In your circle of friends"; and school practices through the item "At school: I learn about different cultures; I participate in events celebrating cultural diversity throughout the school year; I learn how people from different cultures can have different perspectives on some issues; I learn how to communicate with people from different backgrounds.".

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	
	Beta	*Standard error*	*Beta*	*Sign,*
	-0,989	0,003		0,000
"Nation" effect (ref. cat, Germany)	0,098	0,002	0,047	0,000
	-0,581	0,002	-0,253	0,000
	0,066	0,002	0,026	0,000
Family background	0,077	0,001	0,073	0,000
Sex	0,369	0,001	0,186	0,000
Self-representation	0,225	0,001	0,190	0,000
Relationships effect	0,061	0,001	0,077	0,000
School effect	0,083	0,001	0,104	0,000

Table 4. *Regression model: Intercultural model as a dependent variable. Source: Elaboration by the authors on OECD-PISA 2018 data.*

A number of interesting aspects emerge from the regression analysis performed. The first concerns the effect of local specificities, which could be broken down by using dummy variables associated with nations. Furthermore, social background and gender hold considerable weight in influencing intercultural respect. As a further significant finding, female students systematically show better results than their male peers. Moreover, self-representation appears to be a crucial variable (and most likely itself subject to other variables; ESCS correlation is r=,38). The domain of relationships also appears to play an important role in influencing intercultural respect. Finally, school practices also show a positive effect. Although it appears small in the model, this is due to the fact that they depend on the average school background.

Specific regression models were then performed for the four countries considered in this research – France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. In the regression models by country, the identified explanatory structure remains stable. National differences emerge due to local specificities. Interestingly, the effect of school practices maintains significance across nations, and is particularly marked in the contexts that showed the lowest average values with respect to the intercultural respect index.

Conclusions

In this research, three indices were developed to measure intercultural communication, cross-cultural openness, and intercultural respect in four European countries (France, Germany, Italy, and Spain) using OECD-PISA 2018 data. These three scales are internally consistent and effectively capture the variance among individuals as well as among the contexts – in this case, nations – under analysis. Furthermore, these three scales are related to each other, and they do not overlap. Thus, they accurately grasp diverse dimensions. As to intercultural respect, the overall pattern – net of the "nation effect" – shows the significant weight of ascriptive factors (particularly, family social origin), but also the importance of school practices.

The results clearly highlight how cross-cultural teaching and experience practices have a positive effect on students' attitudes. At the same time, the research shows the exigency for an integrated approach in which families and communities are both and mutually involved.

Wider reflection is needed on this point, for as relevant as schools are, they do not have the power to act alone with respect to improving attitudes, perceptions and – ultimately – behaviors. Related to this last point, the next stages of our research will try to go deeper with qualitative methods, from an integrated methodological perspective.

Note

This research is part of a larger ongoing research project in which various partners (Fondazione Intercultura, Scuola Democratica) are collaborating.

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In Other Words. A contextualized dictionary to problematize otherness: An online educational resource to challenge – and reverse – discriminatory language

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Abstract

Our paper illustrates the collaborative work of the online dictionary In Other Words. A contextualized Dictionary to problematize Otherness (www.iowdictionary.org). The dictionary is a free online resource that aims to raise critical awareness of how words are used and misused to reify, stigmatize, stereotype or folklorize the many diversities that inhabit our classrooms and our societies. We believe that Education has a precise political responsibility to promote human rights and, within such a mandate, we think that one of the most effective ways is that of challenging the (re)production of predominant narratives against diversities in order to develop critical thinking and prepare future critical and responsible global citizens.

Keywords: diversities, discriminating language, critical awareness, educational resource, In Other Words.

IOW dictionary: Introduction & aims

Discourses on diversity are mobilized in public and political debates to serve specific agendas and (re)produce different forms of discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origins, age, body features and shapes, disabilities, social status, with the result that specific individuals or groups are made 'invisible' and/or get targeted – when not assaulted – as representatives of a particular kind of minority or diversity, being thus denied of individual and community rights. Within such a setting, words do play a fundamental role in **the (re)production of different forms of Otherness,** creating specific narratives which have the power to shape individual and collective representations and interpretations of the self and others. **From an ethical stance and within an educational perspective, we have developed the online dictionary** *In Other Words* **as a resource to be used for free in different social and educational contexts** to develop and share **critical and intercultural awareness** able to challenge the reification, the stigmatization, the stereotyping or the folklorization of the **Other.**

Characteristics

Dictionaries photograph who we are, which are our values, how are the societies we live in. Reading which words are present – or absent – in a dictionary at a given time tells a lot about who we are. Precisely for those reasons, dictionaries usually crystallize words, fixing them in a meaning that is the point of arrival of a specific word. Conversely, IOW dictionary analyses words along the paths they travel, on the move, and in their contexts. Then, IOW dictionary has another characteristic: it is online, and such a choice was made for two

main reasons. The first is that, unlike a book that at some point has a final full stop, being online allows the dictionary to be a constant work-in progress, of being not so much a product, but rather an ongoing process always open to further collaborations and contributions. But the second and fundamental reason is that the dictionary aims to reach those people or those contexts that may not have access to books or not be at ease with them. IOW dictionary is responsive: it is an agile, accessible and user-friendly resource that can be also used from mobiles in different educational and social contexts. Finally, the most relevant characteristic of IOW dictionary is that it does not only analyses words but proposes a creative subversion, as it is illustrated further on.

The dictionary is a critical, collective, creative, and intercultural project. It is critical because we analyse critically and contextually discriminating words. It is collective not only because it involves different contributors from different countries and cultures but also because it promotes the praxis of co-construction and collaborative authorship towards a change in knowledge production and dissemination. It is creative because, in order to develop a counter narrative, we juxtapose to the keywords analysed some creative proposals – e.g., visual elements, works of art, ads, poems, songs, etc. – capable to reverse the perspective of predominant narratives. Creativity is very relevant to develop a critical and intercultural approach since it allows us to see things from a different perspective, to go beyond the taken for granted, which goes in the same direction of intercultural dialogue. Indeed, IOW dictionary is intercultural in the wider sense of the term since it aims to develop and share critical and intercultural awareness able to challenge the (re)production and the dissemination of dehumanizing, stigmatizing, and stereotyping language.

Structure

Each keyword is analysed according to several steps:

- abstract: in a language other-than-English followed by a shorter abstract in English;
- etymology: traces the trajectory of a word, its history and its contemporary applications, uses, misuses, etc.;
- cultural specificity: from etymology to the culture-specific meaning(s), from one root to the many branches;
- problematization: examples from old and new media and public discourses that (re)produce different forms of Otherness;
- communication strategies: analysis of communicative acts in context.
  Until now there was critical analysis. Yet, we believe that critical analysis is just part of our commitment as educators, researchers, and activists. What is needed is to propose an alternative to predominant discourses of discrimination. In our dictionary, this is particularly done in the last two steps:
- subversion: that is the most creative part of the dictionary, showing how a specific word mobilized for the construction of Otherness can be recontextualized and subverted by using pieces of literature, poems, works of art, songs, street art, etc. We believe that a creative approach offers a different

perspective that allows to re-apprehend the word and the world from another viewpoint (see e.g., Nussbaum 1995, 2010);

- discussion: it is conceived as a series of questions that open a door to step outside the dictionary and engage readers in personal reflections and collective discussions.

Methodological framework

To define our stance, our methodological approach mainly considers both our positionality and that of the authors of each entry, as well as the intersection of intercultural, multilingual and multisemiotic resources.

- Positionality and context-specific issues.

According to CohenMiller and Boivin (2022), positionality refers to gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, languages spoken and geopolitical location. We respond differently according to who we are and where we speak from. Therefore, what we bring to the keyword entry, our reading and writing process, is never neutral. The time-space dimension is a further point of reflection as the authors of each entry/keyword respond to both local and global events. An example is a recent entry, 'war', in which the author, a Ukrainian scholar, explores the frontline metaphor. At the same time, other authors engage in longstanding *local* issues and traditions which are both valued but also contested ways of seeing the world. For example, two keywords, 'chakka' from India and 'muxe' from Mexico, speak from different cultural, historical geopolitical spaces, yet both engage with contemporary transgender issues.

- Multilingual and semiotic resources.

According to Rao (2020), language reflects, constitutes, and reproduces privilege, discrimination and exclusion. Therefore, IOW strategy not to translate everything into English is deliberate a way of decentering knowledge and promoting access, participation and engagement. Some of the examples used in the dictionary include videos or memes in languages different from English (for example: the keywords *patriotism*, *war (*война*)*, *(new) heroes [Neoi Iroes - (Νέοι) Ήρωες]*, etc).

Addressees & Actors

IOW dictionary bridges **theoretical reflections** and **practical actions** engaging teachers, educators, students, scholars, activists, and volunteers who work in different **social** and **educational** contexts. It favours participation at different levels, since it can be used as a resource to promote critical and intercultural awareness and dialogue, and as an active site to submit personal contributions – e.g., addressees can become actors by writing a new entry. Within such a framework, we believe that IOW is a critical, intercultural, interdisciplinary, and educational resource with several modalities of use and forms of participation:

a) for students

- to favour their critical reflections and discussions about an existing entry
- to engage them in discussing, proposing, and writing a new entry
- to promote their reflections/practices about languages, translation, plurilingual perspectives

b) for pre-/in-service teachers

- as a training resource

- as an educational resource to favour a critical, intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue within the classroom and across different disciplines

c) for researchers

- to research on the origins of a word but also on its uses in context, reflecting for example on how, by whom, and for which purposes a specific word is mobilized.

To have an idea of how the dictionary works, we invite you to navigate the website: www.iowdictionary.org.

Conclusion

Among all other dictionaries available online and offline, IOW Dictionary started as a collaborative project between several committed scholars and practiontioners who did not know each other but who share the belief in open, accessible, and critical knowledge as a way to challenge predominant narratives in different languages and cultures.

Multicultural and anti-discriminatory education needs resources that may help educators and people who are educated in the process of presenting, formulating, and discussing the problems related to the main topic of Otherness. We think that the IOW project is a step in the right direction and we hope some of the readers may be provoked not only to use it but to contribute to it with proposals of new keywords, ideas, or examples.

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Investigating language belonging of international teachers

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The following is a presentation of a conceptual approach to a study addressing the situation of displaced international teachers and their perception of language belonging. The targeted teachers are being trained to be able to (re-)enter into their professions as teachers in German schools in a current project "Lehrkräfte Plus" in North Rhine Westfalia (NRW), Germany. The motivation to conduct the study was triggered by the professional intuition of the lecturers after teaching the first cohort when they found themself critically re-addressing the same question: *Does the program actually empower teachers to enter the realities of German school-life as multilingual professionals and help them develop a sense of (language) belonging?*

The ideas to be presented aim to disclose the perceptible vulnerability of displaced international teachers, especially regarding their multilingual biographies within the given societal realities.

The authors see an apparent multi-layered complexity of the underlying negotiation processes in teachers' language biographies, especially in their need to negotiate between the societal expectations of integrating and learning (near native-level) German, due to the postulated monolingual habitus in German schools – although these are in fact marked by language diversity. The authors believe that a sense of language belonging is central to the long-term well-being of the displaced teachers and pertinent to their linguistic, professional and personal acculturation processes. These again are seen as relevant for a positive development of a diverse German society.

In the following, the theoretical approach and concepts will be outlined, as well as the research background, the method of study, participants and mode of analysis. Finally, the research questions will be presented with an insight offered into first results.

Keywords: displaced international teachers, teacher education, language belonging, migrant and refugee education.

Theoretical Approach and Concepts

Language maintenance

Conventional psychological and linguistic frameworks as well as recent interpretative concepts in sociolinguistics are considered helpful for the foreseen study. Among these, Berry's (1997) *Theoretical Framework for Acculturation* (Fig. 1) serves as a general reference. He observes acculturation from a psychological point of view and addresses all key variables and factors that should be kept in mind when carrying out acculturation studies. Based on Berry's approach Bourhis' (1997) *Interactive Model of Linguistic Acculturation* (Fig. 2) focuses on the individual factor *language* and the perceived value of keeping one's language and/or adapting

the dominant majority language during the acculturation process and aligns this perceived value to the dominant majority acculturation orientations. These are influenced by governmental decisions and state language policies. His model predicts either consensual, problematic or conflictual long-term outcomes of the individual acculturation process, depending on the relationship between the linguistic minority and dominant majority acculturation orientations.
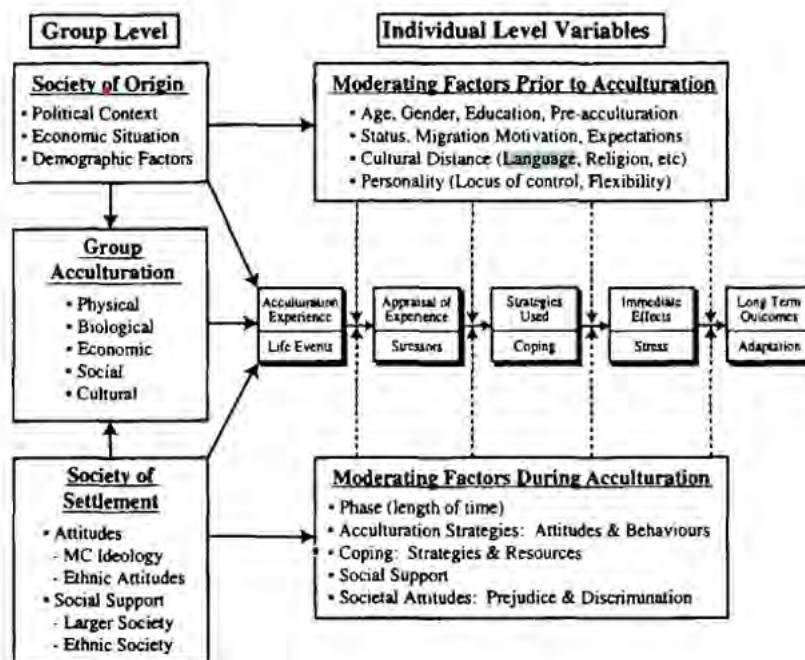
Figure 1. B*erry (1997, 15) Theoretical Framework for Acculturation*
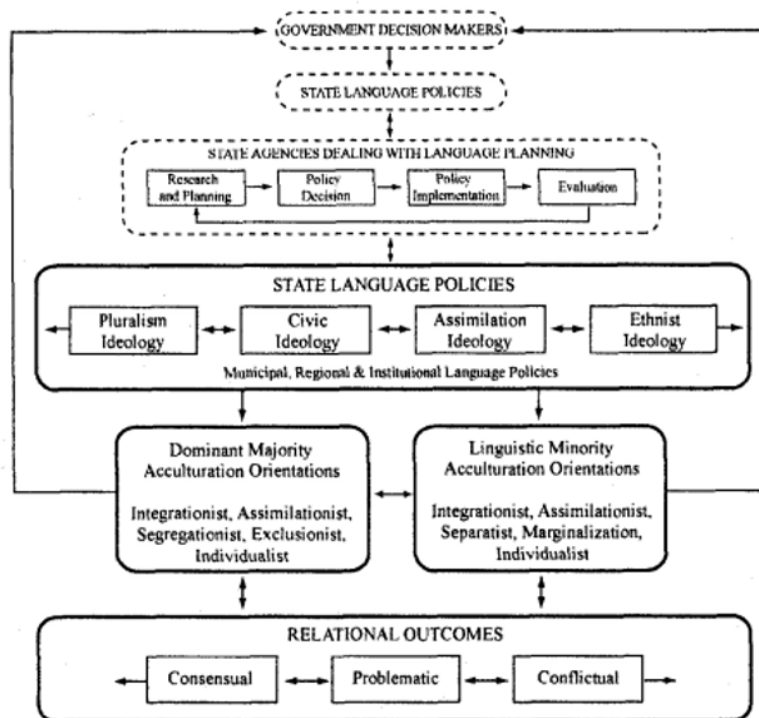
Figure 2. *Bourhis (1997, p. 7) Interactive Model of Linguistic Acculturation*

Linguistic identity

Contemporary and past research on linguistic identity in German literature is found to be relating more to multilingualism, language diversity of children and justifiably focuses on linguistic diversity in German classrooms, challenges met, methodologies and didactics suitable for teaching German as a second language and/or considering multilingual approaches (Jeuk, 2021; Bauman & Becker-Mrotzek, 2014; Wolf-Farré et al., 2021; Ahrenholz et al., 2021). This also includes criticizing the "monolingual" teaching perspective (Gogolin, 2008) and critically discussing the discourse on teachers with so-called migrant backgrounds and addressing the danger of de-professionalization (Rotter, 2014; Ennerberg & Economou, 2020).

In sociolinguistics there is an increase in interpretative studies on the concepts of languages and identities, multilingual life-worlds, and the observation that people use their linguistic repertoires to adapt to societal requirements. For the foreseen study closer attention will be paid to following the concepts of Busch's (2017) developed *Linguistic Repertoire,* Norton's (2015) *Model of Investment* and Creese & Blackledges (2015) approach to *Translanguaging*. All three concepts address linguistic identity from the individual speakers' point of view and take societal factors into account, indicating amongst other that these may lead to limitations in the individual's linguistic negotiation processes. These concepts determine a further understanding of the multi-layered linguistic negotiation processes of displaced international teachers and will help identify the underlying concept of language belonging. An inductive approach to the study has been chosen, which will be guided by the elicited data via a content analysis (see 3.). The foremost interest of the foreseen study lies in understanding the individual perspectives and the displaced international teacher' experiences and perceptions within their linguistic biographies.

Research Background

Germany has severe difficulties with adequate numbers of teachers in schools with 40,000 missing in 2022. There is a political dispute on the predicted numbers up to 2035. These range from 23,000 foreseen by official authorities to around 158,000 foreseen by a group of educational experts.[1]

In 2016, more than 11,000 persons applied for asylum in Germany who had previously worked in the teaching profession in their country of origin (Terhart, 2022, p. 294). In 2019 only 250 people with a nationality of a country of origin classified as "not safe" were working as teachers at schools in Germany (ibid). This shows that the vast number of potential teachers who arrived in 2016 do not re-enter or gain entrance into their professions as teachers.

This may be due to the requirements for teachers. Whilst it is quite common for teachers around the globe to be fully recognized as a subject teacher, i.e. one subject, in Germany one has to have a Master Degree and be able to teach two subjects to be a fully recognized teacher. One also needs to have the certified German

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[1] deutsches-schulportal.de, 26.8.2022, https://deutsches-schulportal.de/bildungswesen/lehrermangel-bleibt-bundesweit-ein-problem/#was-sagen-die-prognosen-zum-lehrermangel-in-den-kommenden-jahren

language level of C2[2]. There are possibilities to enter the teaching profession with one subject in so call side-entries (Terhart 2022, 295), such as in the project "Lehrkräfte Plus" described here, however, this is the start of a long re-qualification process, in which teachers need to commit to a three-year training with no guarantees at the end of the road to be accepted by schools. One could say that anybody who does chose to enter this path is highly motivated.

Germany is oddly considered a monolingual country with no official national language (Bartelsheimer, Hufeisen, & Montanari, 2019, p. 37), and German is by law the official language for schools, offices and courts (Marten, 2016, p. 146). There is no coherent language planning policy. The focus lies on acquisition of German as the majority language (Marten, 2016, p. 152), while attention is rarely paid towards immigrant minority languages.

That said, current statistics which are based on migrant background - not actual multilingualism - show 27% of Germany's population with a migrant background[3]. Unfortunately, in order to count multilingual people, citizenship or migration background is used, which is no depiction of the real language practices in families (cf. Cantone/Di Venanzio, 2015; cf. Cantone, 2020). Given the federal organization where education is left to the single ministries of the federal states, there are no general guidelines on the selection of foreign languages or on models for bilingual education or mother tongue instruction.

North Rhine Westfalia (NRW) is the federal state in which the foreseen study is conducted. NRW is a long-standing and current destination of labour migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers (Lehman 2019, 52), where approx. 29% of the population have so called 'migration background'[4]. It is the most populous federal state with about 5500 schools. 26% of school children speak other languages in addition to German.[5] NRW currently has 4400 teaching positions vacant.[6]

With the increase of refugees coming to Germany in 2015/16, a number of projects for refugees with professional background in teaching have been initiated in Germany. Since 2020 five universities offer Lehrkräfte Plus as a one-year (re-)qualification programme for refugee teachers in North Rhine-Westphalia, which is sponsored by the DAAD[7] and Ministry of Culture and Science for NRW. The majority of participants are from Syria and Turkey. The entry requirements for the programs are a refugee status, a BA in a subject area relevant for German schools, German at least B1 level and teaching experience at a school in the home country or elsewhere.
They are full-time programs with courses in German language, general and content-related educational

[2] According to Common European Framework Reference Language Skills   https://europa.eu/europass/en/common-european-framework-reference-language-skills
[3] destatis.de, 12.4.2022, https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2022/04/PD22_162_125.html
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[6] news4teachers.de, 18.7. 2022, https://www.news4teachers.de/2022/07/lehrermangel-waechst-sich-weiter-aus-allein-in-nrw-sind-schon-fast-4-400-lehrerstellen-unbesetzt/
[7] Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service)

knowledge, practice-related courses, school internships, and career counselling. The universities form a network and have the same modules, however, their individual programs differ. The programs cooperate with the district governments. (Terhart 2022, p. 295).

Method of Study

The chosen perspective to the study was substantiated by a pre-study which was conducted by Lialiou et al. (unpublished) addressing the same displaced international teachers and focusing on professionalization and educational participation. The study clearly showed that language skills was the dominant topic articulated by the teachers and considered a central requirement for their professional success in German schools. This was not fully surprising due to the monolingual habitus in German schools; however, the question arose what impact learning German has on the professional biographies and the linguistic acculturation processes of the participants and how this impacts their well-being.

The foreseen study intends to focus further on the participants' professional biographies which include deliberate prompting questions towards their linguistic biographies.

The interviews to be analysed include six interviewees from both genders with Turkish and Farsi as first languages. The participants are from the second cohort of Lehrkräfte Plus at the university of Duisburg-Essen who are six months into their practical phases at German schools. The interview durations range from 30 – 60 minutes and have been conducted according to Schütze's (1997) method of narrative interviews with open-ended/stimulating questions on the teachers' professional biographies, hence their experiences since they decided to become a teacher, their impressions on their professional paths so far, their future perspectives and their experiences in their personal & professional life with language and language diversity. Furthermore, a questionnaire with open questions was distributed to elicit information about their personal experiences & preferences concerning their linguistic identity.

The verbalized statements in the transcribed interviews will be analysed via a qualitative content analysis based on Schreier (2012) in which the described occurrences and experiences of language usage will be evaluated.

First insights

A first insight into one interview example shows a language learning experience described at institutional level with its impact on the individual teacher's well-being. The interviewee also offers insight into her strategy used to cope with the situation and how she retrospectively negotiates the emotional occurrence towards a positive outcome indicating that she has overcome a feeling of exclusion and reached a sense of language-belonging. Interviewee Aydin (name changed) speaks about her experiences with German speakers in general who always try to speak more slowly

(1) *"...because they know my weaknesses. But in school that is totally different. They have no time to speak slowly (...) they speak like normal and (...) I have difficulties in understanding all words and*

everybody has a different pronunciation, some speak very clearly and a bit slower or others speak very fast and mumble(.) of course the first month was extremely difficult and I remember that I was at home and cried a bit and my husband said, you do not have to work, don´t be stressed" (410-414, own translation).

Aydin explains further

(2) *"we were always three two yes three two months always in contact and then slowly I ehm understood nearly all words and then there are less and less words that I did not understand. I got used to it" (426-428, own translation)*

Aydin endured the emotional challenge of first not understanding to then slowly understanding fast speaking German speakers at school (in the interview it becomes clear she is referring to colleagues not pupils) and chooses to draw a positive conclusion

(3) *"and afterwards when I (…) understood understand the people who speak so fast I can understand other people also easily" (479-480, own translation)*

It is to be expected that further occurrences are verbalized in the interviews disclosing similar moments of self-perceived vulnerability of the displaced international teachers and their strategies used to negotiate their experiences. In summary, the analysis of the displaced international teachers' interviews will be guided by following research questions:

- Is there a self-perceived vulnerability of the displaced international teachers regarding their multilingual biographies?
- How do participants describe their personal experiences and their linguistic negotiation processes at the given time and place of their professional (re-)integration as teachers -leading to our definition of *Language Belonging?*
- How do the teachers negotiate between the societal expectations of integrating and learning near native-level German (i.e. monolingual habitus) although schools are in fact marked by language diversity?
- Which first conclusions can be drawn concerning the linguistic acculturation processes of the interviewed displaced teachers and how can these be related to state language policies and dominant acculturation orientations?

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Intercultural and multilingual integration of international students to the US

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to understand how international students exercise their multicultural and multilingual competences between their cultural and linguistic repertoire and the discovery of other realities, in order to communicate effectively in different social, cultural and domain-specific contexts and to adapt in their new environment. By employing both a quantitative and a qualitative approach in this research, we analyze the students' responses. This presentation will provide critical insights on the cultural and multilingual competence of international students and the principles they apply to of the day-to-day management of their societal and educational encounters.

Keywords: cultural inclusion, foreign students' education, intercultural competence, multilingualism, perceptions.

Introduction and Theory

This research was conducted at the University of Akron, Ohio. Our qualitative and quantitative analyses will be based on the responses of the students regarding their perceptions of themselves as international students and their new environment.

Through their responses, we argue how the development of intercultural awareness can be seen through Mill's model, as: a positive perception of difference and as an identification through diversity. Mill suggests that it is important when different ways of living exist, just as it is useful when different opinions are expressed, that different characters should be allowed enough latitude, provided that they do not harm one another. « Ce respect conjointement avec le respect de la diversité des façons de vivre permettra ?« à laisser chaque homme vivre comme bon lui semble plutôt qu'à le contraindre à vivre comme bon semble aux autres ». (Mill, 1990)[8]

As Byram emphasizes, the development of intercultural understanding, in an immersive environment, has to lead to a critical cultural awareness of oneself as a global citizen. "When such change takes hold and becomes incorporated into the person's sense of themselves, a step towards being an intercultural person has been taken" (Byram, 2008).

Questions

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[8] Let every man live as he sees fit rather than force him to live as he pleases others. (Our translation).

The questions that this research is trying to answer are the following:

1.   How do international students exercise their multilingualism in order to communicate effectively in different social and cultural contexts?

2.   How do foreign students adapt *a)* to the social and *b)* educational environment in the receiving country?

3.   How does the culture of international students influence their conceptions (perceptions)? of their new environment?

4.

Public and Methodology

The subject population of this research is international students who have lived in the USA one to four years. We targeted 100 responses after having distributed more than 450 questionnaires to international students at The University of Akron. For this article we present the analysis of the 60 questionnaires that have been analyzed with quantitative and qualitative analyses. In our sample population of 60 international students, we have identified 25 different national origins.

Our sample population includes more men than women: men, 81.4%, women, 18.6%. This may be attributed to the fact that most of the responses we received were from the College of Engineering (58.3%) and the College of Business Administration and fewer from the College of Arts and Sciences.

Analysis

Response to question 1

Within the framework of this research we examined how international students exercise their multilingualism in order to communicate effectively. Very often, students use their native language in everyday life, mostly for communicating with family and friends. They use both languages for taking notes in their classes and for writing in the social media.

- *I use my native language when I talk to my countrymates, search for specific information, try to understand something I don't understand in English.* 27 female, Turkmenistan 6 months in the US.

- *When I post status on Facebook or tweet sometime, I use both languages because I have friends from all over the world in my social media. Specially Shri Lankans and Americans* 24 female, Shri-Lanka, 12 months in the US.

- *English is important in my life. On the other hand, I try to balance English with Arabic because I don't want to get English over my Arabic.* 22 male, Saudi Arabia, 6 months in the US.

Response to question 2a:

Within the framework of this research we also examined how international students adapt to the social environment in the receiving country. More than 68% of the students consider that adaptation to their new environment is important.

With regard to what are the most important difficulties that students face, they are telling us about the challenges they had to face in their interactions with the new culture. They mostly argue (46.7%) that their biggest challenge is/was to adapt to the new social and educational environments and more precisely in making new friends so they may have a social life.

- *In my culture we are caring of the social life and our relationship with each other. However, in USA they don't have a social life like us. But sometimes it's headache I mean the social life.* 32 years old, from Jordanie, male, 2 years in the US.

- *How hard I try I cannot make an American my best friend because Americans have thoughts about Arabs.* 22 years old, from Saudi Arabia, male, mor than 3 years in the US.

- *Many people are resentful of foreigners and are pretty bad at hiding that resent. People are too busy showing off their worldly goods to find time for real family, friendship.* 32 years old, Turkish, more than 5 years in the US.

- *Hollywood paints a false picture of America. I though Americans are more friendly. Racism is a big issue.* 22 years old, male, Saudi Arabia, 16 months in the US in the US.

We must notice that although students face difficulties in their social life there is a period of time, when they first come to the US, that they have a generally positive attitude. Positive attitudes are easily adopted when you are starting a new life. International students begin with a high level of optimism known as the "honeymoon phase". The newly arrived students are excited to be in the US and find everything impressive, as the views of the students demonstrate hereunder.

- *The way people treated us, internationals when we arrived was amazing. No one was biased because of his/her origins.* 24 male, Romania 6 months

- *I am very happy to be here in U.S. I am gradually learning to speak fluent English but public speaking is still a drawback for me.* 25 male, Indian, 10 months in the US

- *Americans drink iced tea in cold winter, Americans say hello to stranger and always smile.* 26 female, China, 4 months in the US

- *In general, Ohio's residents are so friendly and barely you'll feel any kind of homesick. Also, they would offer more help once they know that you are new in the place. Rarely, facing an uncivilized person in Ohio.* 32 years old, male, Saudi Arabian, 1 year in the US

Response to question 2b:

We also examined how international students adapt to the educational environment of the receiving country. Students are satisfied with their educational environment and they don't seem to have major adaptation issues. They state:

- *My education system back in Bangladesh was mainly based on book and old theory, we learned a lot but hardly found a way to experiment and innovate. But here I find the culture of innovation and testing.* 29, Male Bagladesh, 1.5 years in the US.

- *Students especially in class are given more freedom to ask questions or give their input. The relationship between professor and student is more friendly and warm.* 24 years old, female, Indian, 1,5 years in the US.

- *Grades are not published publicly. Teaching methods are very different and I am loving the way teachers help students here.* 23 years old, female, Indian, 6 months in the US.

Response to question 3:

Our last question aims at understanding how the culture of each of these students influences his/her perception of the new environment. Individuals largely live in and through structures. These structures, and the rules by which they function, establish how much they value cultural diversity in society. The culture of international students expands their capacity for intercultural dialogue, as they become familiar with the culture of the receiving country.

- *It's totally difference because we mix our culture with our religion, it is part of our culture. American culture like separate religion from culture.* 22 years old, male, Saudi Arabia, 6 months in the US

- *The family relationship is totally different, many American student feel alone and depressed.* 26 years old, male, Venezuela, one year in the US

- *Being joint to the family even in very old ages is more popular in my native culture.* 26 years old, from China, 4 years in the US

- *I believe that people in my country are more friendly and receptive than most Americans. I also realized that in general, Americans do not tolerate personal contact while interacting with others, while in my country, personal contact is much more usual.* 24 years old, male, Brazilian, more than 6 months in the US

- *Here it is hard to have help when you need. In my country my whole family will stand with me when I have a problem.* 23 years old, from S Korea, male, 6 months in the US

- *Here is emphasized on individual, whereas the culture I came from is more collective or group.* 39 years old, from Timor Leste, female, 1 year in the US.

Conclusion

The responses of the students presented in this paper seem to confirm their aptitude in using diverse behavior strategies which enable them to adapt to cultural differences. Most of them state that it is very important to adapt however, each of them appears to have a different idea of what adapting to a new culture means. They are knowledgeable, reflective learners and intercultural persons.

They face many challenges in their educational, societal and cultural encounters and juggle two (or more) languages and two cultures (at least) while in the US. They apply their multicultural and multilingual skills along a fluid continuum between their cultural and linguistic repertoires in order to communicate effectively in different social, cultural and domain-specific contexts. Although language and culture of international students influence their action, it seems that they do so, not by providing the ultimate values

toward which action is oriented, but through the construction of new viewpoints and beliefs, from which students construct strategies that empower them to open up to new possibilities in their environments.

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Through parents' eyes. Parents' views on the educational experience of their children in Greece

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Abstract

This paper investigates the views of 10 refugee parents, regarding their children's education. Despite the fact that a large number of refugee children attend Greek schools, refugee parents' experiences and views have not been adequately studied. Semi-structured interviews were used to investigate language expectations, difficulties children faced and the support children receive from teachers and parents. Parents also expressed the changes they would like, so that their children would be facilitated in their schooling. Research findings suggested that parents were rather unfamiliar with the Greek educational system. They also considered education crucial for their children's progress and development, and claimed that they supported their boys' and girls' education, in multiple ways.

Keywords: refugee parents, refugee education, inclusive education.

Introduction and Literature Review

It has been stated (Dryden-Peterson, 2015) that refugee children experience frequent disruptions and limited access to schooling. Large-scale movements of refugees and migrants worldwide are a global phenomenon, and the matters connected to parents' involvement in children's schooling have been explored widely. Inclusion of refugee children cannot be realized without refugee parent engagement in their children's schooling. Many refugee families and refugee children have limited experiences of formal schooling and lack familiarity with educational policies and circumstances.

Relating to the educational structures and the host country's formal function, families may be unaware of their roles in the new school context and the current school expectations regarding engagement in children's schooling (Bendixsen & Danielsen, 2020). Refugee parents expect school help them overcome the emerged obstacles and follow their children's progress. According to (Sarikoudi & Apostolidou, 2020) they would like to inform them by utilizing their first language. They expect information concerning school's functions, their children's progress, and expectations from parents (Housel, 2020).

They hold high aspirations for their children's education; they want their children to overwhelm life barriers, integrate, ascend social, thrive and achieve better living conditions (Aria & Morillo- Campbell, 2008; Garcia Coll et al., 2002). They highlight and appreciate their children's education as they deem that enrollment and engagement in schools are crucial for their future and the development of their children's lives (Gibson & Hidalgo, 2009). Barboudaki et al. (2019) also display that parents raised in Syria believe that children's

registration in Greek schools is decisive for their future; they perceive education as an investment, although they may intend to relocate to another nation or even if they had prior adverse educational backgrounds.

In low-income nations, poverty, family structure and financial well-being influence schooling. Parents are presented gender stereotyped and underestimate their children's education (Rosenzweig & Schultz, 1982). Hattar-Pollara, (2019) declared that Syrian refugee girls in the Syrian Refugee Camp in Jordan have a restricted range of opportunities and direct their lives and behaviors within explicitly prescribed expectations formed by oppressive paternalistic norms. Furthermore, it is evident that prevailing stereotypical opinions concerning sectors most suitable for women and men, influence parents' attitudes and expectations concerning their children's career choices (Kalantari, 2012).

Family and school cooperation should be reciprocal. Parents need to feel confident to engage in school activities and be near to children and educators. To achieve comfort and participation, parents need cooperation with interpreters and staff trained in cultural competence and capable of speaking the parent's first language (Hands, 2013). Parents want to understand how the educational system works, express their needs and views. Thus, parents suggest the organization of meetings that will foster their participation in school activities and events (Bower & Griffin, 2011)

This article explores how refugee parents experience their children's schooling in Greece. Our focus is on raising public awareness about refugee parents' viewpoints of the Greek school, their involvement in their children's education and the significance of the school and family partnership by approaching these issues from the point of view of the vulnerable population. The present examination seeks to give voice to less powerful agents, refugee parents from Congo. At the time of the research, parents resided in a city in Central Greece.

Methodology

Qualitative research was seen as an opportunity for refugee parents to reveal their unique and diverse views and experiences and the complicated conditions they have encountered while engaging in their children's education in the previous host countries, as well as their perception of the Greek school context, which cannot be collected and analyzed in numerical data

The research questions investigated:

- children's previous educational experiences

- parents' current perceptions and expectations of Greek schools

- parents' suggested changes concerning education

- parents' aspirations for their children's future

This investigation aimed to study refugee parents' meanings utilizing semi-structured interviews as they combine flexibility, guidance, and adjustability.

Before proceeding to the implementation of the interviews, the investigator gave consent forms to the refugee parents to inform them of the research aims, and decrease power discrepancies, illustrating that they had the choice of whether to participate or not. Moreover, the informed consent form explicitly declared that the investigator would precisely preserve the confidentiality of the data and anonymity of those involved by using pseudonyms or symbols. Participants gave their permission to record the discussions and transcribe them for data to be collected and analyzed through the thematic analysis approach by identifying patterns and themes in meaning across the data.

The investigation's sample was parents from Congo whose first language is French. Most participants have been living in Greece for four or three years. Before arriving in the current residence, they had lived in camps in Samos, Larissa, Lesvos, and Thessaloniki. Most of the children of the participants had been attending, at the time of the study, primary and secondary school. Seven participants are female, and three had attended high school in their homeland. Most participants had received basic education in their homeland, while one attended university. Participants' past employment did not require a degree.

Findings and Discussion

They suggested that there should be French speaking staff. Three out of ten suggested the existence of cultural mediators to overcome any sociolinguistic difficulty. Furthermore, participants suggest organizing conferences engaging in school events and meetings and expressing their thoughts and opinions. They supported the organization of gatherings with the school, teachers and school staff where they would discuss issues such as the separation and discrimination of children. According to four parents' sayings, some teachers, ignored their children and could not respond to their specific needs. They also claimed that the material used was not culturally and age appropriate. Finally, there were eight participants who said that they needed to have role in their children' education, assisting them to obtain the host language.

Four parents said that their children had (formal and non-formal) interrupted education, some in their homeland, some in countries in between and some education in Greece (Dryden-Peterson, 2015). They all had a vague understanding of the Greek educational system and interaction with the school was limited. All parents seemed interested in their children's educational development and they wished for a positive connection with schools and teachers. Parents' deficiency of engagement in schooling signified a lack of appropriate information resources and not an absence of a will or inadequate cognitive aspirations. Furthermore, most of the participants have limited education that complicates their comprehension of the Greek educational system functions.

Concerning refugee parents' expectations from school, all parents wanted the Greek school to help them face the emerged challenges and follow their children's progress. 4 out of 10 participants expect the translation of reports about the development of children's behaviour and performance in school (Sarikoudi & Apostolidou, 2020). Also, parents expect the organization of meetings between teachers and parents that will encourage their participation in school events (Bower & Griffin, 2011).

Concerning parental aspirations, findings in this research revealed that refugee parents think highly of their children's schooling as a stepping stone for their development and future. These findings are congruent

with the literature that parents hold high aspirations for their children's education (Aria & Morillo- Campbell, 2008; Garcia Coll et al., 2002). Regardless of most participants' mediocre education, they highlight and appreciate their children's education, as they deem that enrollment in schools is decisive for their children's evolution (Gibson & Hidalgo, 2009). They described education as an investment and a tool to achieve social integration (Barboudaki et al., 2019).

Older research, Rosenzweig & Schultz (1982), had indicated that parents underestimated children's education, and they thought education was necessary for their sons and not their daughters. In the research of Hattar-Pollara (2019), who worked with Syrian refugee parents in Jordan, parents demonstrated behaviors within explicitly prescribed expectations formed by oppressive paternalistic norms. On the contrary, this study indicated that all participants, mothers and fathers, encouraged their children's school enrollment and participation regardless of gender. All families had the same ambitions for their sons and daughters.

There is no gender segregation in domains such as education and studies; however, some parents maintain traditional beliefs about fields such as jobs and occupational decisions. It is evident that some parents understand and internalize cultural conceptions concerning gender and career-relevant choices, and this internalization influences behaviour. Societal perspectives influence the kind of employment that parents want for their sons and their daughters (Kalantari, 2012). These viewpoints are based on prevailing stereotypical opinions concerning sectors most suitable for women. Nowadays, most people encourage women's entrance and success in all educational and economic opportunities; they simultaneously expect men and women to pursue traditionally male and female jobs. However, there are participants whose opinions are not consistent with the previous results, and who do not internalize and adopt the opinion that males are more skilled than females in several activities and professions. Some parents aspire their daughters to pursue careers such as doctors and lawyers.

Four parents suggested that the existence interpreters and specialized staff for refugee students that would help them and their children overpass their challenges. They would like to provide them with information written in their first language and cooperate with interpreters and staff capable of speaking their parents' mother tongue or English to be able to communicate more easily with them (Housel, 2020; Hands, 2013).

Conclusion

Although participants noted that they are not familiar with the Greek educational system and encountered various difficulties and challenges, parents did not seem to face severe behaviors by the school staff and the society in which they lived. Nevertheless, their refugee position, created multiple problems. Parents were not actively involved in their children's education. However, they wanted to assist their children's engagement in school. Participants had diverse perceptions concerning parental roles, but they all agreed that parent involvement in children's education was decisive for social and academic success.

Moreover, policymakers have to be aware of the context of refugee families' encounters, diverse needs and strengths in order to proceed to the creation of programs and protocols that will improve refugee family and

school cooperation. Besides developing social opportunities and personal skills of parents, all stakeholders have to try to involve them in ways based on their experiences. Failing to do this will keep refugee families in assimilative and precarious contexts that continue to develop and support the power injustices and inequalities they encounter.

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Empowering resilience of vulnerable students with serious health problems during the Covid-19 pandemic: The case of the online school of the Regional Directorate of Education of Attica

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Abstract

Online schools were established worldwide during the pandemic to cover the need for delivering high-quality education. This paper focuses on a specific online school for vulnerable students, laying emphasis on the methods used by the school's teachers to empower the resilience of their students, by developing authentic relationships with the students and by creating a rich learning environment. Appropriate interviews were used to assess the impact of the learning process on the vulnerable students' resilience. According to the research findings, students' resilience appeared to be positively correlated to their academic achievement.

Keywords: online school, vulnerable students, resilience, academic performance.

Introduction

Online schools were established worldwide during the Covid-19 pandemic (Sumadi et al., 2022; Syam & Achmad, 2022; Nae, 2020). However, there is no substantial reference to studies related to the establishment of an online school for vulnerable students in literature. Vulnerable students are deemed to be those who face serious health problems. It is important to underline that according to a specific study, vulnerable students with learning disabilities are at risk, dealing with negative feelings such as depression and anxiety (Brunelle et al., 2020). Therefore, the issue of empowering the resilience of vulnerable students is paramount.

Resilience has been defined as the ability of positive adaptation or adjustment, at the time of adversity (Sanderson & Brewer, 2017). Resilience denotes gaining strength from disaster. An important study relates resilience to stability, viability and development (Masten, 2012). From another perspective, resilience is also defined as the absence of vulnerability (Sturgeon & Zautra, 2013). It is essential to point out that a specific study connects resilience to a reduction in the effect of stress (Podina, 2017). Empowering resilience is a process characterized by the development of specific emotional qualities such as empathy and self-efficacy (Stanciu, 2021). Therefore, the best way to empower students' resilience is to create a learning environment in the context of which students could develop the aforementioned traits. In that spirit, the online school, established under the auspices of the Regional Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education of Attica, aimed at investing in the "pedagogy of empathy" to help vulnerable students develop the requisite skills. In detail, the learning process was implemented on the base of a holistic pedagogical approach, the objective of which is centered on setting socio-emotional targets (Taylor et al., 2020). Teachers endeavored to aid students

to recognize, express and manage their emotions. Up-to date educational practices based on the blended learning model were employed to support the "pedagogy of empathy" in the online school. It is also important to underline that vulnerable teachers were appointed to teach in the online school with a view to developing genuine relationships with vulnerable students.

The research interest is directed into examining the effect of the "pedagogy of empathy" implementation on the students' resilience and into analyzing the effect of the strength gained on the students' academic achievement.

Method and Procedure

The online school population was constituted by 1096 students and 560 teachers. Open interviews were used to assess the success of the entire venture. Fifteen (50) vulnerable teachers and (10) vulnerable students were selected to participate in the open interviews. The sample was selected in light of specific criteria such as gender and educational level in order to be representative. An empirical method was used to carry out the interview process. This method was developed in a sequence of steps:

1. Recording the interviews;
2. Deciphering the content;
3. Eliciting the significant information;

It is important to clarify that the significant information was deemed to be any item of information related to the students' resilience.

Analysis of Results

The results include the significant information elicited from the interviews. The indicative teachers and students' comments that contain the respective significant information are listed below:

A. Indicative Teachers' comments:

- *T1: " Since I also belong to the high-risk groups, I felt an inner urge to help them. We tried together and managed to stand up and stay safe".*
- *T2: "There was emotional contact with my students. Our warm relationship has had a positive effect on students' learning and performance."*
- *T3: "All the students could study and most of them will succeed in the Panhellenic Examinations and will enter the university".*
- *T4: "As students and teachers we understand that life is not only about happy moments, that pain and suffering are part of life. But we managed to withstand the difficulties".*
- *T5: "I was asking these guys to do something more, not to give up. The power of empathy between us triggered the children to greater effort and success".*
- *T6: "For me…. I felt I had one thing in common with the students … we all shared health issues …that's why we should "connect" in a different way".*

In the light of the indicative teachers' comments, we can deduce that teachers established genuine relationships with students, they helped students withstand the difficulties, they urged students not to give up trying and they shared their health issues in order to aid the vulnerable students to deal with their own health problems.

B. Indicative Students' comments:

- *S1 (high school student): "The Online School supported me to graduate high school and attend all the subjects of the last grade. I had perfect relationships with all the teachers, they understood my personal issues and the improvement in my performance during the year is due to them alone.* Although our communication was done through digital tools, I felt that they were always by my side. The digital school gave me the strength to complete my preparation for the Panhellenic Examinations and to achieve my dream "*

  (the student showed remarkable success and was admitted to the university a little later).

- *S2 (High school student): " There was something in common with our teachers, there was compassion. We were motivated with love and that helped me greatly increase my performance".*

- *S3 (primary school student): "This year I had a unique school experience. At first my feelings were strange, because we were all strangers to each other both the students and teachers. But very quickly I made friends with the children and we all became a very nice group ".*

- *S4 (primary school student): "I really liked the Online School. My teacher was warm and patient. She helped me with my personal health problems. He told me that we all make mistakes and that gave me strength, that no one succeeds without effort and I took courage, that life does not stop and we must move forward. My classmates and I became a nice group. I saw that other classmates have similar problems. When I was in the hospital, I looked forward to meeting my friends. The team gave me love. We all became friends and we continue to talk to each other".*

The indicative students' comments indicated that students were supported by their teachers, they were motivated with love to speed up (in terms of their study pace), they were really connected with their teachers and their classmates and they managed to gain strength through the safe learning environment supported by the use of digital media.

Discussion

The indicative comments of students and teachers indicated that the "pedagogy of empathy" worked well in the online school. It is important to underline that the benefits of the pedagogy of empathy have been highlighted in some studies (Scorgie, 2010; Carlson & Dobson, 2020). In that light, the practice of investing in the socio-emotional skills of students, rather than simply setting cognitive targets achieved the intended result. It is essential to lay emphasis on the fact that a couple of studies stress the socio-emotional skills' avail (Mondi et al., 2021; Váradi, 2022). In the context of the "pedagogy of empathy" teachers were really connected with their students, sharing their own experiences in dealing with their own health problems, leading to students'

resilience (gaining strength). It is vital to denote that the benefits of developing authentic relationships with students is also highlighted in literature (Cranton, 2006; Stipek, 2006).

In parallel, students' resilience led to an increase in their engagement which subsequently resulted in high academic achievement (a lot of students entered University). It is important to emphasize on the fact that some studies associate students' resilience with high academic performance (Mwangi et al., 2015; Sarwar et al., 2010; Kumi, 2020; Hammermeister et al., 2020).

Conclusion

This paper presented an online school for vulnerable students, the learning process of which was implemented in the context of the "pedagogy of empathy", focusing on the need to invest in the socio-emotional skills of students. The paper also laid emphasis on the positive effect of the authentic teacher-student relationship on student resilience. Finally, the paper indicated that creating a safe environment for vulnerable students in which their resilience is empowered could result in high academic achievement. Though, it is important to clarify that these findings derive from an empirical study and cannot be easily generalized. However, the successful online school venture could pave the way for further scientific output.

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European QuaMMELOT Programme: An ethnomathematical approach to refugee education

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been an increase in students with a refugee background who attend European Schools. Multicultural classes should deal with the issue of teaching in a non-native speakers' language. This paper takes up the issue of Mathematics' instruction in multicultural classes demonstrating an ethnomathematical approach employed in terms of a European Erasmus program. Teachers who participated in the respective program were trained in order to be equipped to apply the ethnomathematical approach in their classes. The findings from the teachers' report showed that the employment of such educational practice increased students' cooperation and interaction and enhanced their conceptual understanding.

Keywords: Ethnomathematics, mathematical multimodality, refugee students.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increase in refugee students who attend European Schools. However, European educational systems rely almost exclusively on the language experiences of native students, brushing aside the need for dealing with language barriers (Cerna, 2019). A specific study indicates that teaching Mathematics in students' mother-tongue increases their comprehension of Mathematical concepts (Bednorz & Kleine, 2019). This is a great challenge given that Mathematics includes a variety of symbols, figures, tables and graphs and its teaching requires the employment of a multimodal approach with ethnomathematical connections. The paper focuses on the multimodal ethnomathematical approach which was used in terms of the European Erasmus + QuaMMELOT programme. The paper demonstrates this approach in the context of the overall ethnomathematical philosophy. In parallel, the paper lays emphasis on the application of the ethnomathematical approach in multicultural classes, pointing out that the intrinsic multimodality of Mathematics combined with an ethnomathematical approach could be deemed to increase student-teacher interaction and to enhance students' conceptual understanding, overcoming the language barriers.

Ethnomathematics

The term "Ethnomathematics" denotes that Mathematics is not independent of culture. In that sense, every cultural group employs its own practices, constructs its own knowledge and develops its own mathematical concepts in order to combine the generic Mathematics multimodality with its own language experiences (Bishop, 1994; D' Ambrosio, 2001; Anderson & Pence, 2013, Presmeg, 1998; Banks & Banks, 1995; Civil et al., 2019).

Ethnomathematics stands in contrast to school or academic Mathematics. In general, School functions as

a mechanism for promoting the dominant culture and values of the community. Therefore, students, regardless of whether they belong to the dominant culture or not, experience a cultural conflict when they engage into Mathematics activities (Bishop, 1994; D' Ambrosio, 2001). In addition, the Mathematics multimodality lies in the fact that various semiotic means are incorporated into its teaching (Jewitt et al., 2016). The Mathematics multimodality affects the students' comprehension of Mathematical concepts. Figure 1 illustrates the various types of representations that are connected to Mathematics multimodality.it is important to underline that students' academic performance is dependent on the extent of decoding these representations in different languages (O'Halloran et al., 2019; Prediger, Clarkson & Bose, 2016).
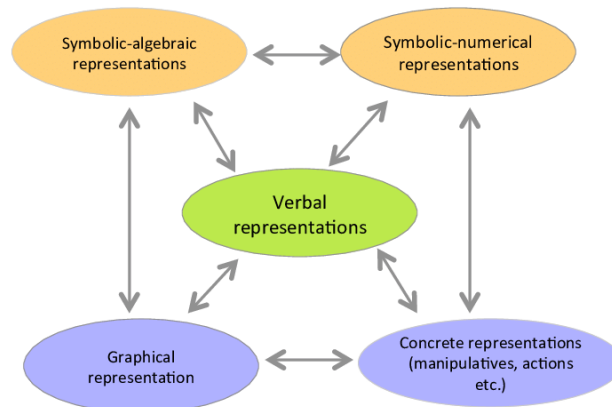
Figure 1. *Transitions between different representations (Prediger, Clarkson, & Bose, 2016).*

Ethnomathematical approaches offer refugee students a great degree of freedom to achieve the aforementioned decoding. Their effort is supported by their teachers who endorse the ethnomathematical philosophy and combine mathematical concepts with refugee students' language experiences.

Literature Review

Some studies stress the benefits of the ethnomathematical approaches, indicating that the use of such educational practices improves students' problem-solving ability and makes students more responsible for their own learning (Widada et al., 2019; Mariani & Kurniati, 2021). An important study deals with the issue of employing ethnomathematical approaches to refugees, pointing out that a basic ingredient to the success of this venture is self-critique. That quality leads to the recognition of different cultural groups. The same study indicates that the use of an ethnomathematical approach which is based on dignity and recognition could allow refugees students to develop their own interaction with their peers and their teachers (Appelbaum & Stathopoulou, 2016).

Method and research objective

Our research is directed into examining the application of the ethnomathematical approach in multicultural classes. In detail, the research objective is centered on assessing the success of applying the ethnomathematical approach in overcoming language barriers. To this end, teachers who were assigned to employ such approach in

their classes were appropriately trained. A specific training course on MOODLE LMS served the aforementioned purpose. After implementing an ethnomathematical teaching, teachers were obliged to upload a report on Moodle, summarizing the way they applied the underlying approach focusing on its contribution to overcoming language difficulties. 80 Secondary Education teachers participated in this research. Our method was based on analyzing the reports in order to come up with important findings in regard to the success of the overall venture. Our technique relied on eliciting the significant information from the reports. It is also essential to clarify that no quantitative research was carried out to examine the relationship between ethnomathematical teaching and language barriers' overcoming.

Results

Analyzing reports in terms of the significant information helped us gain perspective on things. The reports' data indicated the success of the ethnomathematical teaching. In detail, Mathematical representations were decoded in refugees' languages, the Mathematics multimodality was appropriately exploited and refugees were allowed to develop their own conceptual thinking (Block, 2014). In parallel, mathematical concepts were connected to the refugees' cultural experiences. The respective teaching approach resulted in greater cooperation between teachers and students and in more constructive interaction among students. In addition, experimental learning and deep conceptual understanding were also achieved.

Discussion

The findings from the reports showed that ethnomathematical teaching can be implemented by appropriately exploiting Mathematics multimodality and by enhancing students' conceptual thinking. This finding is in line with some studies (Jewitt et al., 2016; O'Halloran et al., 2019; Prediger et al., 2016). The success of the entire venture lied in the fact that teachers tried to connect Mathematical concepts to refugees' cultural experiences. Such connection is also highlighted in some studies (Bishop, 1994; D' Ambrosio, 2001; Anderson & Pence, 2013, Presmeg, 1998; Banks & Banks, 1995; Parker, et al., 2016); Civil et al., 2019). The employment of the ethnomathematical approach appeared to increase cooperation and interaction, a finding that is also underlined in an important study. The employment of the ethnomathematical approach appeared to increase cooperation and interaction, a finding that is also underlined in an important study (Appelbaum & Stathopoulou, 2016).

However, there is no significant information about the way the language barriers were overcome by implementing ethnomathematical teaching. Though, the success of the entire venture indicates that the language barriers didn't negatively affect the learning process. However, students' satisfaction should be assessed and students' comments should be analyzed to reinforce the argument that ethnomathematical teaching is suitable for instructing Mathematics in multicultural classes.

Conclusion

The paper indicates that an ethnomathematical approach could be used to achieve inclusive learning in

multicultural classes. The paper also points out that such an approach could increase the degree of students' cooperation and interaction. In parallel, ethnomathematical teaching could enhance students' conceptual understanding.

Nevertheless, a more quantitative research should be conducted to analyze students' satisfaction and to examine the role of ethnomathematical teaching in students' performance. Quantitative data could also be used to fully indicate the contribution of ethnomathematics to overcoming language barriers. Our team is currently working on analyzing quantitative data elicited from the students' activities in order to assess the contribution of Ethnomathematics to the refugees' academic achievement.

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Religious freedom in Greek school in the context of human rights. Opinions of teachers in primary education

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Abstract

Educational policy on religious education in Greece raises human rights issues, as religious freedom is rarely adequately protected in school. A survey was conducted on 1271 teachers, in order to investigate the views of primary school teachers on students' religious freedom and diversity in Greek schools. The results showed that teachers defend the religious freedom of their students as an element of democracy, as well as their right to choose their own prayer (Lytsiousi, 2021). However, a percentage of teachers consider it important that students learn about the majority religion at school. It becomes obvious that the modern multicultural school must ensure the religious freedom of all students through an educational policy that respects human rights.

Keywords: religious freedom, human rights, religious education.

Religious freedom and human rights

Religious freedom can be defined as the inherent right of an individual to worship or not to worship in public or in private according to his or her conscience, beliefs or preferences, to profess and propagate his or her faith, to change his or her religion - all without hindrance, harassment or discrimination (Wood, 2004, p. 739). Religious freedom prevents the cultural majority from using the power of the state to impose their beliefs on others. This protects everyone-religious and non-religious alike-from the government becoming so powerful that it can tell people what to think and how to act.

Religious freedom, in its legal dimension, has a broad scope and is linked to freedoms of thought and conscience. Freedom of conscience means that everyone can have what they want or nothing at all, change their beliefs at any time, proclaim and disseminate them using their individual rights or conceal them.

The European Court of Justice has stressed that religious freedom is one of the foundations of a "democratic society" within the meaning of the Convention. Pluralism, which is inextricably linked to a democratic society, depends on religious freedom. Over the years, the Court has developed a rich jurisprudence on religious freedom.

Religious freedom and education

Religious freedom links religious education and human rights. However, in public schools in many nations around the world it is ignored and children are not protected. Roux (2010) notes the particular importance of

religious freedoms as a component of classroom practice and the emphasis teachers place on the link between human rights and religion.

Greece today is a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. However, it does not meet the requirements of religious freedom in education, resulting in a failure to ensure the religious rights of all children (Russo, 2015).

Article 13(1) of the Constitution establishes the inviolability of religious conscience as a necessary consequence of respect for the dignity of the human person, enshrined in Article 2(1) of the Constitution. However, the Greek State's policy on religious education requires all pupils on a compulsory basis to be taught the 'authentic tradition of the Orthodox Church' (Article 1(1)).

Religious practices, such as compulsory morning prayer and church services, undermine the religious freedom of students and intensify the debate on the balance between the public and private dimensions of religion.

Of course, according to the article on religious freedom, the right of heterodox and irreligious persons to not attend religious education classes and to not participate in morning prayer and church services is recognized with a declaration of the student's parents' wish (Alivizatos, 1999). However, the right to exemption is not a sufficient procedure for respecting religious diversity and freedom.

The issue of religious freedom, although institutionally and constitutionally guaranteed, presents certain difficulties, which are due to Article 3 of the Constitution on the prevailing religion. Particularly in schools, where the purpose of education is defined as, inter alia, the "development of religious awareness" (Article 16(2)), it is obvious that it must be provided in a way that does not infringe on the religious freedom of pupils.

In recent years there have been some changes to the religious education curriculum, which have transformed it into an interfaith education subject, although the approach is largely confessional. Nevertheless, compulsory and mono-confessional religious education violates religious freedom in education (Russo, 2015).

Research

A survey was conducted, in the context of doctoral thesis, during the school years 2016-2018 on a sample of 1,271 teachers, kindergarten teachers and students of pedagogical departments about their views in relation to the management of religious diversity and school prayer (Lytsiousi, 2021). The questionnaire contained specific questions in order to capture the views of teachers on religious freedom and on human rights in general.
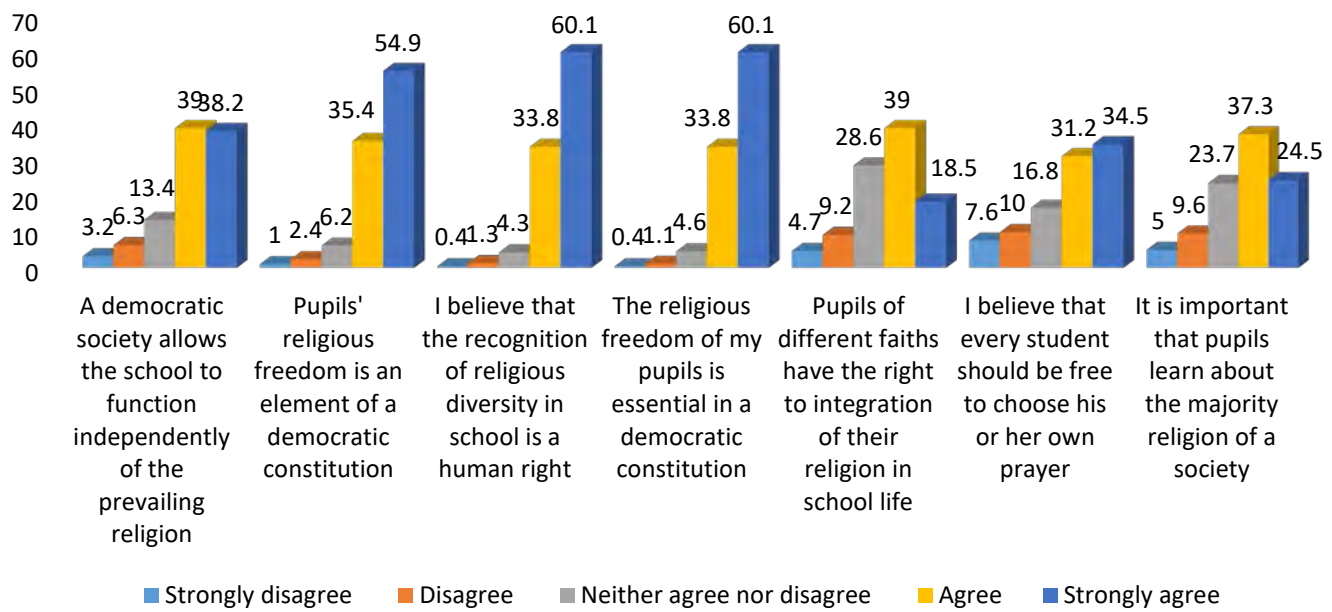
The table above shows that teachers express the highest degree of agreement in third question which refer to the recognition of religious diversity in school as a human right (94%) and in fourth question which refer to the religious freedom of pupils as essential in a democratic constitution (93,9%). High rates of agreement are also observed in the question referred to pupils' religious freedom as an element of a democratic constitution (90,3%). However, teachers seem to be undecided about the integration of pupils' religions into school life (28,6%). Nevertheless, they disagree with student's free choice of prayer (17,6%), but they consider the religious freedom of their pupils to be non-negotiable in the context of human rights. However, they are reluctant to consent to the integration of their pupils' religions in the school and even more to the choice of prayer by the pupils themselves.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. A democratic society allows the school to function independently of the prevailing religion	4.02	1.025
2. Pupils' religious freedom is an element of a democratic constitution	4.40	.79
3. I believe that the recognition of religious diversity in school is a human right	4.52	.67
4. The religious freedom of my pupils is essential in a democratic constitution	4.52	.67
5. Pupils of different faiths have the right to integration of their religion in school life	3.57	1.04
6. I believe that every student should be free to choose his or her own prayer	3.74	1.23
7. It is important that pupils learn about the majority religion of a society	3.66	1.09

The mean and standard deviation also provide some useful information about teachers' views. The mean is higher for questions on religious freedom and lower for those on the predominant religion and the inclusion of other religions in the school. As for the standard deviation, the highest value is observed in the question referring to the free choice of prayer.

Cross-tabulations of age-related variables lead us to conclude that pedagogical students and younger teachers recognize the right of their heterodox students to integrate their religion in school and defend the free choice of prayer by students. Older teachers rather disagree. Certainly, in an educational system where Christian Orthodox prayer is compulsory, it is difficult to accept the student's free choice of prayer. Students and younger teachers, having grown up in a multicultural society and having been taught to approach students from different cultural backgrounds through an intercultural perspective, are more open to issues of religious diversity.

In terms of teacher specialization, kindergarten teachers express a higher average compared to teachers on the question on whether heterodox pupils have the right to integrate their religion into school life. There is a tendency for teachers to show greater commitment to the traditional role of the school, while kindergarten teachers seem to place greater emphasis on respecting children's rights. However, both agree that it is important for pupils to learn about the majority religion of a society, which shows the influence of the existing institutional framework governing religious education.

In terms of years of service, students and teachers with 0-5 years of service are more accepting of the presence of other religions in school. In terms of gender, men seem more conservative on the issue of prayer than women.

Discussion

The teachers in this study support the principles of human rights. Thus, they defend students' religious freedom as a key element of a democratic constitution. Moreover, they argue that the recognition of religious diversity in school is a human right. Many teachers, especially younger teachers, kindergarten teachers and students, believe that heterodox pupils have the right to integrate their religion into school life. This would be a radical change for our country's education policy. However, it is noteworthy that a significant percentage of teachers chose not to take a positive or negative position, which may indicate that they do not want to state their opinion or that they have not made up their minds on this issue.

A survey conducted by Stratoudaki (2005) among students showed that they consider the free choice of religion as a building block of democracy. In a study by Vassiliadis, Tsioumi and Kyridis (2013) of teachers on the influence of dominant ideology - which includes dominant religion - on teachers' perceptions and practices of the 'Other', it was found that there is a close relationship between teachers' perceptions and their practices and attitudes.

Modern multicultural societies need a school that ensures the religious freedom of its students and cultivates democratic citizenship by contributing to social cohesion. It becomes clear that these are the

consequences of the practices of the Greek school for religious diversity, but also for Human Rights in general. Moreover, the research highlights the current conflict and human rights dilemmas.

Conclusions

A modern democracy must guarantee the religious freedom of its citizens, because a key element of modern democracy is its foundation on rights such as religious freedom and the free development of human personality (Lytsiousi, 2021, p. 313).

As far as educational policy is concerned, it is fundamental to combat discrimination on the grounds of religion and to defend respect for human rights and freedom of religious conscience. Particularly today, rapid and profound changes in the composition of societies create an urgent need for education to include heterodox, irreligious, irreligious, atheist and agnostic people. We must therefore talk not only about religious freedom, but also about freedom of belief and spiritual freedom.

The right to education and religious freedom is a key priority for educational leaders, legislators and policy makers alike, because today's children will be the next generation. It is therefore of major importance to foster tolerance towards people whose beliefs differ, so that all can live in harmony in their societies.

Teachers in particular should develop attitudes and behaviors that will help to build and defend a culture of human rights in society. A major issue emerges from this research and it is the position of teachers on issues related to religious freedom.

As far as the content of the religious education course is concerned, it must be in line with the spirit of interfaith education and international conventions concerning religious freedom. Religious education includes the rights of citizens, the relationship between church and state and human rights. The role of religion in modern society is closely linked to the process of secularization.

The recognition of human rights is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. Their disregard has led to acts of barbarity, so it is very important that they are protected by a legal regime.

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Values lived during and after the study abroad experience

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Abstract

This paper intends to present some data of a research on student mobility of Italian pupils who went abroad with the Intercultura program. We will focus particularly on values and moral re-thinking during the abroad period, and after a period of time has passed since returning home. This research is still a work in progress and adopts Grounded Theory as a methodological approach. The research has already developed two core categories, which allowed us to gain some intercultural considerations. The same categories will be useful for the building of the emerging theory in the final step of the research.

Keywords: exchange students, values, intercultural education, experience, situational meaning.

Introduction

In Italian educational literature, the word value is a rather complicated word. Such complexity is linked to the history of pedagogy and to those different scientific disciplines that, over time, have been responsible for developing the idea of "Educational Sciences". In addition to subjective preferences, values may also be culturally-historical determinations (meaning systems or value frameworks). Therefore, conducting a value research study is not an easy undertaking. Researching intercultural education, a field where different cultural frameworks and values have different meanings, is even more challenging. Currently, I am working on a research project, funded by the Intercultura Foundation, called "Lived and values experiences after studying abroad. Aspects of interiority that change one's way of thinking and acting". It investigates the lived values of young returnees with the Intercultura Association programme during their study period abroad and upon their return to Italy.

From the *sensitizing concept* to *theoretical sampling*

As part of my previous researches, I examined the construct of competence, concluding that more is needed to explain the complexity and entirety of the educational process. Despite not being opposed to competence, I believe the standard trilogy of knowledge, skills, and attitude may require a fourth element, which has been added in recent years: values. In terms of measurement and centrality to action, values are different from attitudes (Barrett, 2020). As I wish to move 'beyond competence' (Chiosso, 2018; Milani, 2020), rather than relying upon this theoretical framework, I would prefer to focus on values that are rooted in inner personality rather than competence constructions, mainly because Fondazione Intercultura has already done quite a bit of

research on it (the most recent being Baiutti, 2019; Baiutti, Deardorff, & Ruffino, 2021). This has been the starting point of my research, or more accurately the 'sensitizing concept', the first step of the grounded theory method (Tarozzi, 2020), the methodological approach employed in this research. There is certainly a risk of not being able to trace the epistemological boundaries of educational research, but this is also a challenge of transdisciplinarity.

Before formulating the research questions, there were some steps we needed to take to improve the understanding of the core of this research. They are as follows:

1. Six interviews with students who had spent a study period abroad but not with the Interculture Program;

2. Gathering of data on the Intercultura Association and its intercultural educational project;

3. Six interviews with Intercultura volunteers who are involved in pre-departure training for students.

Once these three steps were accomplished, I formulated the following two research questions:

1. Which elements of the experience abroad affect the returnee's way of thinking and acting?

2. After at least one year upon their return to Italy, what practices or experiences support the returnee's "moral rethinking" to provide newly lived values or to confirm them?

The interviews, then, began following the idea of the theoretical sampling. The first sampling involved 21 returnees, while the second involved 11 returnees. For data collection, we employed the semi-structured interview, and for data coding the MaxQDA software. Once I arrived at the two core categories, I considered the theoretical sampling finished.

From main categories to *core* categories

During the analysis of the returnee interviews, a first common element is the perception of the new context upon arrival abroad. Within the intercultural experience, space is not a neutral factor, because the space is situational. In fact the intentionality of the person attributes distance and direction to things and other people. The personal project of life gives relevance and meaning to the context. The context returnees find upon their return to Italy is also a key factor. A returnee often feels that time has stood still in his country of origin, especially when contrasted with the speed at which his life has changed. In comparing the two contexts, the one abroad and the one at home, the values aspects that emerged were mostly related to forms of discrimination, such as skin colour, social class, or gender.

Family is another relevant context. Being a value in itself, especially in Italian culture, family is one of the most mentioned values by returnees during the interview. When it comes to daily-life questions, such as family roles, religion, and tradition, and not major ethical issues, the host family is the first place to compare values. In this context, a comparison is always made within a family relationship, which has often been described as affectionate or no less than respectful. Once the student becomes more fluent in the target language, the family also becomes a place to discuss ethical issues.

While the relationship between returnees and their peers, either inside or outside of school, is a fascinating element, apart from a few school debates about ethical aspects, it is irrelevant to the topic at hand.

Often, the only value considered is that of friendship itself and the ways in which it is expressed: friendships are always characterized by a need for acceptance and reconciliation. Upon return, on the other hand, friendship was one of the values most discussed and suffered by returnees, as many friendships were lost. The returnees felt more mature than their peers who stayed in Italy, and their value structure led them to make different choices than those who remained in Italy.

In conclusion, in each "relational space" discussed, returnees became aware of different social expectations and roles. This caused a moral rethinking, sometimes rewarding the host culture, other times reconsidering in a positive way some negative clichés about Italy.

Relational spaces are a key topic for returnees' ethical rethinking, but time plays an equally significant role: the chronology of the experience explains the density of internalization. Initially, for example, returnees are almost over-exposed to the host family and host culture's values. It is only with time and a greater mastery of the language that they will be able to understand some of the stimuli around them. Some scholars speak of an initial intercultural shock (Roverselli & Paolone, 2013), while others of increased levels of adaptation stress (Demes & Geeraert, 2015).

There is not just a chronological time, but also a time for reflection, a 'biographical' time that links the past to the present, while also looking to the future. It is a time of crises, questions, desires, and rethinking. One returnee even described the intercultural experience as "positive trauma".

We are here facing once a critical issue: considering that adolescence is an age of reflection, how much is this moral rethinking linked to it, and how much to the intercultural experience?

This critical question had already come up after the first theoretical sampling, when I shared my results with a psychology scholar. In the second theoretical sampling, this question was also addressed to the returnees, who spoke of a "mix" of the two, specifying, however, how the intercultural element was more significant. As a way of explaining this, the returnees compared their experience of the Intercultura Programme with that of Erasmus, finding that Erasmus had a lower level of moral rethinking and inter-values comparison.

In conclusion, I consider the concept of time as an element in the analysis of the moral rethinking of returning individuals, according to the standard division between *chronos*, as linear time, and *kairòs*, as meaning and temporal quality. The junction point between the two main categories of time of awareness and relational spaces leads us to the first core category of this research. In this interpretation, a lived value is viewed as a dimension of situational meaning.

Adopting the same analysis and coding system, I then dived into the second research question. In relation to the first one, I focused on the situational dimension of value that can be grasped through the concept of experience. Playing with the Latin etymology of the word "experire", I linked the first research question to the second. *Experire,* from *periculum,* indicates a risk, or rather a challenge, which may not always be positive. The year abroad is a challenge. During this time, the returnee develops moral habits for handling new experiences. The most recurring habits are autonomy and self-worth, choosing friends, teamwork, open-mindedness, and courage.

However, the word *experire* also means to prove or to deal with something. Thus I have found that some experiences, after some years after returning to Italy, have strengthened the moral rethinking that took place during their experience abroad: Erasmus or other experiences of cultural exchange, volunteering with Intercultura and social volunteering, involvement in social events, political commitment.

Another aspect addressed in the research was the current values of returnees. I would like to report that not all returnees have the same concept of values. They can be divided into five categories:

1. Values as a personal characteristic;
2. Values as cultural elements;
3. Values as categories and principles linked to meaning dimension;
4. Values as experience-derived elements;
5. Values as reasons to act.

We can thus appreciate how the polysemy of the term value is not only found in the educational literature, but also in actual life, among people. Returnees were not presented with a value list during the interview, but I can report that the most mentioned values were: family, respect, equality, friendship, solidarity, citizenship of the world.

Intercultural considerations

The first consideration concerns the close link between values and existential meaning. Each of us has our own values. Values are something that we develop, they shape one's interiority. They are meaningful for a person's actions insofar as they give consciousness to experience.

The second consideration concerns intercultural encounters. In contrast to multicultural reductionism, research has shown that authentic cross-cultural exchange only occurs when it is based on the inner diversity of each individual. If clothing, food, and traditions do not provoke critical reflection, then the intercultural encounter remains superficial. An intercultural encounter, or even an intercultural conflict, always leaves a "biographical" mark. This does not mean that an intercultural encounter must necessarily alter one's own hierarchy of values. However, it must lead to an ethical rethinking if it concerns social value aspects, or to a moral rethinking if it concerns personal moral rethinking.

Last but not least, referring to the reasons for this study, I believe the concept of *experience* could serve as a link between the theoretical element of my study and the concept of intercultural competence. According to Loro (2012, p.47), an experience is a form of knowledge that can gradually reach deeper levels of understanding. As we progress from phenomenal and cognitive experience to existential experience, we become aware that we understand something we did not know before. This opens up a new and meaningful relationship with reality.

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"Refugees in the Amphitheatre": Co-educating student teachers and peer refugees

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Abstract

A significant number of studies highlight the need to develop the intercultural competence of prospective teachers in order to be able to manage the cultural diversity of classrooms according to the principles of intercultural education. Similarly, many studies have shown that intercultural competence develops more effectively through acquaintance and interaction with the different 'other' rather than through general references to respect for diversity or the presentation of texts that merely describe the life of the 'other'. At the same time, in the case of Greece, research has shown that among teachers there are many who support the theories of cultural deficit, expressing the view that Greek culture is superior to other cultures. After identifying similar perceptions among students of a Greek pedagogical university department, it was decided to carry out an intervention with the aim of developing reflection on nationalist perceptions, prejudices and stereotypes and on the other hand the cultivation of empathy and intercultural competence. To achieve this goal, a group of young refugees living in a hospitality facility in the same city where the University is located were invited to participate in the course. The group of young refugees participated in the whole semester course on an equal footing with the students, having the support of a suitable interpreter. The course included both discussions on the refugee and immigrant experience, the concept of homeland, xenophobia, social exclusion, as well as intercultural actions involving mixed groups of students and refugees. The research conducted on the students with focus groups interviews after the completion of the twelve three-hour meetings that took place within the course showed transformations in their perceptions regarding stereotypes and prejudices related to national identity, issues of cultural hierarchy and the fear of altering the dominant ethnic culture.

Keywords: refugees, prospective teachers, intercultural education, co-education**.**

Introduction

Although the acquisition of intercultural competence is one of the main goals of prospective teachers' education, international research (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002, Gay, 2010) highlights that a significant number of teachers continue to discriminate towards students who do not belong to the dominant ethno-cultural group. Many teachers continue to express opinions about the assimilation of 'other' students and/or support perceptions and practices compatible with cultural deficit theories (Banks & McGee Banks, 2004).

Despite the enrichment of the curricula of both the initial and continuing education of teachers with courses and seminars aimed at acquiring intercultural competence, the educational practice highlights that the above goal has not been achieved. One of the reasons for this could be found in teaching methods used in

teacher education. This education is mainly theoretical, while there is no interaction with members of ethno-culturally different groups.

As Spalding et al. (2010) emphasize, focusing on the education of prospective teachers, in order to raise their intercultural awareness, it is necessary for them to participate in actions and practices which are linked to social justice issues. The participation of prospective teachers in intercultural actions in the context of their education or their practicum can mobilize their reflection on issues of social inequalities and help them to discover the stereotypes and prejudices that often affect their perceptions and attitudes.

As the research carried out by Miller Dyce & Owusu-Ansah (206) showed, prospective teachers who, as part of their initial education, on the one hand attended courses on the development of intercultural competence and on the other hand participated in community actions in collaboration with refugee and immigrant groups showed significant development of intercultural awareness. In a similar study, Farnsworth (2010) found that prospective teachers who participated in community-based service-learning underwent significant positive transformations in perceptions and attitudes regarding issues of discrimination, inequalities, and social injustice.

The research of Mills (2013) reached similar conclusions about the reflection developed by prospective teachers, who carried out their practicum in culturally sensitive environments, where they had the opportunity to interact with members of vulnerable groups. He argues that the longer the presence of the student teachers in these environments and therefore the time of interaction with the different 'others', the more intense their intercultural awareness can be. Similarly, Hylland and Noffke (2005) underline the importance of conducting action research by prospective teachers in areas of education and life of vulnerable and excluded social groups, as such a context can lead to the development of their reflection and critical thinking on issues related to equal opportunities and social justice.

Co-education of student teachers and peer refugees

The presence of refugee students in recent years in many classes of Greek schools makes it important to raise the awareness of prospective teachers on issues of refugee identities and inclusion. Based on the above objective, but also being prompted by the negative comments made about refugees by a small number of prospective teachers in the context of a university course, the educator and author of this article decided to invite a group of young refugees to a university course in order the development of interaction between them and the students registered for the course.

The course belongs to the curriculum of the Department of Early Childhood Education of the University of Thessaly in Greece, is entitled "Planning, organizing and evaluating intercultural activities" and has the form of an experiential workshop. Its main purpose is to develop the intercultural competence of the student teachers through their participation in intercultural actions in collaboration with members of immigrant/refugee communities and/or other vulnerable groups. In the academic year 2016-17, after a discussion with the students who registered for the course, it was decided to invite in the course young refugees who live in a refugee accommodation center located in the sane city (Volos) where the University Department is located. 32 female students registered for the course, while 15 peer refugees, aged 18-22, from countries of origin mainly Pakistan,

Bangladesh and Syria, agreed to attend. The young refugees were accompanied by a social worker from their accommodation center as well as an interpreter who knew Arabic, Urdu, English and Greek.

The first meeting between the student teachers and the young refugees was dedicated to getting to know each other through appropriately selected ice-breaking activities in order to create a first familiarity between the members of the two groups. While at first there was no interaction, gradually through the activities an environment of interest of one group for the other began to be created. The meeting ended in a discussion, with the help of the interpreter, about the daily life of the refugees and students and the highlighting of common interests, such as the relationship with social media or specific music groups or the discussion about the city, focusing on favorite meeting places etc.

In the discussion that followed between the university teacher and the student teachers after this first meeting, a transformation of negative student teachers' opinions that had been expressed about the refugees before meeting them was evident. Thus, the student A. who at first had expressed fear of the presence of refugees in the course after the meeting focused her interest in the young refugees' experiences. Accordingly, the student E., who before the meeting had expressed her fear about the alteration of the dominant cultural identity by the large number of refugees and immigrants who have come to Greece, after the meeting spoke about the interest that refugees' languages seems to have and that she would be interested in learning one of them.

In a next meeting between the students and the young refugees, after the suggestion of the university teacher, it was decided to undertake together the organization of an anti-racist action. The date of the action was decided to be March 21, which is the International Day Against Racism. After a relevant discussion, the participants decided to focus the content of the action on the message of opening the borders for the free passage of refugees. The symbolic title of the action, which was 'Like flying birds'. Most of the action would take place through music and body expressions, while some related to the main message phrases would be heard in all the languages of the participants. The action became known in the city through posters created by the participants and placed in key points of the city.

The action was attended by many citizens, including school classes, university teachers and students and others, while it became the first topic in the local newspapers and television news. The preparation and carrying out of the action worked particularly positively for the development of acquaintance and communication between the refugees and the student teachers, as they spent a lot of time together in order to prepare all the stages of the action.

As the interaction between student teachers and peer refugees progressed, the more intense elements of empathy seemed to manifest. Student teacher K's opinion is typical. *"Before I met these people, I could not imagine what it means to be a refugee. [...]. What I understood from the conversations with them is that no one leaves their country for a joke. He does it because he has very good reasons to do it. That is, if he stays there, his life is in danger. That was something that, unfortunately, I hadn't thought about."* Particularly interesting is the effect that the interaction with the students had on the young refugees. Some of them sought ways to enroll in formal education with a view to being able to attend university in the future, while others sought from

student teachers support for the Greek courses, they attend in the accommodation center where they stay. Also, some refugees, despite the financial problems they were facing, preferred to lose their daily wages in order to participate in the action preparation meetings.

After the successful completion of the action, student teachers and refugees decided to continue the joint participation in the academic course meetings. Each meeting focused on a topic that was discussed, with the help of the interpreter, by the participants. Indicatively, topics that approached the concepts of homeland, religion, gender identities, prejudices, racism and others were discussed. All the discussions that took place were extremely interesting.

Conclusions

The development of interaction between student teachers and young refugees, both in the course and in preparation for anti-racist action, seems to have led to a reflection of student teachers' initial stereotypical views of refugee identity and experience. The young refugees were no longer faceless foreigners, who endangered the security and culture of the natives, but acquired a specific face, name, personal history and dreams for the future which mobilized firstly the interest and secondly the empathy of the prospective teachers. At the same time, it also mobilized the interest of the refugees for a deeper acquaintance with the natives, the culture and the language of the host country, as well as a different look at gender identities from the one they had adopted in their countries of origin.

The interaction that developed seems that for both groups it had the double function of a mirror and a window. Window because each group was able to see elements of the daily life, values, traditions and culture of the members of the other. A mirror because the members of each group through the interaction developed a reflective look at their own cultural values, perspectives and ways of seeing the others and the world. Such a reflective look can gradually lead to the overcoming of stereotypes and prejudices and the opening of cultural horizons.

Obviously, for the development of reflection it was necessary to create a climate of trust and security, where the other will not be perceived as a threat but as an opportunity for the development of cultural horizons. The interaction between the student teachers and the young refugees, the experiential teaching and learning approach during the course that allowed the exchange of experiences, the collaboration in order to organize the common action, finally the friendship that developed between the participants helped to create a climate capable of leading to the development of intercultural competence and empathy.

Perhaps the best evidence for the development of these skills and the deeper transformations that took place in the participating student teachers was the desire of some of them to offer voluntary work in the accommodation center that hosts the young refugees. At the same time, the young refugee Assad's enrollment in a second-chance school in order to complete formal education and proceed to university studies highlights one of the effects of the interaction with the student teachers in the members of the refugee group. Good luck Assad!

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Teaching English to students with refugee and migrant background and the improvement of teaching with the use of computers and mobile phones

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to illustrate the significance of the use of computers and phones in EFL language in classrooms with refugee and migrant pupils and the major role they play in the achievement of the teaching goals. Emphasis is given to the positive aspects of the features of computers and phones and the conveniences they offer to the teaching process and the learning of the target language which is the English language. The findings raised through this inquiry demonstrate that various issues arise within the framework of EFL teaching of refugee and migrant student which can be eliminated through the inclusion of computers and phones in refugee and migrant teaching environments.

Keywords: English teaching, refugee and migrant students, EFL teachers, CALL, MALL, computer based language learning, mobile based language learning, benefits, challenges, features, teaching goals, skills.

Introduction

This study depicts and focuses on the functionality and the effects of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Teaching) and ML (Mobile learning) in English language teaching introduced in classrooms consisted of refugee and migrant students in terms of fluency, fidelity and intricacy concerning oral, writing, reading and listening skills of the learners. Through this research is illustrated how English teachers can practically design and implement their English lesson plans and have the opportunity to explore renovative and efficient concepts and methods in English language teaching having always as their priority the needs of refugee and migrant students to be fulfilled. This research is based on the scope of teaching English to this multicultural groups of learners with refugee and migrant background in Greece where the Greek language is the dominant language and these learners while they speak their mother language, they have to learn another foreign language, the English language.

Research overview and hypothesis

A case study is incorporated into cased where the limits between the phenomenon and the substance are hard to define and the interest lies on how the background affects the incident (Thomas, 2011). In this case, it is an instrumental case study aiming to give insight into this phenomenon (Alasuutari, Bickman& Brannen, 2008). Here the focus is on the English language teaching to students with refugee and migrant background and how

this can be improved with the use of computers and mobile phones The appropriateness of the case-study method selected in this contribution was derived from reading Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011).

Methodology

The present research implements the qualitative approach so as to guarantee a stable reliability and acquire thorough comprehension of the task explored through a methodological illustration of realistic experiences and descriptions (Altrichter et al., 2008). The interviews were conducted to raise information illustrated by the descriptive answers of the participants and their personal experiences (Cohen et al, 2007). The multidimensional research method of semi-structured interviews was reinforced in order more astute information regarding EFL teaching practices, refugee and migrant training and CALL and MALL attitudes, notions and perceptions (Edwards & Holland, 2013).

Design and conduction of the interviews

Each of the ten interviews lasted approximately thirty minutes and time extensions were given to three of them. The reassurance for anonymity and all the aforementioned information were provided orally in order to form an environment of confidential cooperation and safety (Seidman, 2006). The interviews were held through Skype and Messenger video calls.

Results

The data gathered from the semi-structured interviews have been transcribed and presented based on Thematic Analysis (Braun, 2012). All participants have been asked to respond to open-ended questions referring to the research questions of the dissertation illustrated in tables and categorized in thematic axes (Braun, 2012). English language teachers from various parts of Greece took part in the interviews. The majority of them, eight out ten were women with at least eight years of teaching experience as EFL teachers in classrooms with students with refugee and migrant background.

Discussion

Challenges in teaching English to refugee and migrant students

Refugee and migrant students tend to perform inefficiently in the lesson because of the linguistic barrier that exists as a result of their movement from the homeland to Greece. Therefore, linguistic barriers include and illiteracy with no vocabulary and grammar knowledge (Hull & Schultz, 2001). Moreover, adjusting to the school framework in the host country may include hardships for refugee and migrant students including linguistic difficulties, social obstacles and hardships deriving from inadequacies in educational system, facilities and staff's training (O' Toole Thommessen & Todd, 2018). Furthermore, the research revealed that a lot of students were found to lack motivation and interest caused by post traumatic experiences as students' may have

traumas and suffer from prost-traumatic anxiety which cause various problems to their performance (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007).

Benefits of CALL and MALL in EFL teaching of refugee and migrant students

According to the interviewees' responses the contribution of computers and mobile phones is crucially positive towards the development of writing, speaking, reading and listening skills. On top of that, pronunciation of learners is improved and the interaction during the lesson is increased. As a result, the rate of interest and participance is raised as well making the lesson fulfilling its goals. Technological devices such as computers and mobile phones should not be used when it is needed but technology should be constantly available and accessible. Bax infers that normalization is important for the effectiveness of the foreign language teaching (Bax, 2003). Via the integration of computers and mobile phones in English language teaching students, significant benefits are offered to learners through the inclusion of colorful pictures, sounds and contemporary educational material. CALL and MALL enable English teachers to organize the teaching material in a way to follow the learners' needs and tendencies.

Features of computers and mobile phones and their benefits in English language teaching among refugee and migrant students

The size of the screen as well as the touch screen help learners participate more actively and their attention to get caught easily. Keyboard, whiteboard and projector as well help learners take part in the lesson and the graphics make them consider the lesson as a chance to get away from the traditional and sometimes dull content of typical lessons. The mobility and the inclusion of digital media via the Internet make their use a great asset for teachers.. Moreover, listening exercises based on listening comprehension activities performed easily through apps and in high quality of sound (Kukulska-Hulme, 2015). Fixed phrases are related to specific context through pictures, designs, patterns and visual materials. Cooperative language learning enchanted by computers and mobile phones has also been increased (Kukulska-Hulme, 2018). Via computer and mobile phones refugee and migrant learners can address information and knowledge by signing in online digital libraries, dictionaries and resources. Various reading comprehensions forms can be implemented, such as text on screen with comprehension questions, true or false, multiple choice and meaning of words in bold (Oommen, 2012). Programs helping learners to identify sounds and understand them and practice their pronunciation and toning through the use of digital speech means are offered (Lund & Hauge, 2011).

Recommendations concerning EFL teaching in refugee and migrant students with the use of computers and mobile phones

Governments should enhance school classrooms and students with the appropriate devices which will help them overcome any learning difficulties and obstacles and continuity in education and teaching competencies will be reassured. EFL teachers should get the appropriate training in order to include efficiently the use of computers and mobile phones in the lesson. Supplementary, these training courses should be based on projects,

presentations and workshops dealing with specific teaching methods like task-based language teaching in combination with CALL and MALL both via online and distance learning through various platforms like Skype, zoom, Webex and E-class. Training programs for refugee and migrant students in order to learn efficiently all the vacancies and programs computers, laptops, tablets and mobile phones offer should be conducted. The need for enriching the educational material with contemporary themes and content is crucial. It is imperative psychological support to be provided to refugee and migrant students and their families in order to overcome the traumatic experiences they may have delt with.

Limitations of the research

Referring to the number of interviewees it was attempted and strived more participants to participate in the research. However, the fact that the interviewees was needed to be from various parts of Greece made the conduction of the interviews a demanding process. Despite the fact that the study has been based only on interviews the number of participants with the suitable requirements is adequate with participants from various regions around Greece making the sample reliable.

Suggestions for further study

Future research could focus on how to include computer and mobile phones with a sense and touch of traditional learning methods where the needs and talents of learners are stressed. It would be worth examining the feelings and views of refugee and migrant students towards their language teaching in the Greek school nowadays. On top of that, it could be researched how English teachers are affected both mentally and physically by this challenging form of teaching (Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020). Moreover, it would be of significant interest the study concerning the need of designation of teaching staff and English teachers with studies in intercultural education and refugee and migrant education. This would be included to a wider study for the updating of Greek educational system following the current trends and norms that affect our live nowadays.

Conclusion

Various repercussions and changes have been performed in CALL and MALL which has affected the efficacy of EFL teaching at its utmost. Refugee and migrant education in English language field requires the advantages provided by CALL and MALL in order the learning goals to be accomplished. in order to achieve a more detailed investigation of the topics under discussion, a qualitative research tool was applied.

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Implementing inclusive education in EFL teaching to multicultural classrooms in Greek secondary education

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Abstract

The present paper aims to highlight the challenges teachers and students encounter in multicultural classrooms and to underline the need for the implementation of intercultural education supported by inclusive education. The case study presented focuses on teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) to multicultural classrooms of an Evening Junior High school in Greece and suggests intercultural and inclusive teaching practices including differentiated instruction, adjusted teaching methodologies and practices, the use of ICT, and alternative assessment methods to support all learners' needs and include them in the educational process.
Keywords: intercultural, inclusive education, EFL teaching.

Introduction

Since the number of refugees and immigrants in European as well as in Greek primary and secondary education is constantly increasing the implementation of intercultural education is completely necessary to promote social justice and the inclusion of all students in the educational process (Banks & Banks, 2002; Nieto & Bode, 2008). TEFL in multicultural classrooms can be quite demanding and challenging since it requires the adaptation of teaching techniques not only to fulfill the learners' needs, preferences, and learning styles, but also to promote interaction and collaboration among students of different religions, cultures, and nationalities. The paper presented aims to highlight the main challenges in multicultural classrooms and to focus on the implementation of intercultural education by promoting inclusive teaching practices in TEFL supported by a case study concerning an Evening Junior High School in Thessaloniki, Greece.

Main challenges in teaching multicultural classrooms

Intercultural education is an educational reform movement, and a process in which students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school (Banks & Banks, 2001, p. 1; Nieto, 2006; Hill, 2007). Since its beginning in the 1960s, intercultural education has encountered numerous obstacles, which have become even greater nowadays (Banks, 1993). Most importantly ethnicity referring to the students' and teachers' ethnic backgrounds determines how students perceive their teachers' behavior and how teachers treat individual students, which both have a huge impact on students' achievement (Den Brok Levy, Rodriguez, & Wubbels, 2005). Racism and inequality may also negatively impact teaching in multicultural classrooms, as well as the language barrier and non-verbal behavior,

meaning the body language of another ethnic group which may also be confusing for the teachers and cause difficulties in interpreting the students' behaviors (Banks, 2013).

Defining the different learning styles, interests, and needs of the students is always an issue for teachers and becomes an even more difficult task in multicultural classrooms. Since teaching in multicultural classrooms is quite demanding teachers will not manage to correspond adequately unless they have received proper training. Unfortunately, most teachers lack such training, thus, affecting their confidence as well as their teaching practices, methodology, and approach resulting in poor results in creating an efficient educational environment inclusive to all. Moreover, it is of great significance that teachers realize the psychological factors affecting their students' behaviors, reactions, and performances. Finally, as students from other cultures have experienced different educational systems being in a classroom that differs from theirs means that they should also get accustomed to a new educational environment.

Presentation of the case study: Teaching practices and suggestions

The case study refers to 75 students (37 of whom are immigrants/refugees aged 16-70 years old), who attended the 1st Evening Junior High School of Thessaloniki. The foreign students were mainly immigrants from Albania, Pakistan, and Afghanistan (aged 16-50, 17 male and 20 female). Their language competence in Greek, as well as in English, varied from A1- A2, and, thus, hindered their communication with Greek teachers and students. The teacher focused on the implementation of inclusive education to support all students, engage them in the learning process, and motivate them to participate. Inclusive education, also referred to as integrated education or education-for-all, is based on the principle of equality and is defined as an educational process with the aim of the participation of all students in schools irrespectively of their race, nationality, cultural backgrounds, or learning difficulties (Ainscow, 2005). It is, indeed, connected to intercultural education by serving the same purposes and goals since they both entail the restructuring and modification of educational methodologies, and of the curriculum to achieve the participation of all students in the educational process and the best possible learning outcomes (Takala et al., 2009).

Building intercultural competence and confidence in multicultural classrooms is also of great significance in both intercultural and inclusive education. Regardless of their origin or level of language proficiency students were expected to use the English language to communicate, cooperate and support each other throughout the learning process. Differentiated instruction (D.I.) was also implemented since it is directly linked to inclusive and intercultural education, as it promotes the creation of a constructive and creative learning environment based on student-centered teaching methods, which do not exclude anyone from the educational process (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010). The basic principle of D.I. that applies to inclusive and intercultural education is that an effective educational environment must take into account the learning profiles, interests, cognitive levels, and needs of the students while promoting cooperation and interaction among the participants (teachers and students) (Hall, 2002; Tieso, 2003; Tomlinson, 2005). Having taken into consideration all the above, educational materials and content, teaching methodologies, activities, and

assessment methods were adjusted to the learning styles, cognitive levels, needs, and interests of the students (Mulroy & Eddinger, 2003; Tuttle, 2000).

Concerning the teaching material taught students were given extra material involving the use of ICT (grammar, vocabulary, reading texts, activities in Liveworksheets, Wordwall, and Kahoot) whenever needed, to address the learners' needs and weaknesses. Furthermore, individualized teaching was carried out in various ways by providing simplified schoolwork and homework or more advanced ones depending on the students' needs. The implementation of educational games and art-related activities improved and enriched the learning process to a great extent. Extensive reading also enhanced communication, since by reading materials, which provided a wide range of topics culturally-loaded, students became familiar with and appreciated each other's cultures. Identity texts that were even created by the students themselves served as a pedagogical tool for such a linguistically and culturally diverse classroom (Cummins et al., 2015). Considering that L1 is an essential component of a learner's identity and a source of pride and cultural value it was used as another tool for learning (Coelho, 2012). All the above activities conducted in English engaged students, provided the necessary motive, and empowered them to use the language communicatively and, thus, improve all four skills (reading, speaking, listening, and writing).

To promote interaction and collaboration among students and to create a safe, pleasant, and creative educational environment multiple team-collaborative and student-centered teaching practices were employed (Smutny, 2003; Tomlinson, 2005). The classroom layout was rearranged periodically and students were given time to think-pair-share in small groups to get to know the diverse backgrounds of their classmates while communicating in English. Group or pair work created a learning environment less threatening for the students, proved effective for the improvement of their literacy skills, and promoted their inclusion while enabling them to develop their social skills (Baker & Ramsey, 2016). Furthermore, the communicative approach proved to be valuable since it enhanced communication and engaged students in meaningful and purposeful interaction. The students worked in heterogeneous groups, cooperated, and supported each other, which resulted in the promotion of autonomous learning, building students' self-confidence and enhancing the feeling of appreciation of other cultures.

Concerning students' assessment, alternative assessment methods were implemented along with the more traditional ones, such as testing, to correspond to the learners' needs and level of competence (Tomlison & Eidson, 2003). Portfolios including a collection of the students' work served as a tool for recording linguistic and intercultural knowledge while supporting students in developing metacognitive skills (Griva & Kofou, 2017; Wiggins & McTinhe, 2007, p. 85). Self- and peer assessment questionnaires engaged students in assessing their own or their peers' work and, thus, lead to creating more responsible and independent learners (Griva & Kofou, 2017). All the above practices, activities, and assessment methods promoted intercultural education, self-evaluation, and critical thinking and provided flexibility in the students' assessment.

Conclusion

The implementation of inclusive and intercultural education to address students' cultural differences ensures educational equity and opportunities for students from various cultural backgrounds. Although TEFL in a multicultural classroom can be quite challenging and demanding, intercultural and inclusive practices as the ones suggested in the case study presented have proved to create a most productive, supportive, and efficient educational environment in which students from various cultural backgrounds become engaged to the learning process, achieve academically and acquire the target language without feeling excluded or isolated by the school community.

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Interclusion: Towards a new notion, a new model

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Abstract

Migration has always been very prevalent. Especially nowadays, the number of displaced people and refugees has grown at high rate. As a result, there are new challenges and new needs. Likewise, intercultural education faces new challenges. Intercultural Education's ultimate aim is living together in peace and harmony in multicultural societies and thus moving beyond passive coexistence. Intercultural education today faces much turbulence related to increased migration, climate changes, armed conflicts, and humanitarian crises. These are affecting larger and larger groups and communities in close and distant geographic regions of the world. These challenges with migrants and refugees and all the various subordinate groups indicate the need for shifts and new approaches in educational and social policies that would support human rights and make us reflecting on Intercultural Education in practice nowadays.

In our paper, we will review the concepts of integration and inclusion that are key to understanding the conditions and challenges that today prove crucial to strengthening and building diverse and supportive multicultural societies in which both: majorities and minorities participate and therefore have space to act and protect their human rights. We will look at intercultural education as education that needs to be redefined on the grounds of inclusive and empowering minorities practice. Intercultural education today provides a tool for explaining sensitive topics relating to culturally and socially diverse educational spaces. It is an education in which revised practices of inclusion and integration should play a key role. Along these lines, we explore the views of seven (7) experts in the field of diversity studies about the inclusion processes in multicultural societies. The aim is to highlight these dimensions which show the term intercultural education is adjusted to the new needs of modern societies, with the inclusion process in priority (in education, in social services, in the labor force, in health, in housing).

Keywords: intercultural model, interclusion, intercultural education, and teachers' training.

The evolution of theories concerning migration studies in multicultural societies in line with the continuous changes

Migration has always been very prevalent. Especially nowadays, the number of displaced people and refugees has grown at a high rate. As a result, there are new challenges and new needs. Likewise, intercultural education faces new challenges. Intercultural Education's ultimate aim is living together in peace and harmony in multicultural societies and thus moving beyond passive coexistence. Intercultural education today faces much

turbulence related to increased migration, climate changes, armed conflicts, and humanitarian crises. These are affecting larger and larger groups and communities in close and distant geographic regions of the world,

These challenges with migrants and refugees and all the various subordinate groups indicate the need for shifts and new approaches in educational and social policies that would support human rights and make us reflecting on Intercultural Education in practice nowadays (Palaiologou, 2023)

In our paper, we review the concepts of integration and inclusion that are key to understanding the conditions and challenges that today prove crucial to strengthening and building diverse and supportive multicultural societies in which both majorities and minorities participate and therefore have space to act and protect their human rights. We will look at intercultural education as education that needs to be redefined on the grounds of inclusive and empowering minorities' practice. Intercultural education today is a tool for explaining sensitive topics relating to culturally and socially diverse educational spaces. It is an education in which revised practices of inclusion and integration should play a key role (Markowska-Manista, 2022).

Along these lines, we explore the views of seven (7) experts in the field of diversity studies about inclusion processes in multicultural societies. These people are academics, working at different European Universities. The aim was to highlight these dimensions which show that the intercultural education notion is adjusted to the new needs of modern societies, with the inclusion process in priority (in education, in social services, in the labor force, in health, in housing, etc).

What we wish to present in our paper is a new look at the challenges of integration and inclusion of minority and majority group members and focuses especially on a new area of intercultural inclusion based on a joint perspective, i.e. migrants and refugees as well as the host society. The aim is dual. First, to recognize perspectives and incorporate those perspectives from diverse actors from minority groups into the dominant majority discourse. Second, to search for solutions based on inclusion processes.

In migration studies, there are many models that focus on the integration of migrants with and within the host society (Norman, 2019). National integration models are ubiquitous in public and political discourses about how immigrant countries address the presence and integration of immigrants and minority groups (Morales, 2011; Cholewinski, 2005). These models are configured with varying factors and many variables. We will not go into the well-known models but we will move on to our assumption that - due to increasingly differentiated societies; existing models are not complete and do not meet all the challenges of today's differentiated societies.

One of the reasons we are exploring a new approach is to try to answer the question of inclusion and dependency in integration. Another reason is to see how migrants engage with the challenges of the present and thus the search for a model based on dialogue, participation, and social justice. An important step in the process of intercultural openness in diverse societies is to identify visible, tangible, and hidden agendas related to migrants and refugees and to take steps towards an inclusive approach in the integration practices.

From integration and inclusion to interclusion

European direction (2019) sees the process of integration as a two-way process. Since it is a two-way process that already presupposes interaction to some level. OECD countries nowadays set in priority the term of inclusion (Brussino, 2020).

In his 2016 speech "Refugees and interclusion", former refugee Vimal Vimalasekaran argues for combining integration practices with the inclusion of migrants in the majority society. He created the neologism "interclusion", which denotes two levels of entering the society so the functioning of migrants and refugees in the new environment in the host society (Januszewska, Markowska-Manista, 2022, p. 279). The first level refers to the integration and therefore knowledge of the languages, cultures, and ways of being in the host country in order to function without barriers and be able to integrate into society. The second level concerns inclusion in interculturalism understood here as preserving the right to maintain one's own identity and the right to be treated equally despite the differences in the conditions of functioning in the new society. In this approach, only the values of respect for identity and protection of human rights can be excluded from the level of inclusion and can be combined with the level of integration in the form of co-support for migrants and refugees in adapting to functioning in a new place. It should be noted that this co-support is participatory, i.e. involving the majority and minorities (Januszewska & Markowska-Manista, 2022, p. 279).

In our view, it is always an issue to what extent these processes are conscious or more subconscious. Of course, this has consequences for strategies in order to promote the notion of interclusion.

In order to understand the relationship between interculturalism and inclusion and look for a new model, we decided to conduct desk research and interview 7 key informants - specialists in interculturalism and inclusion. The sample was selected using a snowball method. Informants were coded (KI - key informant, then the ordinal number assigned to each person). The study was conducted in August in virtual communication. We communicated in English as a *lingua franca* with researchers – experts from 5 countries: Germany, Romania, Poland, Greece, and the USA. In this line, we developed an interview protocol that was constructed around three key questions:

1.	How do you conceptualise the term 'interculturalism'?
2.	How do you conceptualise 'inclusion'?
3.	Do you think that there is a common space between the two terms?

Our first results from this study are presented below.

Results from the study

Interculturalism notion

As for the conceptualization of the term 'interculturalism', our experts pointed to 'interculturalism':

•	As an emancipatory concept, directed against hegemonic forms of knowledge and interpretations of the world, aimed at equality with the recognition of difference;

- As a concept that has a transformative task that aims at decolonization of unequal social relations of power;

- To emphasize the contact between cultures, the interaction, and influence they receive from each other. Also as a dynamic process;

- As a reaction occurring between two (or more) individuals (or groups), a process based on interactions and intercultural communication that helps produce shared meanings in the context of diversity;

- As an effect of (re)acting on perceived differences, but also similarities leading to a deeper understanding;

- As a process based on open dialogue and the pursuit of mutual encounter with the assumption of the equality of all the involved subjects.

Interviewees also pointed out the tensions and challenges associated with this term. This notion implies great potential for tension. The presentation of indicative responses is presented below, with code [9] in order to maintain anonymity. The responses are interesting because they show that the participants even though from different countries share similar concerns.

Inclusion as a term

Concerning the term 'inclusion,' our experts pointed the following:

- It is the process of identifying and implementing educational programs aimed at excluded individuals, communities, etc.; [KI_2]

- This process means that *no person is discriminated against, socially disadvantaged, marginalized or excluded on the basis of certain characteristics or attributes, but can participate equally and with dignity in all relevant activities and decisions* integrating individuals or social groups into society with respect for each other's differences [KI_4]

- It is a concept that expresses the intention of those responsible for ensuring that all individuals or groups in society, especially those in segregated or marginalized conditions, have the same opportunities and chances to fulfill themselves as individuals. [KI_5]

- It is the process of *changing and modifying content, teaching methods, approaches, structures and strategies in education* [KI_3]

- It is the process of integrating individuals or social groups into society with respect for each other's differences and with the conviction that they can enrich the whole group through mutual interaction [KI_6]

A common space between the two terms?

In terms of common areas for the two terms discussed earlier, the researchers identify the following:

the recognition of human dignity and moral equality as human beings [KI_1]

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[9] Key Informants (KI) from 1 to 7 are the respondents at this study.

The intercultural shift from the dominant discourses and ideologies to a neutral third space is one of the ways in which inclusion can be promoted, and the joint negotiation of meaning is at the core of the systematic restructuring of education which fosters inclusion [KI_4]

respect for diversity and the need to build an open society [KI_2]

in order to achieve a strong intercultural setting, inclusion is vital e.g the ability to embrace difference and diversity, striving for a consensus and common set of values [KI_6]

Inclusion and interculturality is the societal, educational response to the promotion and/or training of social competences that correspond to values and attitudes such as: acceptance of pluralism, respect for diversity and positive appreciation of differences, rejection of discrimination and intolerance [KI_5]

Such a space can exist depending on how inclusion is understood. If as "absorption", it is difficult to speak of something "in-between", of "creating a new quality". If inclusion takes the form of an "addition" developed in a two-way dialogue (I emphasize two-way, because the concept of dialogue has become undermined today) then such a space exists [KI_7]

The aforementioned responses, especially the last one, show that a two-way process presupposes interaction to some level; elsewhere without interaction, it is one way.

Our interviewees recognize key connections and stress that:

- *If we want to reduce the phenomenon of exclusion and marginalisation, if we want to promote the functioning and democratic development of society, then these two concepts of inclusion and interculturality must be an important aspect* [KI_2].

- *Inclusion and interculturality is the societal, educational response to the promotion and/or training of social competencies* [KI_2].

- *Interculturalism is a socio-cultural fact, a background for successful inclusive practices. Intercultural understanding is the core for inclusive aims programmes* [KI_3].

It is impossible to build an open society without the two components above, i.e. interculturality and inclusion. Moreover in order to incorporate these terms into intercultural education, a precondition is to understand their contexts in real life. It is the very contexts of how inclusion and integration are understood and practiced that allow us to go a step further, looking for a new notion, a new model.

A new notion, a new model

Inclusion and integration are connected vessels in intercultural education (Górak-Sosnowska & Markowska-Manista 2022). We would like to highlight the challenges that have become central to understanding how important participatory intercultural education is today. In order to achieve a solid intercultural setting, inclusion is essential and in it the key elements are the ability to embrace difference and diversity, striving to find ways in which it will be possible to strike a consensus and reciprocal adherence to the common set of values, beliefs and also direction, e.g strategy.

Inclusion doesn't mean wholesale acceptance but more an understanding and appreciation of variances, achieving a pluralistic environment, yet with a specified framework that brings everyone together and enables the principle of 'sum of its parts'[10].

The intercultural shift from the dominant discourses and ideologies to an activist dimension would be a new reality nowadays. Through actions, striving for human rights inclusion can be promoted, and the joint negotiation of meaning is at the core of the systematic restructuring of education which fosters inclusion.

Concluding thoughts and next steps

In our view, our study is crucial because it takes into account participatory and inclusive approaches in intercultural education. We point out, along with the voices of our experts, that integration and inclusion are not enough sufficient concepts to grasp. Interclusion introduces the balance and counteracts any asymmetries that do not take into account migrants' voices and in the majority societies. Migrants and the host society need a sense of empowerment. Action and participation in the diverse community should support them to gradually unload their emotions and feel responsible for the place they co-create and live in.

Given the new area of this pilot study and preliminary analysis as next steps we would like to expand this study to a broader population in order to shine light on the two following questions, as next steps:

1. How could we adapt this concept to intercultural education policies and practices in education settings?

2. How this approach "interclusion" could be constructive in the field of intercultural education for peace and social justice?

3. How do practitioners conceptualize these terms?

4. What are the implications for educational practice?

To sum up, inclusion is a favorite term these days among many policymakers because it is not so political. Of course, it is broader than the term intercultural since it started with a focus on disabilities and still has that strong connotation.

For us as academics, a new space or topos could arise from these two notions. Exploring this further is our next step.

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[10] *Gestalt* refers to the fact the whole of the parts is more than the sum.

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The Dublin Regulation III as part of the CEAS: Implications on the education of minor asylum seekers, deficiencies and recommendations

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Abstract

Since 2015 millions of refugees and migrants undertook a dangerous journey in order to arrive to EU States and request for an asylum. The EU member States have been working since 1999 in order to create a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and provide protection to these vulnerable populations. Part of CEAS is the Dublin III Regulation that aims to set hierarchical criteria in order to be determined which EU State is responsible for the examination of an asylum application. However, it is questionable whether the common asylum system regarding family reunification meets its purpose as there is a very narrow definition of family with that leading to breaking family ties of these populations. Another deficiency is the delay of the States to proceed with Dublin procedures especially those that are dealing with mass arrivals such as Greece. As a result, hundreds of unaccompanied minors reside stranded in Greece while waiting for the family unification procedures and they enroll in the Greek schools. All the above lead these refugee children in a limbo while delaying their integration to any host country. The aim of this study is to highlight the deficiencies of the Dublin III Regulation in its implementation by the states and especially Greece in order to point out the importance and necessity of improvements. More specifically, this paper will explore the evolution of the Dublin Regulation and its implications to the education of unaccompanied minors in Greece. Special mention is made on article 2 Prot 1 ECHR on education and the Convention of the Rights of the Child as well as to the right to family of Article 8 ECHR and how this is challenged by the Dublin III Regulation.

Keywords: Dublin II Regulation, family unification, unaccompanied minors, right to education.

Introduction

The Dublin Regulation is one of the cornerstones of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) as it sets the basic criteria through which it is decided which Member State is responsible to examine an asylum claim. However, despite the fact that the Dublin III Regulation is in line with the basic human rights' legal intruments, the results of its implementation by the EU Member States (MS) tend to show the opposite. The Dublin III Regulation which was a reformation of the Dublin II Regulation was intended to address and improve many of the shortcomings that appeared on the latter. However, Dublin III Regulation appears to be failing its purpose in some respects. More particularly the Regulation, regarding its text, has a very narrow definition about the family reunification and the term of dependent persons with that leading to breaking family ties and not always

respecting the right to family life (Actionaid, 2017). The criterion of first country of entrance also remains and is causing serious harm to countries of external borders that cannot bear the burden. Also, the applicants' preference on the MS they wish to integrate and socially evolve is not taken into consideration.

Unfortunately, deficiencies are also addressed outside the text of the Regulation 604/2013 in terms of the implementation by the MS that should cooperate for more effective results. Common Best Interest Assessment (BIA) procedures for minors are missing among the States and it is noticed that AUM are not always legally represented and supported in order to reunite with family members (UNHCR, 2017). Several NGOs stress how the Dublin Regulation creates obstacles to asylum seekers while breaching their fundamental rights (Asylum Information Database, 2013). Sufficient safeguards are not always followed by the States while there is not access to legal assistance in many occasions and the basic right to appeal is not included in the Regulation (AIDA, 2013).

Additionally, the factor of covid-19 pandemic has affected the asylum procedures and consequently the Dublin provisions as the asylum seekers were not able to apply for family reunification while those who were accepted by another EU MS could not proceed with their transfer (AIDA, 2021). Furthermore, requests could not be sent since March 2020 and deadlines were lost, depriving applicants to reunite with their family (GCR, 2021).

Under these circumstances, the present paper aim is to focus on the complexities of the family refunification procedure for UAM asylum seekers under the Dublin Regulation and more specifically explain the impact on their education. For this respect, interviews with practitioners on the Dublin Regulations and reception teachers were conducted.

Changes in the notion of family on Dublin III Regulation

The innovation of the Dublin III Regulation in Article 2 g) is the update of the definitions related to family unity. To be more specific, regarding minor applicants the family members definition includes not only their parents but other relatives as well such as brothers, uncles, representatives. However, the broadening of the terms of relatives is referring only to minor applicants because in the case of adults as stated in Articles 9 and 10 of the Regulation there is no such reference to other relatives but only to close family members.

Article 16 makes a more detailed reference to dependents. In particular, a State undertakes the application of an applicant if he/she is dependent on the care of his child, brother or parent residing in that Member State. The same can be applied in reverse, ie in case one of the above persons resides in another state and needs the care of the applicant. However, it is worth pointing out that the term of dependent persons is quite limitative in the 604/2012 EU Regulation as in the former one (Dublin Regulation II) the person needing care could be any relative and not only a son, brother or parent (Cafiero, 2019).

In addition to the above, not all MS have the same organization of their asylum services as many of them suffer from bureaucracies that delay the Dublin procedures and make the exchange of information even more difficult (Heidenreich, 2019).

United Nations Convention of the Children's rights

The 1989 UN Convention on the rights of the children refers to all persons that are under the age of 18. In article 1 of the Convention there is reference to the definition of unaccompanied children and separated minors. Regarding the first term it applies to children that have been separated from their parents or relatives and there is no adult taking care of them or is responsible for them. On the other hand, separated minors may have been separated from their parents or caregiver but not from other relatives. For instance a 12 year old boy arriving in Greece from Syria with his 20 year old sister is considered a separated minor. Additionally on Article 22 par. 1 it is pointed out that children who are seeking for asylum need to receive the appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance.

The year of 2021 there were 4.749 referrals of unaccompanied minors to the Special Secretariat for the protection of UAMs while from January till August 2022 the referrals were 3.535 (Special Secretariat for the Protection of unaccompanied minors (2022). Official figures are likely to underestimate the situation because many unaccompanied adolescents do not apply for asylum and hence cannot be counted. In fact, some refugees, including unaccompanied youngsters, are afraid that their asylum request will be denied, so they travel on to a new destination rather than filing their claim right away (Save the Children, 2014). The year of 2021 there were 4.749 referrals of unaccompanied minors to the Special Secretariat for the protection of UAMs in Greece while from January till August 2022 the referrals were 3.535 (Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied minors, 2022).

In the context of the Dublin Regulation when the applicant is a minor the first and most vital step that should be followed by the MS is the Best Interest Assessment of the child (BIA). Best interest Assessment is used to ensure that while working with individual children, the best interest principle (as stated in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) is followed (UNHCR. 2022). In order to complete Best Interests Assessment Form for the Purposes of Implementing the Dublin Regulation it is crucial to inform the minor about the procedure, address all the information that will be needed throughout the process for his/her best interest and have the child's consent. The child's basic biographical information is then gathered, as well as any significant medical issues or traumatic experiences that he/she may be experiencing. Following all the information related to the child's family composition is gathered as well as on relatives that may reside to another MS the minor is asked in particular via a specialized interview on Dublin procedures whether he/she wishes to reunite with these family members. Practitioners that fill in the Best Interest Assessment forms are expected to be fully trained in order to be able to not only approach the minor but also to come to a conclusion regarding the determination of the best interests of the child.

Unaccompanied children in the Dublin Regulation

The Dublin III Regulation aims to prioritize children protection by ensuring that the responsible MS will take proper care of the child without letting it fall to the wrong hands (Colacino, 2014). As stated on Recital 13 of

the Regulation the best interest of the child is expected to be a primary consideration of the MS when applying the Regulation. Having that in mind the best interest of the child is a primary concern from the beginning of the asylum process, meaning from the moment he/she applies for asylum, till his/her transfer to another MS if necessary (Recital 24).

Dublin III, at least theoretically, seems to have made serious steps regarding BIAs. Articles 6 and 8 of the Regulation are dedicated to minors. Specifically, on article 6 it is pointed out that all MS are expected to cooperate smoothly in the context of Dublin especially in cases where unaccompanied minors are involved by providing a legal representative to support the minor throughout the whole process and provide access to his/her file in order to support his case by adding important documents. The major objectives in the best interests of the child are to locate a minor's family in a Member State, as well as to consider the minor's social development and safety. It is critical to consider the minor's viewpoint once he or she has reached adulthood. Furthermore, Member States should take all essential procedures as soon as possible so that any delay does not negatively impact the minor (Article 6).

According to article 8 of the Dublin Regulation an unaccompanied minor can reunite not only with his parent or siblings residing in another MS but with a relative as well. This is also a positive change in favor of the best interest of the child especially in cases where the minor may have lost his/her first degree relatives but may have a very close relationship and emotional bond with other relatives that can provide security and care.

However, the delays in the procedure could be significant affecting the life and education of the applicant AUM. More particularly, as stated by the two teachers of reception classrooms in Greece there have been cases of minors that have been waiting for more than a year their family reunification with that having severe implications to both their psychology and education.

Education of minors who applied for family reunification in Greece

According to the interviews conducted with teachers of reception classrooms in Greece children who were pending family reunification had no motivation to attend lessons as they were thinking that Greek would be of no use in the reception country. There is also a lack of motivation to attend other lessons such as mathematics and English as the children could not understand the guidelines in Greek. There were cases where minors waited almost two years for their family reunification while the past year (2022) they refused to attend school. In such cases the emotional exhaustion played a crucial role to their education journey. On the other hand, refugee children that were not pending family reunification and stayed in Greece showed significant progress. Indeed, their families are emphasizing on their education in the Greek context given that this is the country where they reside and the parents work and try to integrate.

Recommendations on education of AUM under the Dublin procedures in Greece

After taking into consideration the complexities and the length of the family reunification procedure, the challenges of the education of such children in Greece and the fact that they will be finally transferred to another Member State where their family members reside the following suggestions could be made. In general,

following the regular curriculum that Greek students follow is not the best option given the complexities of their situation. Firstly, a special provision could be put into place so that such children could start learning the language of the country they are about to be transferred. That would be much more encouraging for the learners. Even if learning the language of the exact Member State is not possible then at least emphasis should be placed in the English language, given that this could be the starting point on the new educational system the child will follow in the receiving state.

Also focusing on courses like mathematics and physics could be also useful considering that the language of science is the same all over the world. Further it is commendable for such refugee minors to receive special educational support so as not to waste years of their studies while residing in Greece but focus on the topics that would be useful under any European educational system so that they can continue and build on their knowledge accordingly. Such educational support could be provided by specialized teaching personnel in the context of small groups of students belonging in the same category (Dublin applicants) and age group.

Finally, specialized psychological support is of high importance given that these children have to pass through stressful and lengthy procedures to reunite with their families and this is a factor that adds to their anxiety and anticipation, distracting them from school activities and learning.

Such changes in the educational system would have a drastic result in the education of these children as a whole, both in Greece and in the receiving country, in order for the link on the years of their primary/high school education not to be broken.

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A maker space during the Covid-19 pandemic to promote STEM in high school students

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Abstract

Nowadays, STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) is a highly-recognized curriculum choice since it promotes innovation and leads to developing problem-solving skills, which are needed in everyday lives. However, a lack of interest in STEM subject matter has been observed in high school students. Seeking to impact positively on students' attitudes towards STEM, a maker space was implemented using e-textile materials. The research question that directed this implementation was: can a maker space increase students' motivation towards STEM? A total of 96 third-semester high school students participated in this maker space, which was conducted during the pandemic lockdown due to COVID-19. Skills to be developed, activities to be carried out, and objectives stated during the first stage had to be reconsidered and reconfigured since the lockdown was not anticipated during the initial implementation planning. Despite all these changes, the findings were interesting and very positive: students built a learning network with their classmates; but they did so mainly with members of their own families, which was unexpected. Although the participants reported having varied challenges while working on tasks, they indicated that they had fun and felt motivated, not only about getting good grades but also about learning something new. As a result, engagement in STEM activities was impacted positively. Finally, when students were asked whether they had developed disciplinary or formative skills, ninety percent indicated both. The aim of this paper is to address the benefits of maker spaces in promoting STEM.

Keywords: STEM, COVID-19, maker space, students' motivation, e-textile, high school.

Introduction

STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) education plays a crucial role in education since it enables students to be competitive in this modern world. STEM subjects at school promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills. However, over the years, these disciplines have generated a negative opinion by students because they are perceived to be either complicated or boring. So, how can STEM be taught effectively? Research reveals that project-based learning (PBL) is a relevant method to teach STEM disciplines (Mustafa et al., 2016). Furthermore, a study by Chiang and Lee (2016) indicates that PBL can also promote task engagement and motivation in students. But, what is PBL? PBL is an active student-centered form of instruction which is characterized by students' autonomy, goal-setting, collaboration, and challenging problems that are authentic and often interdisciplinary (Kokotsaki et al., 2016).

The COVID-19 pandemic forced teachers to move to virtual spaces; this change presented new barriers and challenges to STEM education (Brancaccio-Taras et al., 2021; Turner et al., 2022): how to adapt laboratories, how to promote equity and inclusion, how to encourage students' engagement, and how to be innovative.

PBL can be implemented through maker spaces; Linke et al. (2018) explain a maker space as a community space that offers students the opportunity to gather and connect in order to share tools and knowledge, all of which is achieved by "making stuff." Maker spaces are being implemented to promote STEM education since they foster students' motivation and enable the development of multiple skills and competencies (Bradley, 2018; Gama et al., 2019; Masters et al., 2018).

The term *e-textile* stands for electronic textile, a fabric produced with electronics, making it possible to incorporate components such as lights, sensors, microcontrollers, etc. Ultimately, e-textiles have become popular due to all the different purposes and areas they can be applied. E-textiles have also found a place inside classrooms by aiding the teaching and learning processes (Searle et at., 2019; Richard et al., 2018; Stewart et al., 2018; Fields et al., 2018).

Following this notion, this study explored maker spaces with e-textiles to promote STEM during the Covid-19 pandemic. The ultimate goal was to provide a comprehensive understanding of maker spaces to boost students' motivation.

Materials and Methods

A mitigation plan

To begin with, this study was planned before the breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic. The maker space was going to take place on campus, and all the materials, tools and resources were going to be shareable and available to all the students. The e-textile components selected would allow the students to practice not only the basis of electronics but also coding. Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic spread and online classes were essential. A mitigation plan was required in order to continue with the implementation of the project.

Participants

A total of 96 second-year high school students participated in this implementation. The research was conducted as part of the Computational and Logical Thinking course.

Implementation

The research was executed with a qualitative approach, which allows interpretation of phenomena, opinions of the participants, and inductive logic.

The research question that directed this implementation is: can a maker space increase students' motivation towards STEM?

Step 1. Context was established. Students watched a video about e-textiles and their current implementation in different areas. To check understanding, they had to answer some questions using the EdPuzzle platform and research and brainstorm some ideas for new e-textile products. Additionally, a dialogue about maker spaces was held; the goal was to help students understand what they are, how they work, and what their benefits are.

Step 2. Students got their material. Beforehand, teachers asked them so sign a contract. The students received the following components: 5 LEDs, 4 different-sized needles, conductive thread (9m), 1 battery holder, 1 battery, and 1 lily twinkle (all of them sewable electronics from SparkFun) (see Figure 1).

Figure1. *Sewable electronics received by the students*

Some tutorials and guides were published for the students to get familiar with the components as well as some videos showing products created by the teachers.

Step 3. Students learned to sew. The first product was activity1's purpose to train students to sew; this was a highly relevant skill students needed to develop before trying to sew electronic components. A tutorial showing basic sewing techniques was shared with the students, and they were free to ask for extra help. The product was building a cartoon character they like from recycled cloth. The results were amazing (see Figure 2). Moreover, their video reflections on this first activity revealed that the maker space had started and that the networking at home was established.

Figure 2. *Students' sewable products*

Step 4. The aim was to plan the connection and design the e-textile product. During this activity, the students had to select the piece of clothing they would renovate, create a design and sketch the connection of electronic components. To do so, students were given some images and videos explaining a basic connection (parallel connection), the connection of the lily twinkle, and a mixed connection (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. *Presenting the connections*

The students were free to plan the connection directly on the selected piece of clothing or on paper. Their sketch had to show every single component to be included, as well as the use of the conductive thread to join them (see Figure 4).
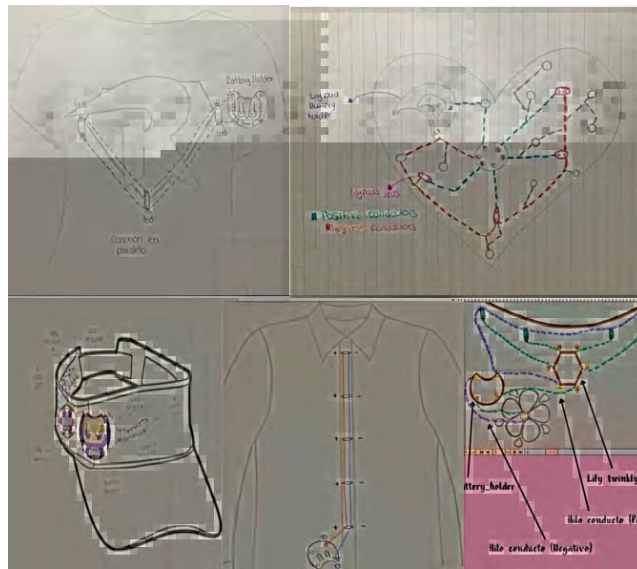
Figure 4. *Some sketches created by the students*

Step 5. Their e-textile products were made. The final product was requested, and the creation process had to be documented in a one-minute video including details about what challenges were faced during the maker space and how these were overcome, what knowledge was acquired, which skills were developed, how satisfied they felt with their final product, and h

ow much they enjoyed participating in the maker space and why. Figure 5 shows some students' final products.
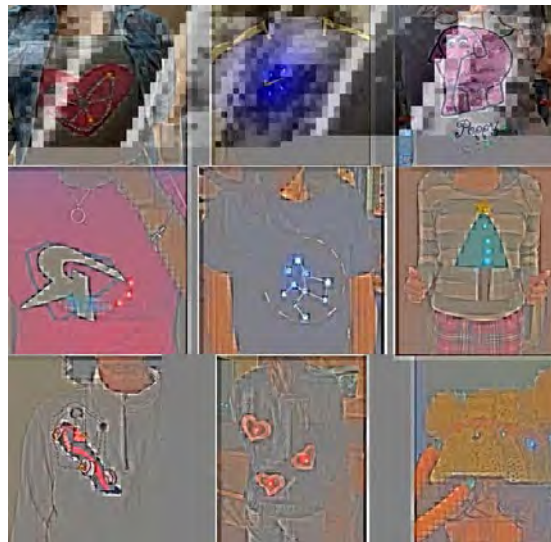
Figure 5. *Students' final products*

Once the students finished their product and shared their experiences, they were asked to give back the material not used, to record a final feedback video (documentary) and to complete a survey to evaluate the experience.

Data collection

Surveys were conducted using Google forms; the first part included Likert scale questions, and the second part opinion scale questions.

The Likert scale used was as follows:

- Does not correspond at all
- Corresponds a little
- Corresponds moderately
- Corresponds a lot
- Corresponds exactly

And the statements evaluated were the following:

Reasons to work on these project (motivation)

- To get a grade/to pass the class
- The project was interesting/fun
- I enjoy learning new things
- This knowledge will be useful at college

How you worked during the project

- I just waited till the deadlines to work each part of the project.
- I was willing to work on the project during some of my free time.
- I used to get distracted easily while working on this project.
- I usually prepared my work area in advance to have all material needed.
- Besides the teacher's explanations and materials, I did research on my own or asked for help from people not involved in this project.
- I shared ideas and my doubts with my classmates; I also helped find answers and solutions to their questions regarding the project.

The opinion scale questions were evaluated with stars (from 1 to 5).

The documentaries (final feedback videos) were analyzed using constant appropriate qualitative data analysis steps in order to increase the validity and reliability of the data. For these videos, the students were required to list the things they learned from the beginning till the end of the project and to describe their experience as participants of the maker space.

Results

By adding the Corresponds a lot (CL) and the Corresponds exactly (CE) answers, results of the survey indicate that 86% of the students' motivation was to get a grade; 79.5% worked on the project since it was seen as something interesting or fun, 91.4% answered that they enjoy learning new things; while only 21.5% considered that this knowledge would be useful at college.

When asked how they worked during this project, the CL and the CE answers added together show that only 26.9% of the students waited till the deadline to work on the project; 76.4% were willing to work on the project during their free time; 91.4% of the students prepared their work area in advance; 59.1% said they did research on their own or connected with people not related to the project; 74.2% of the students indicated that

they shared, helped or collaborated with their classmates; and lastly, 47.4% of the students indicated they used to get distracted easily while working on the project.

The opinion scale section gave us the following results (from 1 to 5 stars):

● I established learning networks with classmates, relatives, professors and others to learn about the topic: *4.42* stars.

● My final product is innovative and integrates technology, my skills and knowledge: *4.26* stars.

● My final product is original and visually attractive: *4.18* stars.

● I developed life skills such as creativity, patience, resilience, etc., and I also acquired academic knowledge: *4.40* stars.

Opinions collected from the students' documentaries were all positive; some mentioned what they learned, some others highlighted how fun it was, and some students described the challenges they faced.

Discussion and conclusion

At the very beginning, our expectations about how successful the maker space would be were not very high since we had to switch to online classes, and we thought this would negatively impact the implementation and results of the project. However, the results suggest that the maker space worked efficiently, different from what was expected.

The results of this study all point to the fact that maker spaces have positive effects on students' motivation. The students felt free to create and make; they established connections, not only with their classmates but also with their relatives and people at home in general. Despite the fact that many of them faced difficulties which required them to undo and redo their products, they never gave up. They were willing to work during their free time evidenced by the majority finishing their products in advance. They wanted a good grade, but they also felt happy and had fun learning about electronics.

The findings of our study show that the maker space gave the students the opportunity to develop a variety of academic and life skills; results also suggest that maker spaces can work even virtually.

Overall, the results seem to illustrate that even though many of the students were not interested in electronics, the maker space contributed to a positive attitude towards it; moreover, their curiosity towards this area was increased or awakened.

This study provides more refined knowledge on the impact of maker spaces on students' motivation. These results open up new lines of similar research to analyze the possibility of implementing 'at home' maker spaces; this could allow more schools to implement maker spaces and to enjoy the benefits this strategy can bring to the teaching-learning process without worrying about budget.

Acknowledgments

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Teacher practices and perspectives regarding Japanese-background students in the Greek school

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Abstract

The present study explores the inclusion of Japanese-background students in the Greek school focusing on their teachers' perspectives and practices. Semi-structured interviews with 18 teachers were conducted and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed a superficial approach to diversity and showed that the practices employed are mainly monolingual and monocultural. A shift from the exclusive focus on academic content is suggested to re-orientate the goals and priorities of the Greek school and transform the educational setting so that all students feel safe and supported. The study concludes that intercultural educational policies which focus on social justice principles and inclusiveness should be prioritized.

Keywords: inclusion, Japanese-background students, diversity, intercultural educational policies, social justice.

Introduction

The inclusion of diverse populations in the educational systems of various European countries, as a result of globalization and unprecedented migration, has led to demanding educational contexts. Research has indicated the importance of taking into consideration the learners' diverse backgrounds and life experiences in the educational procedure (Kalantzis & Cope, 2016). Intercultural educational policies which focus on social justice principles and inclusiveness should be prioritized to foster social cohesion and strengthen democratic values (Palaiologou & Gorski, 2017).

The present study aims to explore the teaching practices employed in various Greek classrooms regarding the inclusion of Japanese-background students. The educators' perspectives and assumptions are also explored to understand their reported teaching practices. This research can thus highlight the needs of a group of learners that were not adequately examined in the literature and complement relevant research about intercultural education in Greece.

Semi-structured interviews with 18 teachers were conducted and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study demonstrate the need for change from rigid, monocultural, and monolingual approaches to a holistic model that focuses on inclusiveness and fosters the learners' active participation in the educational procedure. Teacher training and adjustments to the curriculum are necessary to assist educators in adopting intercultural teaching practices, which respond to the needs of the contemporary multicultural reality.

Pedagogies and practices in multilingual classrooms

Education is an inalienable right for everybody and an important tool that can equip individuals with knowledge and skills as well as democratic values. The participation of linguistically and culturally diverse learners in the educational systems of resettlement countries requires the development of suitable practices, which address their academic, social, and emotional needs (Block et al., 2014). Inclusive education in multilingual settings entails learners who are proud of their identities and feel that their diversity is valued (Kalantzis & Cope, 2016). Drama-based activities can be used to enhance intercultural understanding and empower the students (Vitsou et al., 2019; Vitsou & Papadopoulou, 2020).

Despite the considerable amount of literature regarding the benefits of culturally relevant practices for linguistically and culturally diverse learners, research has shown that in many cases the efforts made towards inclusion might entail the intention of assimilation to the dominant culture (Palaiologou & Faas, 2012). The concept of "otherness" and the failure to perceive it as a social construct is also present in teachers' discourse (Arvanitis, 2021). In this way, diversity is suppressed and inequalities are perpetuated. Moreover, in many cases diversity is treated in superficial ways, failing to incorporate social justice principles within the educational procedure (Banks, 2006; Nieto, 2017). This does not mean that the celebration of diversity should be abandoned, but it is suggested that the principle of social justice should always be central to the curriculum (Gorski & Swalwell, 2015).

Research Methodology

This study aims to explore the educational practices employed in various Greek classrooms regarding the inclusion of Japanese background learners and to explore the educators' perspectives and assumptions that shape these practices. The study followed a qualitative approach to examine how the participants perceive the world and interpret their experiences (Creswell, 2014). The nature of the question required an in-depth exploration of the teachers' views and the practices employed in the classroom. A case study was thus conducted to shed light on the complex relationships between individuals and the sociolinguistic and cultural setting (Creswell, 2014).

The participants of the study were 18 Greek teachers. The main tools of data collection were semi-structured interviews with the educators. We tried to make the teachers feel comfortable and express themselves freely. The questions of the interviews concerned the educational objectives and the practices employed, the educational material used, the inclusion of Japanese language and culture in the educational procedure, the teachers' familiarization with intercultural and inclusive practices, as well as challenges encountered.

Thematic analysis was used to examine and analyze the data. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to help us familiarize ourselves with the information collected and organize it (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Reading repeatedly the transcripts and the notes made during the interviews allowed us to be immersed in the data. Afterward, the systematic analysis of the data took place. To this end, it was coded and analyzed. The most important themes identified in every interview were compared across different interviews.

Limitations and ethical considerations

Due to the restrictions created by the pandemic Covid 19, data was collected using a video calling application, which made it more difficult to establish rapport between the researcher and the interviewees (Akinyode & Khan, 2018). Ethical considerations concerning the participants' confidentiality and anonymity were taken into account (Creswell, 2014).

Research findings

Classroom practices regarding the inclusion of Japanese-background students

The results of the data analysis regarding the teachers who participated in the study show that they view their Japanese-background students in a positive light, however, the majority of them do not believe that the learners' cultural and linguistic background is something that should concern the school. T1 characteristically noted: *"It is not possible to include cultural and linguistic elements in every lesson. Ok, sometimes if an opportunity is given by the book. Yes, we once spoke about Hiroshima…"* The practices followed are mainly monolingual and monocultural since ethnic minority students' languages and cultures are excluded from the school practices.

Most teachers also highlight the shortage of time as an impediment to the integration of Japanese background students' cultural identities and native languages in classroom practices. They stress that the emphasis on the curriculum and the need to cover the syllabus leaves no space for flexibility. This is shown in the following extract from T5's interview: *"There is no time for cultural diversity things. Maybe we once said something about Japan, but there is no time. It would be nice, for sure, but there's no time. We have to follow the curriculum".*

A completely different approach is adopted by two of the educators interviewed. Both teachers view diversity as a source of learning for the whole class. According to T3: *"It is an educational objective and a priority to give space to diverse languages and cultures".* T3 and T4 also suggested the importance of using organized activities, such as drama-based or creative writing activities to enhance intercultural understanding and promote inclusion. T4 suggested that theater education and art are *"valuable means to promote diversity and challenge discrimination"*.

Beliefs that shape educators' practices

The research findings highlight the beliefs that shape the educator's practices and attitudes in the classroom. The majority of the participants (16 out of 18) mainly assume static ideologies regarding language and culture. They view languages as autonomous systems which are separate and distinct from each other. T7 suggested that *"their language has nothing to do with Greek… It certainly cannot be used in the classroom on a daily basis".* The teachers adopt ethnocentric practices and are not cognizant of the benefits of culturally sustaining pedagogies for the learners' academic achievement and emotional well-being. T17 specifically mentioned: *"We shouldn't highlight he (his Japanese student) is different. He might be embarrassed".*

However, T3 and T4's attitudes seem to be completely different. They both point to their belief that school needs to be an inclusive learning community where all students feel that their linguistic and cultural backgrounds are appreciated and respected. Moreover, their educational practices are shaped by the belief that children learn best when they are motivated and treated as individuals with inherent worth. T3 mentioned: *"Connecting with our students' cultures and background knowledge can facilitate the educational procedure and make them feel proud of themselves and their families".*

Discussion

The analysis of the results of this study highlights the monocultural and monolingual practices employed by the overwhelming majority of the participants. Japanese background learners' linguistic and cultural capital remains largely invisible in the educational procedure. These practices reinforce injustice and prejudice in education (Arvanitis, 2021). They also force students to assimilate into the dominant culture (Palaiologou & Faas, 2012). Some teachers seem to try to address diversity in a superficial way, which fails to incorporate social justice principles in the learning process, thus cannot lead to the creation of equitable classrooms (Banks, 2006; Nieto, 2004; Gorski & Swalwell, 2015). The substance of education seems to have been lost in the Greek school since the teaching practices are not focused on the whole person aiming to ensure the students' overall well-being, but are characterized by strict adherence to the curriculum and obsession with covering the syllabus.

However, the study brings to light the positive results of the pedagogies used by two of the teachers who encourage their Japanese-background students to contribute to the learning process with all their resources and lifeworld experiences. (Kalantzis & Cope, 2016). Moreover, the classroom practices include a variety of creative activities, such as drama-based activities to enhance intercultural understanding and empower the learners' identities. These findings are in line with studies that explored the use of creative activities for the students' affirmation of identity and inclusion (Vitsou & Papadopoulou, 2020; Vitsou et al., 2019).

The study highlights the need for teacher training on inclusive and intercultural practices since the majority of the educators interviewed were unaware of the benefits of these pedagogies. The research findings also indicate the need to re-orientate the goals and priorities of the Greek school and transform the educational setting so that all students feel safe and supported. Educators need to dissociate from ethnocentrism and commit themselves to intercultural practices that focus on social justice principles (Arvanitis, 2021; Palaiologou & Gorski, 2017). Collaboration among policy-makers, teachers, and researchers is of great importance for the development of structural strategies which focus on linguistically and culturally diverse learners' needs and address their resources and potential.

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Intercultural and multicultural education policies in Canada:
Shifting boundaries and emerging trends in inclusive education

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Abstract

Multiculturalism in Canada was widely acknowledged after 1988. The Canadian Multiculturalism act came into effect in 1988 and was adopted by Parliament. The fundamental ideology of this policy considers Canada as a mosaic made up of various ethnic groups—English-speaking, French-speaking, indigenous peoples and migrants. These various ethnic groups lived and worked in a harmonious pluralist society. Their diversity continues to be celebrated. Canada was the first country in the world to pass a national multiculturalism law. The significance of the term 'multicultural education' was initially recognized as having potential for reinforcing or challenging hegemony. The focus of this research is to largely understand xenophobic tendencies and its influence on making education accessible to a largely diverse multicultural society. The methodology for the study is based on identifying and articulating the most common criticisms of multicultural education. A critical literary review and analysis will be conducted by focusing on journal articles, books, dissertation abstracts, book reviews, reports, policies, and other documents. Database research includes EBSCO, Proquest, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. I intend to conduct a key word search of 'multiculturalism' and 'inclusive education' within other search terms such as critical reviews or problems, between the years 2000 and 2022. For the purposes of this research, thirty academic peer-reviewed articles, four books, seven book reviews, and five reports that focused on a theoretical critique of multicultural education in Canada will be selected.

Analysis of the above sources enables the identification of common theoretical perspectives in a Canadian context such as critical pedagogy theorists, liberal multiculturalism, revolutionary multiculturalism and anti-racist theorists. This research aims to conduct a critical examination of the discourses in the academic literature on multicultural education in Canada taking into account the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Followed by a critical reflection on the implications of major findings through the review of multicultural education in Canada. The outcome of this study is to provide policy recommendations and changes to the existing multicultural education framework implemented in Canada.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Canada, inclusive education, minority education, post-secondary education.

Multiculturalism in the Canadian education context:

Through the work of leading scholars' culture may be defined as a process of enculturation and socialization. Since the 1970s onward, the work of prominent Marxist sociologist Stuart Hall, along with that of his colleagues Paul Willis, Dick Hebdige, Tony Jefferson, and Angela McRobbie, pioneered in building an international intellectual movement. Multicultural societies are diverse affected by forces encouraging and

resisting change. According to Bennetti the term multiculturalism means "local cultures finding themselves within cultural values without being assimilated". Other contributors to the field of multicultural education focused on the role and nature of multicultural education. Scholars such as Ameny-Dixon, identified multicultural education as a tool that promotes and increases productivity, it further helps eliminate prejudice, and develops interpersonal communication, creating cultural awareness, and prevents social conflicts. Keith, A. McLeod identifies multicultural education as an updated form of humanistic education developing open mindedness.

A recent study conducted in the province of British Columbia Canada, reports the city alone has a staggering 140 ethic origins (city website, 2016) out of which approximately 76.3% are considered visible minority population, defined by the Canadian government as people other than aboriginal persons, non-Caucasian. A majority of this population comprises of new immigrants and foreign-born students. Many of these students are taught by educators that have little to limited training on intercultural competencies and therefore lack the necessary cognitive, effective and behavioural skills necessary to communicate effectively with a diverse multi-cultural student population. In the last three decades multiple frameworks and conceptualizations were created to provide the necessary training competencies to educators (Banks & Banks, 2009; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Desimone, 2009; Gore, 2001; Kumashiro, 2004; Nieto, 2000; Sleeter, 2008) however there is limited research on the outcomes of the implemented frameworks (Sleeter, 2012).

Canada's federal multiculturalism policy

The policy was first adopted in 1971 by Pierre Trudeau's libertarian government. Although the policy could be considered a by-product of the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (1963–69), the idea was to use it as a policy solution to manage both rising *francophone* nationalism, particularly in *Quebec* (see French-Canadian Nationalism; The Quiet Revolution), and as a solution to increasing cultural diversity fuelled by immigration across the country. However, when comparing Canada with the rest of the world, Canada was the first country in the world to adopt a multiculturalism policy. The successful implementation of this policy marked its 51st anniversary in 2022.

The notion of critical multiculturalism was built on the premise of critical pedagogy and theory (Apple, 1999; Freire, 1973; McLaren, 1997). Many educational policy reformers have proposed conceptual frameworks that go well beyond the liberal's multiculturalism policy embracing a more transformative approach supported by strategies that engage educators with multiple modalities of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism emerged as a topic of national debate in Canadian society after the 1960's it was during this time Canada saw an unprecedent growth of new immigrant population. The origins of Canada's multiculturalism policy can be found in the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963–69). With the unrest of French Canadians in Quebec the Royal Commission was appointed to conduct an inquiry into bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada.

Following the inquiry one of the outcomes led to the creation of the official languages act 1969. Two years later the Multiculturalism policy emerged acknowledging the diversity of all Canadians and associating

intrinsic value to all cultures. According to the speech of Honorable Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau the policy was first introduced as "a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework," a policy that would complement the *Official Languages Act* by facilitating the integration of new Canadians into one or both of the official language communities".

Since its inception multiculturalism has evolved considerably in the early 20th century. Today there is an ongoing debate on the relevance of the message the multicultural policy conveys to the new immigrant population of Canada considering the majority of new comers to Canada approximately (61.8%) between the years 2011 to 2016 were born in Asia. Furthermore, African-born immigrants represented a growing share of the foreign-born population, increasing from 1.4% in the 1971 Census to 8.5% in the 2016 Census. In 2016, 7,674,580 individuals were classified as visible minority population by the *Employment Equity Act*. Amounting to one-fifth (22.3%) of Canada's population.

One of the aims of this research is to take into account the Canadian Multiculturalism Act identifying the existing gaps within the act and its relevance to inclusive education across all Canadian provinces.

Creating an inclusive education space for everyone

Begins with multicultural education as a response to cultural pluralism. According to the work of (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004) growth in immigration led to dramatic shifts in the Canadian social policy heightened by a need for diversification and multiple means of representation. As a result educational institutions struggled with the need to deliver content which equally represented the various learning needs of all learners. However, there was a noticeable cross-fertilization of theoretical frameworks which developed both in their implications for multicultural education practices and the critique of these practices (Lund, 2003). Mitchell (2001) states the contemporary liberal thought in educational theory.

"Within this theoretical framework, by virtue of collective, plural education, Americans and Canadians simultaneously endorse both democratic possibility and the ongoing maintenance of national unity and identity".

One of the challenges is the lack of rigorous scrutiny of educational policies and reforms, however periodic policy reforms have been identified as a necessary intervention creating an on-going dialogue of multiculturalism and diversity (Elliston, 1997). This intervention is helpful in eliminating systemic barriers such as language and culture which restrict immigrant assimilation into the mainstream culture.

The role of schools and institutions in welcoming and assimilating immigrants to the mainstream culture has become even more estranged as these institutions lack the necessary training and resources needed to assist new comers from diverse backgrounds integrate into society instead these institutions become locations of isolation replicating racialized form of injustice (Wideen & Barnard, 1999).The school environment doesn't create an equal playing field in demonstrating how effective multicultural education is nor does it justify the need to create a seamless transition of minority students to the mainstream education culture. Racism prevails and breeds in schools without an effective strategy to minimize its impacts (Dei, 2005); stereotyping Tamil youth, for example, with the gang label or name-calling through identities such as islamophobia.

The expectation that multicultural educational policies will promote peaceful coexistence and create equal participation for all students including visible minority student groups has been challenged when comparing the high school youth dropout rate, this rate is visibly high between 5-14% and increases to 50% or more in low-income communities (Canadian census 2016: Derwing et al., 1999; Watt & Roessingh, 2001).

Second generation immigrants face even more harsh socio-economic factors, a sense of dislocation and systemic restrictions enforced by daily racism in the Canadian system (Pratt 2002). Providing evidence which demonstrates multiculturalism has more cracks in the system which are widening and visible minority populations seems to be disappearing through the abyss. Previous studies in the field demonstrates labour market trends for non-white individuals (Li, 1998; Gee & Prus, 2000; Kazemipur & Halli, 2003) indicating lack of job opportunities and limited job security. These findings demonstrate the idea that liberal multiculturalism has not achieved what it originally intended to accomplish instead racialized groups and visible minority communities are over represented in the criminal system (Wortley, 2003).

Method

In order to articulate a critical review on multiculturalism and inclusive education a critical review and analysis of literature will be conducted by focusing on journal articles, books, dissertation abstracts, book reviews, reports, policies, and other documents. Database research sources such as EBSCO, Proquest, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. With some repetition followed by a key word search of 'multiculturalism' and 'inclusive education' within other search terms such as critical reviews or problems, between the years 2000 and 2022. Some seminal works prior to this year was also included.

For the purposes of this research, an initial search produced thirty academic peer-reviewed articles, four books, seven book reviews, and five reports that focused on a theoretical critique of multicultural education in Canada after further scrutiny and elimination of content that were not directly contributing to the topic and narrowing the search criteria, fifteen research articles were analyzed in depth to create this research paper.

Analysis of the above sources enabled the identification of the most common theoretical perspectives which most of the authors have used to critique various aspects of multicultural education in the past decade. These theoretical perspectives emerged as oppositional discourses to mainstream multicultural education theory, policies, and practices and thus provide a distinct yet somewhat overlapping array of criticisms or concerns about multicultural education.

Promoting diversity in education across provinces

Multicultural education has been challenged in its ability to achieve equality (Giroux, 2001) since its inception. The key goals of promoting multicultural education resides in the efficiency of the original federal multiculturalism policy which focuses on ethnocultural retention promoting cultural heritage and harmony (Lund 2003).

Through the work of Willinsky (1999) the effect of the Multiculturalism Act on education has been identified as follows:

- Governmental sponsorship of ethnic events and community groups

- Inclusion of non-European inventors in STEM disciplines.

- Implementing anti racist education and training to help students and educators combat racism.

In Canada education is provided provincially and territorially therefore considering the federal multiculturalism policy each province is left to adopt this policy at its own discretion with no uniformity in implementation. Currently five out of ten provinces adopted multiculturalism in education. The province of Saskatchewan implemented the policy in 1975 as the first province to adopt multiculturalism in its education system next Ontario followed in 1977, Quebec implemented its own intercultural perspective on education. The other two provinces Alberta and Manitoba followed.

The Report on the State of the Art of Multicultural Education in Canada led by Keith A. McLeod from 1992 to 1996, is important as it distinguishes key tasks in education namely

Creating inclusive conceptualization, which improves content and pedagogy. The report further highlights the need to address multiculturalism and Canadian identity (Elliston, 1997). The way forward for education policy makers in creating an inclusive space for all learners although multiculturalism is valid its application is narrow within the wide spectrum of education (McCreath, 1997; Ellison, 1997). Ghosh and Abdi (2004) argue on the demerits of multicultural and intercultural programs stating this gives theoretical access to ethnocultural groups while lacking equal participation in economic and educational spheres. Further stating "Canadians cannot afford to ignore the implications of a failed multicultural policy, and now face a challenge of redefining meaning in the quest for peace and collective prosperity".

One of the main critics of multicultural education came about by antiracist education theorists who claim multiculturalism ignores racial discrimination this on-going debate is harmful as it prevents necessary changes to be implemented in revision of curriculum (Tomlinson, 1990). Practical implementation of multiculturalism has many challenges (Brown & Kysilka, 1994; Cole, 1986; May, 1994; Wilhelm, 1994).

Education for Indigenous communities

A good portion of creating multicultural education is making education accessible for all communities inclusive of indigenous communities. In 1830, the Secretary of State for the Colonies of the British Imperial Government, George Murray, spoke about the government's policy. The policy promoted improvements to the condition of indigenous communities by encouraging progress and knowledge of the Christian religion "in any way", and education for the native tribes (Sbarrato, 2005). Following the adoption of the Indian act, the indigenous residential schools were founded in 1840 with the main objective to teach the children French or English and to convert the natives, by choice or by force, to adopt Christianity and the habits of modern life.

The violence of the residential schools and the trauma faced by the survivors of the residential school system. The use of coercion and force by the school is an example of assimilation in which the natives were forced to assimilate to a dominant culture while giving up their own cultural values, origins and identities which are part of their traditional way of life typified by their environment and natural resources.

The residential schools were first managed by the church and after 1969 by the state of Canada. Within the school community indigenous languages were forbidden, even in conversations between children. Any attempt to speak their own language resulted in severe punishment. Furthermore, the children were taught that their culture was barbarous and their religious beliefs pagan.

"The traditions, the rites, the political organization and economic practices of indigenous people were considered mostly as obstacles to their Christianization or even as criminal behaviour" (Sbarrato, 2005). Indigenous education evolves with hope and openness despite frustration and constraints. Through awareness and recognition of truth and reconciliation by paying tribute to the lives lost by means of recognition in the form of honoring the lives lost through the residential school system these communities are able to grieve and make their voices heard despite years of oppressions. Canada has identified the 30th of September as orange shirt day as a mark of respect to honour the lost lives of indigenous children and this day is recognized as a federal statutory holiday.

Residential schools represent the antithesis of intercultural approaches to education. Based on the attitudes of colonization, ethnocentrism, racism and discrimination, these schools have left an important contentious legacy between the indigenous cultures and the manner of schooling.

Analysis and Discussion

Through analysis of multicultural programs subsidized by government funds between 1982-2002 McAndrew, Helly and Tessier (2005) conclude the following:

1. Supporting minority language and culture
2. Intercultural comprehension
3. Combating Racism
4. Integration and participation

The last three initiatives have a more dominant presence today in comparison to initiatives that support minority language and culture. Despite funding and programs available there is a lack of support for students from minority communities contributing to a high rate of school dropout (James, 2017). Multiculturalism has not succeeded to resolve the problem of racial inequality (Ontario provincial advisory committee on race, 1987). Lack of trained staff, improvements in an inclusive curricula and ethnocentric practices contributed to educational and cultural difficulties in students from minority communities.

The creation of a Canadian school for young black students was a historical milestone in accepting multiculturalism. September 2009 welcomed over 135 students to an Afrocentric alternative school in Toronto (Levine Rasky, 2014). The principal's message to the school community begins with 'together we build, succeed and lead' identifying it as one of the districts model school. The school focuses on building a positive black identity creating a sense of belonging to all students. The Afro Canadian community wanted empowerment in education they wanted their students to learn about various perspectives, history and experiences of people from African descent. This is one fine example of creating inclusive education. One of the challenges the school faced once opened was the students in this school system would feel even more

marginalized by mainstream communities. According to a poll only 3% of the province's population supported the opening of this school.

Conclusion

The idea of creating a pluralist society begins with acceptance. Accepting people from different races, ethnic backgrounds and religious views living together in unity and promoting meaningful relationships contributing to social wellbeing and uplifting communities are valued and respected. Multiculturalism applies to all Canadian and is a representation of all Canadians which means creating a meaningful and inclusive education system for all Canadians. Creating inclusive education is represented in varying proportions across different provinces based on their own jurisdictions however the challenge lies in the hesitancy of the federal government in mandating multicultural education through policy statements. Educating and creating awareness about history, culture and understanding the diversity of social groups in communities is a part of creating a holistic multicultural education model.

Today the message on multicultural education is seen as discouraging to new comers adopting Canadian values as they find it difficult to assimilate the message into their own diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Making them less involved and engaged in socio cultural actives leading to the creation of ethnic ghettos. The solution begins with acceptance of a diverse multicultural society and allowing multicultural identities to thrive however while this notion if multicultural identities is promoted in society research indicates a division on religious ideologies.

Recommendations

There is limited language on promoting a provincial multicultural education policy across Canadian provinces. The provinces have also been cautions in terms of over representation of multicultural educational policies. Therefore it is important to begin with understanding culture prior to interpreting multi culture (Chan, 2022).

The Ontario school system has much work to do revolving culture and student identities. Culture is considered as one of the elements in constructing student identity, making students feel safe and welcome. Building a sense of belonging in the system is necessary. To facilitate this the school system needs to create a framework of culturally responsive pedagogy.

This framework must be holistically implemented from an administrative, academic and student perspective focusing on the common values of the school system, creating inclusive curricula for students to understand their own multicultural backgrounds and history as well as training teachers to be equipped with resources and knowledge, being culturally sensitive, promoting a level of cultural intelligence among students and educators and building a community for students to feel a sense of belongingness within their school environment.

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Teachers' readiness to handle multiculturalism in class environments

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Abstract

Greek schools nowadays are culturally diverse because of the intense arrivals of many immigrants and refugees in our country This study comes to shed light on primary school teachers' readiness to work and teach in multicultural school context. In this context, teachers' attitudes over culturally diverse students were explored a long with their competence and ability to operate in a multicultural classroom. Research sample consisted of 137 primary school teachers employed in the prefecture of Achaia, whereas convenient random technique was followed. The data were encoded and analyzed with the statistical software SPSS 26.0 for Windows. The reliability of the internal consistency is high as it ranges from 0,802 to 0,899 > 0,70. A questionnaire based on the Greek version of the Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparedness Scale developed by HSiao (2015) was used. This scale includes 18 questions where the teachers engaged in the research were asked to answer in a 5-point Likert scale. Three factors were measured with the above scale: (a) curriculum and instruction, (b) relationship and expectation establishment, and (c) group belonging formation. Results showed that the teachers involved were not prepared to operate in a high degree in a multicultural classroom. They seem to be interculturally sensitive and caring for their students and they have understood the importance of family communication and engagement in the school process.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, interculturalism, primary education, readiness.

Introduction

Nowadays in Greek schools various cultures and ethnicities merge. Along with the Greek students, there are many immigrant students of diverse cultural backgrounds. Thus, the education of culturally diverse students is essential for their academic achievement. According to Gay (2002), teacher's mindset and perceptions are a vital issue in the quality of education offered to culturally diverse students. It is important for teachers to understand their students' cultural status in order to teach them in culturally responsive way since this would lead to higher academic achievements (Gay 2002; Plata 2008), whilst there would be benefits for the rest of the students (Barnes, 2006).

Irvine and Arment (2001) state that a teacher who is culturally responsive should be informed about the various patterns in the school environment so as to act in a constructive way. Not every teacher, though, is able to handle multiculturalism in school environments. Various researchers (Gay, 2005; Spanierman et al., 2011) believe that the aforementioned ability should be practiced during teachers' academic studies.

Barrett (2013) states that multiculturalism can be defined in many ways. Contemporary societies are characterized as multiculturalist for various reasons: because of immigration of people who were born in other countries and have grown up in different culture settings as well as due to the existence of distinct ethnotic groups in many countries such as Welsh, Scots, Catalans or Roma.

Interculturalism is the modern approach for the management of culturally diverse societies. There are a few common traits with multiculturalism since it takes into account the multicultural diversity of modern societies and multicultural acceptance. It emphasizes the integration of culturally diverse people and social inclusion. The main difference with multiculturalism is that is focuses on intercultural dialogue, interaction and exchange. The main objective of interculturalism is the creation of a society based on universal principles, values. This can be achieved by means of intercultural dialogue in which someone can take part as long as he is interculturally competent.

Teachers can contribute to change leading to social cohesion. This can be achieved on condition that they are adequately trained and hence prepared to adopt and implement the principles of intercultural education to their instructional practices. In the light of the above, the purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' readiness to handle multiculturalism in class environment.

There were two research questions set for the current study:

- What are the teachers' attitudes towards cultural diversity in school environment?

- To what extent do they have the knowledge and competences to handle multicultural school classes?

Method

In order to conduct this study a quantitative method was used. A sample of 137 primary school teachers teaching in the prefecture of Achaia was accessed by means of convenient random sampling technique. These teachers fulfilled the criteria to participate in this study since all of them teach in culturally diverse classes where lots of immigrant students are present. The research sample consisted of 109 female and 29 male teachers the majority of them being 31 to 50 years old. The research instrument used was the Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparedness Scale developed by Hsiao (2015). The aforementioned scale is a questionnaire consisting of 18 questions exploring three aspects suitable to identify competencies and factors of readiness. The factors measured by means of the above scale are: (a) *Curriculum and Instruction* (questions 1-8), (b) *Relationship and Expectation Establishment* (questions 9-14) and (c) *Group Belonging Formation* (questions 15-18). The research instrument was translated to Greek. In order to configure the validity of the instrument a pilot study was conducted during which 15 teachers were asked to answer the questions on a 5-point Likert scale. The participants' comments and suggestions were taken into account and the statements that were ambiguous were rewritten and clarified. The final, revised draft of the questionnaire was formed and distributed to the teachers participating in this research. The data collected was encoded and analysed with the statistical software IBM SPSS 26.0 for Windows.

Results

The internal consistency of the factors of the questionnaire was measured by the estimation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The values were: 0.899 for Curriculum and Instruction, 0.802 for Relationship and Expectation Establishment and 0.805 for Group Belonging Formation. All values were far above 0.70 which is the basis value set by literature (Field, 2009) meaning that there is a strong internal consistency and reliability in the instrument used.

A total of 18 culturally responsive teaching competencies were identified in the questionnaire and rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Participants were guided to self-rate each competence to indicate their preparedness. Each competence had the same stem "I am able to". The answers ranged from Completely Disagree, which was attributed value 1, to Completely Agree, which was attributed value 5. When the value of an answer is 4 or 5, the answer is considered to be positive. When the value of a participant's answer is less than 3, the answer is regarded as a negative one.

In order to estimate the degree of perceptible intercultural competence for each teacher, the mean of every answer was calculated along with the mean for every factor and the total mean of all three factors. In this way, the degree of teachers' intercultural competence with regard to every question and every factor as well as the overall degree of teacher's readiness was calculated.

The mean values and their standard deviation (SD) of the first factor entitled "*Curriculum and Instruction*" presented in Table 1 show that there were not many positive answers. Mean values ranged from 3.38 to 3.72 which is lower than 4 whereas 5 is the ideal value. This finding indicates that the majority of the teachers participating in this survey are not ready to handle curriculum, instruction, assessment techniques and language issues effectively, in a way that would benefit culturally diverse students.

		Questions		
		I am able to	**MEAN**	**SD**
		infuse the curriculum and thematic units with the culture of students represented in the classroom	3.62	0.768
		review and assess curricula and instructional materials to determine their multicultural strengths and weakness. and relevance to students' interest and instructional needs, and revise them if necessary.	3,62	0.796
		develop a repertoire of instructional examples that are culturally familiar to students to serve as a scaffold for learning.	3.72	0.776
		find ways to support language acquisition and enhance culturally and linguistically diverse students' comprehension of classroom tasks.	3.64	0.913
		use a variety of assessment techniques, such as self-assessment, portfolios, and so on, to evaluate students' performance in favor of cultural diversity.	3.60	0.790
		design assessments to complement the culturally responsive pedagogical strategies that were employed during instruction.	3.38	0.850
		assess culturally diverse students' readiness, intellectual and academic strengths and weaknesses, and development needs.	3.55	0.786
		utilize a variety of instructional methods to match students' learning preferences in 8 learning the subject matter, and maintaining their attention and interest in learning.	3.67	0.814

Table 1. *Curriculum and Instruction*

According to the findings of this research, the mean value of the most answers for the factor "*Relationship and Expectation Establishment*" is quite high ranging from 3.80 to 4.23 whereas 2 answers are higher than 4 and the rest very close to 4 (Table 2). These results indicate that teachers are really competent at developing expectations as well as relationships based on trust and solidarity with culturally diverse students and their parents.

		Questions		
		I am able to	**MEAN**	**SD**
		know how to communicate with culturally diverse students and their parents or guardians.	3.80	0.729
0		structure classroom-based meetings that are comfortable for parents.	3.93	0.660
1		foster meaningful and supportive relationships with parents and families, and actively involve them in their students' learning.	3.87	0.662
2		use non-traditional discourse styles with culturally diverse students in an attempt to communicate in culturally responsive ways.	3.96	0.640

		MEAN	SD
3	communicate expectations of success to culturally diverse students.	4.13	0.640
4	establish expectations for appropriate classroom behavior in considering students' cultural 14 backgrounds to maintain a conducive learning environment	4.23	0.686

Table 2. *Relationship and Expectation Establishment*

The participants' answers on the third factor, "*Group Belonging Formation*", showed that teachers demonstrate a high degree of readiness, given that the mean of the answers was high, greater than 4, except for question 18, which raised a mean relatively high (3,82) but not as high as the mean of the rest answers (Table 3).

	Questions		
	I am able to	MEAN	SD
5	develop and maintain positive, meaningful, caring, and trusting relationships with students.	4.23	0.518
6	create a warm, supporting, safe, and secure classroom environment for culturally diverse students	4.14	0.644
7	create a community of learners by encouraging students to focus on collective work, responsibility, and cooperation.	4.12	0.680
8	provide students with knowledge and skills needed to function in mainstream culture.	3.82	0.779

Table 3. *Group belonging formation*

The total mean of the answers per factor provided by the participants is presented in Table 4. The estimations show that the teachers participating in this survey are in a quite high degree readiness in the factors "*Relationship and Expectation Establishment*" and "*Group Belonging Formation*" since the total mean of all answers to the questions that measure each factor is high (4.08 and 3.98 respectively). By contrast, as far as the "*Curriculum and Instruction*" factor is concerned, the teachers' answers indicated that they are not prepared to a high degree to operate effectively in a multicultural class. The mean assembled (3.60) is considered to be quite low, showing that teachers are insufficiently prepared to handle instruction, assessment, curriculum and language issues.

FACTOR	MEAN
Curriculum and Instruction	3.60
Relationship and Expectation Establishment	3.98
Group Belonging Formation	4.08

Table 4. *Mean value of each factor*

In addition, the total mean of all three factors was calculated. Its value, 3.89 is relatively high but does not depict a desirable degree of teachers' multicultural readiness. Therefore, it could be maintained that teachers participating in the study are not ready to a satisfactorily high degree to cope with the challenges that arise from a multicultural class environment.

Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this study was to provide insight into teachers' readiness to handle multiculturalism in class environments. Results showed that the participants are not ready to a desirably high degree to cope with the challenges that arise from a multicultural class environment. They wish to support their students and care to a high degree; they seem to be interculturally sensitive and caring for their students; they have realized the importance of family communication and engagement in the students' learning. It appears that they know how to enhance expectations of success and how to create a warm, supporting, safe, and secure classroom environment for culturally diverse students. However, they seem to lack knowledge and competences which would help them handle multiculturalism successfully in class. In particular, their answers showed that they lack knowledge and competences necessary for the implementation of multicultural instructional practices which facilitate learning, match students' learning preferences and maintain their attention and interest in learning.

Moreover, the participants lack knowledge and competences for supporting language acquisition which would enhance culturally and linguistically diverse students' comprehension of classroom tasks. As far as the curriculum is concerned, it appears that they are not competent enough at infusing it with the culture of students in the classroom. Their answers indicated that they are not able to review and assess curricula and instructional materials to determine their multicultural strengths and weakness, and relevance to students' interest and instructional needs and revise them if necessary. Last but not least, the participants' answers showed that they can neither use a variety of assessment techniques which favour cultural diversity, such as self-assessment, portfolios to evaluate students' performance nor assess culturally diverse students' readiness, their intellectual and academic strengths and weaknesses and their developmental needs. In view of these findings, it could be well supported that the participants are not to a high degree ready to successfully meet the demands of multicultural classes.

Thus, relevant training can play a significant role, since well-educated and informed teachers are more likely to implement more "participatory and inclusive pedagogies and adjust their teaching to the needs of their specific classroom" (Papadopoulou, Palaiologou, & Karanikola, 2022, p. 13). In addition, the development of global and intercultural competences are of crucial importance for citizens in multilingual and multicultural environments, and for the thriving, prospering and evolution of modern societies (Karanikola, Katsiouli, & Palaiologou, 2022).

This research tried to shed light on some important aspects of this topic and contribute to the relative scientific field. Some important findings were revealed, and there are many commonalities with other similar researches conducted both at a national and at international level. However, these findings cannot be

generalized for the whole population given that they depict teachers' views in a specific region and in a specific time period. Some more relevant researches, both qualitative and quantitative, could be conducted in this direction. Finally, more aspects related to education and training could also be investigated, such as teachers' needs analysis, training programs designing and implementation.

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Pedagogical interventions to a hyper-challenging educational environment

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Abstract

In this research we propose a range of educational strategies and activities to mitigate the effects of the challenges encountered in the field of refugee education. The research took place in a preschool Reception Facility for Refugee Education (RFRE) in Greece. An action research methodology was implemented and the data were collected through participatory observation and the use of a research diary. The educational strategies and activities were deployed during a complete school year and their efficacy was evaluated with respect to enhancing the engagement of the students during the educational act, developing the students' communicational and literacy skills and promoting their overall resilience. The findings of the research suggest that the most effective strategies and activities are relevant to artistic expression, physical activities, classroom setup, free play, numeracy activities, board games, daily routines and story reading. The concept of multimodality stood out throughout the study. Furthermore, the role of explicit teaching strategies, alongside implicit strategies, was highlighted.

Keywords: refugee education, preschool, teaching strategies, resilience, multimodality, emergent literacy.

Introduction

At the end of 2021, the total number of refugees worldwide was estimated at over 27.1 million people, over half of whom were children under the age of 18 and in need of education (UNHCR, 2022). Despite the universal acknowledgment of the importance and the multiple benefits of education for refugee communities, and particularly refugee children (Cerna, Brussino, & Mezzanote, 2021; Nicolai & Triplehorn, 2003), refugee education is still riddled with serious challenges, such as language barriers, trauma and uncertainty, lack of teacher training and exclusion of refugee students from mainstream classrooms (EU Fundamental Rights Agency, 2017; OECD, 2018; Mogli, Kalbeni, & Stergiou, 2020). Thus, the primary goal of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a range of educational strategies and activities with regard to mitigating the effects of these challenges.

Theoretical Framework

A strength-based approach for the education of immigrant and refugee children, which is characterized by resilience and capacity, is considered to have significant potential to assist the mitigation of symptoms of stress and trauma for refugee students (Hayward, 2017; MacArthur, Rawana, & Brownlee, 2011). The focus of such an approach is on the person's strengths and capabilities, rather than engaging an individual with a deficit

perspective and risk focus (Hammond & Zimmerman, 2012). The concept of resilience is one of high importance in this approach. According to Masten's (2011) definition, resilience is the capacity of a dynamic system to withstand or recover from significant challenges that threaten its stability, viability, or development. On the individual level, resilience could be described as the flexibility that allows some children and young people who appear at risk to "bounce back" from adversity and even thrive in the face of challenges (Mohamed & Thomas, 2017). Resilience is not one-dimensional but rather the accumulation of many skills and resources and emerges from the interactions among several different systems and contexts (e.g., individual, family, school, community, and societal levels). The following are considered among the main school factors to contribute to the promotion of resilience in immigrant and refugee youth: sense of belonging and social integration, attainment of baseline levels of academic proficiency, educational programs that foster equality and inclusion, achievement motivation, respect for the students' fundamental needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2020; OECD, 2018).

Another key concept for the present study is the concept multimodality. Multimodal perspectives suggest that language is only one of the many representational and communicational resources through which meanings are made, as well as distributed, interpreted, and remade (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Image, gesture, gaze, body posture, sound, writing and music are some of these communicational resources, which are conceptualized as modes, namely organized sets of semiotic resources for meaning making (Jewitt, 2008). Each one of these modes can convey full meaning, that is, ideational, interpersonal, and textual meaning. Our experiences of the outer world are expressed through the ideational function. The interpersonal function refers to interactions and relationships with others, and the textual function concerns the way in which the above meanings are organized (Magnusson & Godhe, 2019).

Methodology

The research took place from October 2021 to June 2022 in a preschool Reception Facility for Refugee Education (RFRE) in Greece. The sample of the study consisted of 11 preschool students, 5 boys and 6 girls, aged 4-5 years old, whose countries of origin where Afghanistan, Congo, Syria and Iraq. The primary reflection on the classroom situation indicated that the students had no knowledge of the host country language, namely Greek, and only some students had basic knowledge of English.

Administratively, the RFRE pertained to a "mother" public preschool that resides nearby the camp. RFREs where founded by the Greek state (2016) in order to respond to the educational needs of the students residing in Open Accommodation Sites. Preschool RFREs operate within the refugee camps and follow the timetable and curriculum of the public preschools. Teachers in the RFREs are substitute teachers provided by the Greek state. Special training in refugee/multicultural/multilingual education is not a prerequisite for teachers to be employed in a RFRE.

An action research methodology was followed through the implementation of an action research cyclical process (Drummond & Themessl-Huber, 2007). Due to the evaluative nature of the study, a four-cycle action research format was preferred consisting of the following cycles: reflection, planning, acting, observation

(Edwards & Burns, 2016). The data was collected through participatory observation and a research diary. Since the effectiveness of the educational strategies and activities was evaluated regarding three main qualities, the data was categorized under three main groups, each corresponding to one of these qualities, that is enhancing the engagement of the students during the educational act, developing the students' communicational and literacy skills and promoting their overall resilience. Several data elements were categorized under more than one group. Through the data analysis, the most effective educational strategies and activities were identified, as they were linked to the aforementioned qualities. Furthermore, the emergent pattern of the importance of multimodality in alleviating the challenges of language barriers, was noted.

Findings

Effective educational strategies and activities

Classroom setup – welcoming, structured and inclusive environment
Providing a welcoming, structured and inclusive environment was crucial in counterbalancing the effects of trauma and uncertainty and encouraging all students to participate in the educational procedure. Some of the elements of this environment were the everyday greeting in both Greek and the mother tongue of every student, the adoption by the teacher of commonly used words and expressions in the students' mother tongues, the provision of classroom space and school time for free play, the presence of permanent reference boards (colors, numbers, shapes) to whom students could refer at any time and the consistent everyday timetable (morning routines, educational activities time, free play time).

Story reading
Simple texts with rich imagery and stories without words would be the most effective material. Students were highly engaged during those activities and read the books during their free play, repeating key phrases of the story.

Dramatization and puppetry
For some dramatizations, students would choose everyday activities to dramatize (going to the doctor, going to the store, riding the bus), thus these activities were tending the students' needs for relatedness. After the implementation of the activities, the students were observed to use the model dialogues during their free play.

Songs
A selection of songs that could be visualized using gestures and songs that included animal voices was used. The students would adopt and use vocabulary from the songs in a relatively short time.

Morning routines

Morning routines had to do with the date, the weather and the daily attendance and contributed to students' acquisition of numeracy skills and vocabulary.

Memory card games

These games were amongst the favorite activities for the students and were effective in terms of vocabulary acquisition, as the teacher would name at first the objects or animals on the cards and gradually the students would do the same during the game and apply the vocabulary in other contexts. They were also effective in terms of acquisition of numeracy skills as the students would count the cards at the end of each game and compare them.

Literacy activities

Two of the most successful literacy activities were word recomposition, namely cutting the letters of a word and rearranging them and optical name recognition of the students' own names and their classmates' names.

Naming activities using pictures

This activity consisted of explicit teaching of the names of objects, animals, colors, actions and was characterized by high effectiveness in vocabulary acquisition.

Online communication with "mother" preschool

Students were excited to meet their peers in the preschool outside the camp and were eager to communicate with them. During the communication they tried to demonstrate their language skills and even used words they had not used in other occasions.

Discussion

The present research was an attempt to identify effective educational strategies and activities in terms of overcoming the challenges that hinder the education of refugee children. We believe that its results constitute a contribution towards the improvement of the educational practice in refugee education and can be a helpful tool in the hands of practitioners in the field. Throughout the research, the concept of multimodality was distinctly present. This occurred mainly using pictures and visual cues, gestures, movement and enactment, songs and music. Overall, multimodality facilitated communication and allowed both teacher and students to convey meaning. Furthermore, the promotion of resilience was fostered through: a) the setup of an environment that promoted the sense of belonging, b) the promotion of the sense of competence and academic achievement via the development of communicational, literacy and numeracy skills and c) through tending to the students' need for relatedness. Finally, the role of explicit teaching was highlighted, as the educational activities that were based on explicit teaching were highly effective in respect to the acquisition of vocabulary and numeracy skills.

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COVID 19 and the complications of distance learning for Roma children

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Abstract

There is very little literature on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Roma populations in Greece. Especially those living in conditions of structural exclusion. in particular the structural problems that affect Roma education have been aggravated by Covid-19. The present paper presents a study carried out by the Laboratory of Intercultural Education of the University of Athens, in which interviews were conducted with a sample of 800 participants of Roma origin. The interviews show the extent of exclusion of young populations. This is linked to education and the role that it has in the perpetuation of this process.

Keywords: intercultural education, exclusion, school integration, support for regular education, Covid-19 pandemic.

Introduction: Problems recorded in the Covid 19 pandemic conditions on Roma communities

The COVID-19 pandemic has not had as bad impact on Roma communities so far as expected. This is probably due to the fact that Roma communities often have limited contact with the local population. However, the wider effects of the pandemic have had a huge impact on the Roma community, increasing displacement and limiting opportunities for work and resettlement.

The closure of schools to curb the spread of COVID-19 has affected millions of Roma children. While the impact of school closures has been mitigated by distance learning initiatives, the lack of connectivity and technological access for Roma population is a significant challenge.

Exclusion factors for Roma population

The exclusion of social groups is a complex phenomenon that must be linked to the mechanisms used by the dominant social group to maintain its power (Tilly, 2005, p. 73). A key axis of these mechanisms is the creation of inequalities aimed at excluding different social groups from social rights (Markou, 2018, p. 38). The same term, inequality, describes the relationship between two social groups, which results in greater benefits for the one of the two groups (Markou, 2018, p. 47). This inequality first forms the access and the control of resources, both physical and social, and then the social relationships, which, on their turn, shape the culture of that society, affecting education, working conditions and social ties (Markou, 2018, pp. 43-44, 47; Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 241-258).

In particular, the exclusion of Roma populations in Greece has often been occurred by the fact that the particularities of a social group were transformed, using both stereotypes and prejudices, to prove ethnic

identity, and thus ethnic difference (Gotovos, 2002, p. 125). Political, social and financial relations of power are silenced as agents and the sole responsibility of those experiencing exclusion is maintained. At the same time, the impact of the attitudes of non-Roma populations and the relationships they develop with Roma in shaping their socio-economic status are ignored, an effect characterized as a 'secondary ethno-cultural effect' (Markou, 2018, p. 67). Accordingly, the ignored fact is that the 'socio-cultural identity' of all social groups, whether Roma or not, is constantly changing (Markou, 2018, p. 74).

On the other hand, there are approaches that consider class to be the criterion for interpreting the exclusion experienced by Roma populations. In this case, the socio-economic factors, not the ethnocultural characteristics, interpret the concept of different. These factors are powerful enough to exclude poor groups who move in search of casual work, and to make them form a closed society as a defense against exclusion and discrimination (Pizanias, 2004, pp. 29-31). At the same time, the communication of non-Roma populations with Roma is highlighted, which is shaped by the given socio-economic conditions of the latter (Markou, 2018, p. 67). The actions therefore proposed by the proponents of this approach to removing exclusion experienced by Roma populations do not concern the cultural deficit, as advocates of the ethnocultural approach, but suggest structural-social measures in education, in labor market, and in the fight against poverty and racism (Zapata-Barrero, 2015, pp. 7-15; Markou, 2018, pp. 67-68; Pizanias, 2004, pp. 34-37).

Knowledge of the ethnocultural background of Roma populations may contribute to the adoption of effective integration strategies. However, ethnocultural characteristics cannot be an objective factor that distinguishes the Roma population from other social groups (Markou, 2018, pp. 70-72). On the contrary, a systematic view of the factors that contribute to the marginalization of Roma populations, including the socio-historical conditions of exclusion, their place in society and production, the relationships they develop with non-Roma populations, and their spatial exclusion, is considered more complete to interpret the phenomenon.

The pilot study of the Laboratory of Intercultural Education

Interviews were conducted with a sample of 800 participants of Roma origin. The interviews highlighted the profiles of participants in terms of living conditions, participation in social life and access to social benefits. At the same time, their response to the prevention of COVID-19 is being examined.

The interviews show the extent of exclusion of young populations. This is linked to education and the role that it has in the perpetuation of this process. The statistics showed that the main problem regarding structural exclusion of Roma to a very large extent is professional rehabilitation (71.6%) and that the second main problem to a very large extent is the lack of benefits from the state (64.1%). In particular, statistically significant results emerged regarding the amount of monthly income, the level of speaking Greek and the level of reading Greek.

One can conclude the need to promote a pedagogy of intercultural education that should not consider that children's skill acquisition and the fight against discrimination can be achieved simply by the design of a "correct teaching strategy" and that this problem extends beyond the realm of pedagogy. The lack of access to

health care, housing or work are determinant to fight against discrimination. There is need for successful pedagogical measures based on the creation of a collective identity that allows children to be part of group.

Method

Research questions

- Does the level of speaking Greek have a significant effect on the structural exclusion regarding the children's education problems, as well as on the structural exclusion regarding the lack of acceptance by the children?

- Does the reading level of Greek have a significant effect on the structural exclusion regarding the lack of benefits from the state, as well as on the structural exclusion regarding the problems of renting a house?

Participants and tool

The method of systematic sampling was used, in combination with the overview of the corresponding questionnaire, which was drawn up and used in corresponding research concerning Roma populations at national level, during the period of the program "Education of Roma Children".

The final questionnaire consists of eight (8) axes, which reflect the respective dimensions and objectives of the research:

1. Demographic characteristics

2. Educational route

3. Position in the labor market

4. Financial situation

5. Spatial segregation and housing conditions

6. Ethnocultural orientations

7. Social relations – relations with the community

8. Family composition and marital relations

The target group was the Roma families who reside in the areas of responsibility of the program and the corresponding sampling distribution takes into account the type of residence, based on the records of the families in each area, as it has been presented through different census surveys in the last years. It should be pointed out that there is no complete and completely reliable record of the Roma population, much less a census of them by the country's official authorities.

A total of 832 questionnaires were completed, of which a total of 800 were used, which met all the conditions for use in the analysis. It should be noted that the questionnaires were distributed and completed in 20 prefectures of the country including five islands. Also, the final distribution of the sample (45 municipalities) corresponds to the distribution of Roma population in the country based on data from studies by various agencies (GGLE, Roma Network, etc.), which concerned the type of residence and residence them, but

also from the registration of the families in the framework of the "Inclusion of Roma children in Education" program in 2010 - 2011.

Results

- The level of speaking Greek exerts a statistically significant effect on structural exclusion with regard to housing problems, the problem of lack of acceptance by the non-Roma populations, the problem of lack of benefits from the state and the problem of renting a house.
- The level of reading skill in Greek exerts a significant influence on structural exclusion in terms of problems in education, in terms of professional problems, and in terms of housing problems.

Discussion

Problems in housing, education, work, acceptance by non-Roma populations and benefits from the state were observed to depend on the above factors to a statistically very high degree. In particular, with regard to the level of speaking and reading in Greek, this research highlights the crucial role of education, either for the continuation of the reproduction of inequalities or for their removal. information. In fact, in a corresponding survey, a very high percentage of respondents (83.9%) highlighted as one of the biggest problems facing the lack of benefits from the state (Parthenis, 2018). The adoption of measures in all sectors and especially in the area of education is, therefore, deemed necessary to deal with the exclusion of the Greek Roma.

Conclusions

The present research highlighted the high correlation of the level of speaking and reading in the Greek language with the standard of living of the Greek Roma. The research can contribute to the dialogue regarding the measures to strengthen the vulnerable social groups, and in particular the populations of Roma origin, in periods of crisis, such as the recent Covid-19 pandemic.

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Citizenship competence of refugee students in the Greek educational system: Teachers' views and perspectives

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Abstract

The study purpose is to understand how citizenship is interpreted in Greek primary school, with the purpose to compare and identify prioritized aspects of intercultural education in primary school refugee students. The project is based upon the principles of Intercultural education that aims to create equal opportunities for students from different backgrounds. It follows the qualitative approach and uses semi-structured interviews with 10 primary school teachers that work with refugee students. The interviews depicted an ethnocentric approach in education. Also, issues related with racist attitudes of different agents inside and outside education, lack of proper infrastructure, and other structural issues.

Keywords: Intercultural education, refugee education, semi-structured interviews, immigration, citizenship competence, teachers' perspectives.

Introduction

From 2015 and onwards the greatest burden of immigration, has been borne by southern European countries and especially Greece, as it is the closest geographical entrance to Europe for many countries in upheaval and war. However, the country was not prepared for the large refugee numbers that arrived at the eastern shores of the Greek islands during the summer of 2015. More than a million people arrived in the EU during that year, with many coming through Greece (Afouxenidis et al., 2017).

Refugee Education in Greece

The Greek Ministry of Education established the Reception Facilities for Refugee Education (DYEP), as preparatory classes during a transitional period (Crul et al., 2019). They operate within schools, with teachers that teach in an extra afternoon shift, separate from the native population, a specialized curriculum that has as its aim to re-integrate refugee children into the school society (Crul et al., 2019). The ministry is responsible for the curriculum and the students have courses in English language, Greek as a second language, mathematics, arts, computer science and physical education (Vergou, 2019). In general, their purpose is to offer a sense of normality to refugee children and secure their psychosocial support (Crul et al., 2019).

Apart from DYEPs the ministry also established morning classes. Refugees are part of the regular class with native students for some courses (Science, History, Physical Education, etc.) and spend most of their time

in classes called Reception Classes of Educational Priority Zones (ZEP) with different teachers and learn Greek and Mathematics (Crul et al., 2019).

Challenges in Greek education

Although there has been significant progress in refugee education, there are still challenges to overcome. Both DYEP and ZEP have received strong critique, as research has shown that offer a lower education quality and unfortunately segregation effects (Crul et al., 2019). The courses are done exclusively for the refugees outside the regular classroom and many teachers that work with the refugee children do not have the appropriate knowledge to work in these situations (Vergou, 2019).

Further, many refugee children suffer traumas and ideally, they should receive an extra support in schools, which is not always the case due to the lack of resources of the Greek educational system (Christodoulou & Abou-Saleh, 2016). Within the school, refugee students face issues related to their socialization with native students. In many cases refugee students did not have continuous education and they find it difficult to communicate in a new language. This contributes to emotional problems and causes confusions that lead to incidents of verbal and physical violence (Nikolaou, 2011).

However, the main problem is the xenophobia and the racist reactions (Nordgren, 2017). Refugees faced the refusal of schools to accept them, because a few of Greek parents reacted to the attendance of refugees along with their children for hygiene reasons (Shakya et. al., 2012). This created a hostile environment for refugees and dangerous scenarios of contamination were circulated (Vergou, 2019). The massive influx of refugees in the country, especially in areas with small native population, created a negative climate (Griva & Stamou, 2014). The fear of the "foreigner" created prejudices and phobic reactions from the residents. All these negative perceptions and challenges that refugees face in Greece, hinders their integration in education and reveal a situation quite opposite to the values of interculturalism.

Study purpose

The aim of the study is to understand how the citizenship notion is interpreted in the Greek primary school classroom, with the purpose to be able to compare and identify the prioritized aspects of intercultural education of primary school refugee students. The research questions that guide this study are:

- How are the values of intercultural education and the European concept of citizenship integrated into refugee education?
- Are there intercultural education values in teachers' practices?

Theoretical framework

The study is based on the Intercultural education (ICE) theory that seeks a dynamic interaction and cooperation between individuals of different national groups (Markou, 1996). Its goal is to challenge power relations and emancipate individuals to secure social change (Faas, Hajisoteriou, & Angelides, 2014). Advocates for radical interventions to abolish stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and discrimination (Banks & Banks, 2019). Thus,

dialogue is fundamental for ICE to integrate students in a multicultural society (Baros, Stergiou, & Chatzidimou, 2014).

Methodology

The study follows the qualitative approach, as interviews were used to explore the teachers' experiences in refugee education, as well as the range and variation in their opinions and perspectives about the intercultural values in school (Frey, 2018).

The sample was ten teachers that are working with refugee students in Greek public schools. It was used convenient or purposive sampling, as the teachers were chosen based on the researcher's convenience. In particular, the teachers were people the researcher already knew from before, met the criteria of the study and expressed a positive intention to participate (Acharya et al., 2013). Eight interviews were conducted in person and two via the Zoom platform. All interviews lasted between 20-40 minutes. Below I present participants' background information:

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Current Teaching position	Years of experience	Highest Qualification
1	Female	30-40	DYEP	12	Masters' degree
2	Female	30-40	ZEP	10	Masters' degree
3	Male	30-40	ZEP	9	PhD candidate
4	Female	20-30	DYEP	5	Masters' degree
5	Female	50-60	General teacher	33	Bachelor degree
6	Male	40-50	General teacher	25	Bachelor degree
7	Female	30-40	DYEP	10	Masters' degree
8	Male	30-40	General teacher	12	Masters' degree
9	Female	40-50	ZEP	27	Bachelor degree
10	Female	30-40	General teacher	16	Bachelor degree

Table 1. *Interview participants profile*

The participants signed a consent form and were informed for the study purpose, possible risks and the researcher's identity and contact information. Also, there were informed that there were able to withdraw from the research process or their data at any time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Finally, after the completion of the research process, all identifying data were removed and pseudonyms were used, and the interview data will be destroyed (Babbie, 2014).

Data analysis

For the interviews analysis it was applied a thematic analysis, which is the systematic understanding of repetitive themes in the data. The analysis involved a process of obtaining an overview of the data and then codes were created from the themes that were raised (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the analysis an inductive process to extract meaning from data started and each response from the teachers produced a specific code. Then, the codes firstly compared to each other and merged into specific themes that answer the research questions. In the results section of the study the presented findings from the analysis are enriched with individual extracts from interviews for better documentation (Tsiolis, 2014).

Results

Overall, the teachers expressed challenges they face in the Greek educational system regarding refugee education. They have also described practices that assist them to provide quality education to refugee students, in accordance with the values of ICE.

The teachers described a difficult situation regarding their communication with the student especially in the beginning, as most refugee students have never been in a school before. So, they resorted to the use of a kind of body-sign language to communicate. Also, the fact that are so many different ethnicities inside the classrooms (especially in ZEPs and DYEPs) was hindering their communication with the children.

In the classroom most of the teachers, especially the more experienced ones are mainly using Greek, while the younger ones felt comfortable to use both English and Greek. It should be noted that many of the refugee students did not know English either, so they expressed that their work to help students increase their abilities to communicate was difficult. All younger teachers mentioned as very helpful the use of Google Translate through their smartphones. However, all of them expressed their disappointment that they must use their own equipment and economic resources, as most public schools lack the appropriate infrastructure.

Moreover, the teachers mentioned that the curriculum does not give them enough time to develop science and digital skills of the refugee students. All teachers mentioned that they mainly focus to the development of Greek language and mathematical skills. In most cases there is no time to spent on science competences and the teachers center their interest to increasing the refugee students mathematical and verbal competences. In the case of digital competences, the situation is even worse as most of the schools do not have the required equipment, such as laptops or tablets. There is also no proper internet connection or Wi-Fi.

As for the social competences the perceptions and experiences from the teachers were quite rich. In general, the teachers mentioned that the schools were trying to include refugee students to their activities (excursions, festivals, theatrical plays etc.). However, there were instances, as for example the celebration of Greek Independence Day that the students were informed about the historical aspect of the event, but the refugee students were not invited to the celebration the next day. Moreover, all teachers observed a lack of motivation from the part of refugee students and their parents to learn Greek and become part of the society, which influences their social abilities. According to the teachers this is because most of the refugees want to move to another country and see Greece as a transit destination in their route. So, they are not motivated for

their children to learn Greek or participate in general in school activities. Thus, as an interviewee mentioned the Greek government should find ways to motivate them stay in the country.

Furthermore, despite the teachers' efforts to develop the social skills of these students, the interviews cited examples where the school system hindered this process. Specifically, cases of isolation and alienation of refugee children were reported, especially in the afternoon classes.

"While we were out for a break in the school yard, there were also the native students in the same place. Some of the native students came to play together. I was very happy when I saw this because I thought this would help them to feel integrated and improve their Greek skills. However, when the teacher of the native students realized that her students were playing with the refugees, she directly shouted at them to go back. In addition, she came and asked me to play in another part of the yard, where there would be no contact between the groups…She said that she wanted to avoid any frustration from native parents".

"In one of the schools that I worked in the past, the principal wanted the refugee students to drink water from different taps than the native students, without even being at school at the same time as the refugees were coming to the afternoon program…When the refugees first arrived, there was a fear from native parents that they might transmit some disease to their children".

Conclusions

To conclude the teachers expressed from the interviews that the citizenship competences are not developed to a desirable degree with the existing educational initiatives. The teachers revealed many challenges that hinder the development of citizenship competences to refugee students. This study identified limited communication between teachers and students, lack of the appropriate infrastructure, an exhausting curriculum that leaves no room for the teachers to do their work, lack of motivation from refugee students to live in the country, and finally, racist-xenophobic phenomena that occur in the school setting from both internal and external agents.

The interviews revealed cases of segregation, racism, and alienation of refugees. Therefore, even though the intercultural ideas are mentioned regularly in the national documents, the reality is that the Greek educational system is closer to an assimilation integration model than the intercultural education. The teachers expressed their intention to utilize participatory techniques in classroom and tried to ensure a safe learning environment, and positive school climate for the refugee students. However, the curriculum and their lack of knowledge to handle such situations are deterrent factors that the state needs to consider.

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The results of foreign students in SIMCE: From the global gaze to the invisible

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Abstract

The academic results of immigrant students have been the subject of study in recent decades, especially in Europe and the United States (Córdoba, 2020; Garrido-Medina & Cebolla-Boado, 2010; Zinovyeva et al., 2014; Arikan et al., 2017). In international tests such as PIRLS, TIMSS and PISA, they obtain lower results than their native peers in most countries. These results differ from those obtained in other countries such as Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Israel and Singapore; in which natives and first-generation immigrants obtain very similar results. The Latin American PISA case is diverse, on the one hand, in Brazil and Argentina, native students obtain much higher results than first-generation immigrant students, and, on the other hand, in the case of Chile, while no differences are observed in mathematics, one of the few investigations carried out in Chile (Eyzaguirre et al., 2019) reports significant differences identified between the academic results between national and foreign students, and in the result of scores in the national standardized test, Sistema Nacional de Evaluation of Learning Outcomes, hereinafter SIMCE, in favor of native students. The disparity in results between native and immigrant students has been attributed to socioeconomic disadvantages of the latter (OECD, 2015; 2018), although in PISA, it continued to be observed when adjusting the comparison by socioeconomic level (Arikan et al., 2017). Along with this and continuing with the research carried out from PISA, although first-generation immigrant students usually obtain worse results than native ones, there are experiences that show that they can obtain results as high as international standards. In the Chilean case, since 2015 there has been an exponential growth in the presence of foreign students in the educational system, increasing from 0.9% to 4.5%, by 2019 and reaching 5.6 % in 2021. In the first place, the results indicate that at the individual level, native students obtain, on average, a significantly higher performance in the SIMCE tests of reading and mathematics, than their foreign peers, this comparing the scores obtained in both fourth and eighth grade, like in second half. The interesting thing is that the investigations had ignored what happens inside each school and according to the investigation carried out independently analyzing the regional, community and school levels, we see that these results vary depending on the lens with which it is viewed, generally making invisible and transmitting global results that hide key elements to consider.

Keywords: academic results- immigrants- standardized tests.

Introduction

The academic results of immigrant students have been the subject of study in recent decades, especially in Europe and the United States (Córdoba, 2020; Garrido-Medina & Cebolla-Boado, 2010; Zinovyeva et al., 2014;

Arikan et al., 2017). In international tests such as PIRLS, TIMSS and PISA, they obtain lower results than their native peers in most countries.

The Latin American PISA case is diverse, on the one hand, in Brazil and Argentina, native students obtain much higher results than first-generation immigrant students, and, on the other hand, in Chile, while no differences are observed in mathematics, one of the few investigations carried out in Chile (Eyzaguirre et al., 2019) reports significant differences identified between the academic results between national and foreign students.

Methodology

A study was carried out with secondary data from the SIMCE standardized reading and mathematics test, in fourth grade (10 years) and second grade (15 years), at three levels; regional level, community level and school level. Access to the databases was obtained by submitting a request for information to the Chilean Education Quality Agency, for which the data has been treated confidentially and in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Good Practices of the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

Objectives

To compare the results obtained in the SIMCE standardized test by native and foreign students in the metropolitan region of Chile in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Discussion and results

The disparity in results between native and immigrant students has been attributed to socioeconomic disadvantages of the latter (OECD, 2015; 2018), although in PISA, this was also observed when adjusting the comparison by socioeconomic level (Arikan et al., 2017).

Along with this and continuing with the research carried out from PISA, although first-generation immigrant students usually obtain worse results than native ones, there are experiences that show that they can obtain results as high as international standards.

In the Chilean case, since 2015 there has been an exponential growth in the presence of foreign students in the educational system, increasing from 0.9% to 4.5%, by 2019 and reaching 5.6 % in 2021. In the first place, the results indicate that at the individual level, native students obtain, on average, a significantly higher performance in the SIMCE tests of reading and mathematics, than their foreign peers, this comparing the scores obtained in both fourth and eighth grade, like in second half. The interesting thing is that the investigations had ignored what happens inside each school and according to the investigation carried out independently analyzing the regional, community and school levels, we see that these results vary depending on the lens with which it is viewed, generally making invisible and transmitting global results that hide key elements to consider.

If we focus on the Chilean case, when analyzing the results that natives and foreigners obtain, in the fourth grade and second grade, in the SIMCE standardized tests, we find that there are substantial differences

between what we can see at the global and particular levels. In this sense, the results that the students obtain within each of the schools shows us elements that are made invisible at the regional level.

Along with the above, the results analyzed differ considerably from what is stated in the research by Eyzaguirre (2019) in which he indicates that, in Chile, foreign students obtain better scores than their native peers. In the data analyzed, this only happens in a particular way in the year 2017 at the school level.

In the Chilean case, and beyond what the international literature suggests, there are no statistically significant differences if we look at the scores at the school level. With these data we identify that the regional level, when considering an important group of schools, hides what really happens within each educational community in a particular way and makes invisible that the differences in scores are given by socioeconomic and cultural differences, rather than by those of the origin of the boys and girls. These data are contrary to those exposed in various investigations (Airkan et al., 2017, among others) who showed that the socioeconomic level would be responsible for the differences.

In terms of the impact that a greater or lesser number of foreign students per school could have, and together with emphasizing that the average presence in Chilean establishments is much lower than the 23% average of the OECD countries, standing at only 5%, the greater or lesser number in which they are in a school is not observed to have substantially affected the results that neither of the two groups obtains, which is contrary to what was stated by Cebolla (2009).

Another of the elements identified was that even when more than 70% of teachers, according to the 4th Teaching Census on Migration (2018), identify that there are strong difficulties with the subject of language, this has not been expressed in a drop in scores of foreign students in this subject, so despite the perception of teachers this would not be having consequences on their scores.

It is very important to highlight that, in a country like Chile, with high rates of inequality and more severe population and housing segregation than the OECD countries (2018), the weight of the socioeconomic level is greater than the differences that we could identify by origin. Moreover, when comparing the minimum and maximum scores of nationals and foreigners, we see that national girls and boys achieve lower minimum scores than their foreign peers and, in turn, higher maximum scores.

The public policies that the State and each local government is capable of installing will be key, having elements that allow for the conditions that allow all boys and girls, regardless of their origin, to achieve successful school careers, counting on economic resources, professionals and sufficient infrastructure to achieve permanence in schools and, of course, good learning results.

Already during the year 2018, the OECD indicated the need to have more flexible school financing, which allows schools to adapt these resources to their real and emerging needs (Mora Olate, 2018). It was identified that the little existing flexibility could be limiting spending oriented to the particular needs of each school, a relevant element as identified by Dronkers (2014), Gurthrie (2019) and Volante (2019).

As last elements, it is necessary to advance in a permanent and coherent teacher training with the current society, the Chilean system has teachers with very little preparation to receive students from varied contexts (Barrios-Valenzuela & Palou Julián, 2014), in addition to guiding universities to the inclusion of training in

curricular adjustments and educational responses with considerations of a diverse classroom. One last element, already warned by the OECD (2018), is that it is urgent to establish a data production system that allows knowing the realities of foreign students, not only from public institutions, but also, jointly with private institutions, that make it possible to have information on learning outcomes, well-being, hopes and aspirations in relation to their arrival in Chile.

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The teaching of mathematics contributes to the development of intercultural and multicultural education for immigrants, refugees, and vulnerable social groups

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Abstract

In this article, we discuss the added value of teaching mathematics to immigrants, refugees, and other vulnerable social groups. The field of reference focuses on the impact of mathematics teaching on immigrants, refugees, and other vulnerable social groups. The main field of reference was the many years of experience teaching mathematics to students from the Thebes hosting structure. The teaching of mathematics could be a bridge of communication and an approach with a positive sign that would seek beyond the smooth integration of immigrants in the host countries, the countering of xenophobia, and the acceptance of diversity and its achievements.

Keywords: teaching of mathematics, development of intercultural and multicultural education, immigrants, refugees, and vulnerable social groups, Vocational Education and Training.

Introduction: Methodology, purpose, and goals

In the last couple of years, in every country on this planet, there are mass population movements due to the existence of war zones and conflicts between countries. The educational system of every host country is called through international treaties to create the necessary conditions for the approval and inclusion of those populations (Sikorskaya, 2017). Our research was conducted through a literature review of the field of teaching and using Ethnomathematics and through multiple experiential observations from the implementation of living and teaching Mathematics through empirical approaches.

The hospitality structures for immigrants, refugees, and other vulnerable social groups, in Greece, provide a stable accommodation framework that covers not only the basic living and social needs of the guests, but also their pedagogical and learning needs. The young people and teenagers the structures participated in the public educational structures of Thebes (High Schools, General High Schools, and Vocational High Schools) and were taught, among other things, mathematics as a basic subject of study. The data elements from this educational experience showed that the teaching of mathematics contributes to the development of their perception and connects their educational background, and the knowledge they had before immigrating to the host country (Kozlova & Ryabichenko, 2021). Mathematical deductions, steps of proofs, formulas, symbols, and exercises are cognitive level four awareness, facilitate their access and adaptation to the educational requirements in the country of residence, and lead to educational achievements,

such as those seen recently in the national exams of 2022 and were about immigrants' successes and firsts. These facts are not exceptions but are the norm for teaching mathematics (Karountzou, 2021). This is partly because in mathematics, to be presented and studied, no other language is needed than the basic terminology of mathematics and the basic typology of the area under consideration (Fantinato & Leite, 2020). Mathematics with its special nature, conceptuality, and patterns of knowledge (Naresh & Kasmer, 2018), contains develops a special communication between teachers and students as well as a liberating knowledge concerning internal messages, beyond the effectiveness of learning (Im & Swan, 2022). This is of particular importance in designing how immigrants are integrated (integration is seen as a two-way process) in schools (Acar-Ciftci, 2019), the learning expectations we can have of them, the curriculum they should follow, and the specific type of support they need they should receive from their teachers and peer networks (Halse, 2022).

The purpose of this paper is to bring out the contribution of teaching Mathematics in the development of integrated and multicultural education for immigrants, refugees, and socially vulnerable groups. The goal of this paper is to find practices and methods to assure the efficiency and the best-suited teaching for the development of integrated and multicultural education in Mathematics. As a secondary goal, we have the acculturation of knowledge and experiences of immigrant and refugee students from the culture of their countries in teaching typical school Mathematics to Greek Vocational Schools.

Beyond this instruction, in the next section, we describe multicultural education integrated education in Thebes' Vocational High School. In the third section, we present elements of Thebes' hospitality center. In the fourth section, we discuss ascertainments of empirical observations and the adaptation of teaching Mathematics (multicultural education) in Greek Vocational High Schools to immigrants, refugees, and vulnerable social groups. Finally, we present the conclusion of the article.

Multicultural education integrated education in Thebes' Vocational High School

In this research, the material that was used was from the field of Ethnomathematics. Ethnomathematics is a relatively recent field of Mathematics where the creations of every country according to calculations and mathematical thinking are being studied, observed, and recorded timelessly (Pradana, Putra, & Rahmawati, 2022). Thebes' Vocational High School (Figure 1) is an example as it is a representative case of heterogeneous studentship. Aside from the Greek students, there are students from Albania, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, and Russia and refugees from Thebes' hospitality center for refugees and Roma. During the school year 2021-2022 in the Vocational High School aside from immigrants and refugees, two siblings from Libya studied there.

In Thebes' Vocational High School, the school period 2022-2023 every immigrant is with new admissions. Those students are mostly of Afghan and Pakistan nationality. The students that attended there the school year 2021-2022 have left with directions either abroad or to another place in Greece. Generally, all the years the hospitality center is operated the refugees that live there prefer Thebes' Vocational High School due to better professional absorption to the job market. Mathematics is the class that students show interest in, no matter their nationality. Even the Greek language's difficulty is overcome with mathematical symbols

and terminology. It has been observed that through teaching Mathematics they learn the Greek language better.

Figure 1. *Thebes' Vocational High School*

For Thebes' hospitality center

During the school year 2021-2022 in Thebes' Hospitality Center for refugees, the thirty refugees that stayed there attended secondary education. Most of the children refugees attended Middle School, one of them attended High School and seven of them attended Vocational High School. The refugee children are absorbed into public schools through refugee training coordinators of the Ministry of Education. The students are absorbed in public school classes according to their age. The school year 2021–2022 is the sixth year that the students are accommodated in this center. The populations that are accommodated in Thebes' hospitality center move around. In the previous five years, there has been a lot of mobility with constant arrivals and departures of the population of the structure. In the school year 2021 – 2022, there were few arrivals and several departures, as a result of which a decrease in the number of residents in the structure is observed.

The refugees usually stay in the center for several months up to three years. The students that enrolled in Thebes' Vocational High School for the school year 2021-2022 were at least two years in the center so it is considered that they have learned the Greek language. Mathematics is being taught even to students that are oblivious to the Greek language. Based on the Ministry's directions, in class, it was forbidden for the teachers/professors to talk with the children in a language other than Greek. The understanding and the teaching in class were happening with the help of non-verbal communication. In those centers, supportive classes such as Greek, English, and Mathematics are held by non-formal educational organizations. Remedial teaching is being held mostly for the students that attend Greek public schools. The teachers that teach them in those centers educate the professors at the conterminous schools about the issues of multicultural education (Fig 2).

Figure 2. *Thebes Hospitality Center*

The ascertainments of empirical observations and the adaptation of teaching Mathematics in Greek Vocational High Schools to immigrants, refugees, and vulnerable social groups

From the communication and the contact through the teaching of the students in those three classes of Thebes' Vocational High School, it was ascertained that the knowledge of Mathematics is directly linked with global patterns, as the mathematical language, thought and action include commonly integrated references. It was also ascertained that Mathematics as knowledge, includes important elements of national and local cultural context. Furthermore, it was ascertained that there is a connection between mathematical knowledge and the students' culture. The adaptation of teaching Mathematics (multicultural education) in Greek Vocational High Schools is:

1) With the absorption of the syllabus: recognition of the offer of several multicultural groups and different nationalities with different cultures in Mathematics.

2) With the construction of knowledge: recognition from the students that Mathematics applies in everyday life and real-life situations.

3) With certain examples: giving examples of Mathematics that are from different countries (Ethnomathematics) but also approaching different ways of knowing and confronting problems according to their cultures. For example, different ways of implementing the act of multiplication.

4) Reduction of Prejudice: concerning social and cultural issues

5) Fair Pedagogy: mutual respect amongst educators and students regarding their culture. The dominance of the spirit of cooperation in every student and not competition.

6) Strengthening school culture and social life: connection of the knowledge and the applications of Mathematics with the professional rehabilitation of the graduates.

Conclusions

The knowledge of Mathematics is a global cultural product and civilizations with different cultures have contributed to the development of mathematical thinking. Mathematics to its greatest extent constitutes a global language that everyone can understand through mathematical symbols, regardless of their mother tongue. In the design of an analytical program, the diversity of nations should be taken into account apart from the mother tongue. All cultures have something to teach us about the teaching and the use of mathematics. The training of teachers based on the principles of intercultural education is deemed necessary based on the requirements of coexistence and intercultural society. The mathematical background of peoples is also reflected in their creations, artifacts, or culture, but also their particular scientific origins and values. This should be perfectly acceptable by default.

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Teaching English to deaf and hard of hearing students in Primary Education: Teaching strategies and methods

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Abstract

The current paper focuses on teaching English to Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in primary education with the students of Special Primary of Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Argyroupoli under investigation. To that end, the research was conducted into two phases. During the first phase, the methods and strategies the teachers who teach Greek were observed and noted down whilst an interview with the psychologist of the school was carried out who provided valuable information regarding the students' sociocultural and medical background. The second phase, entailed a needs analysis questionnaire which was designed and distributed online to teachers who work with deaf and hard of hearing students and the findings that arise were thoroughly analyzed.

Keywords: Deafness, hearing impairment, primary education, teaching English, syllabus, teaching vocabulary, teaching reading skill, teaching writing skill.

Introduction

Hearing loss is defined as 'the total or partial inability to hear sound in one or both ears' (Alshuaib et al., 2015). The degree and the type of hearing loss constitute the classification of people with sensory deficit. From a medical perspective, a person is considered to be deaf when hearing loss is higher than 90 decibels(db),the unit of sound measurement (Berke, 2020). If a person has a hearing loss less than 90 dc, they can be defined as hard of hearing. Moreover, prelingual hearing loss appears usually in newborn babies and exists before the person develops speech and language. A postlingual hearing loss takes place after the person has acquired language to some extent and it is usually the result of an illness or a trauma (Sharma, 2006). From a cultural aspect, it depends on the people and the way they define and identify themselves as deaf or as hard of hearing(ibid)). With the scientific advancements, mainly in the field of medicine, in the early 2000s, when the cochlear implantation began to gain territory, a mixed group of people emerged which is deaf people when the cochlear is off and hard of hearing when the cochlear is on(Chapman & Dammeyer, 2017).

Deafness has an effect on language acquisition which may be sign language as deaf and hard of hearing students' L1 on the one, and the official spoken and written Greek language as their L2, on the other. In this framework, one can understand how challenging and frustrating the teaching of the English language as an L3 can be. On the other hand, the deaf community has recognized the necessity for the teaching of the English language to the deaf and hard of hearing students as an international language in order for this special group of learners to belong to a larger society (Zysk & Kontra, 2016). Language institutions and sign language linguists

put emphasis on the need for the empowerment of deaf and hard of hearing students throughout every social interaction and communication both as students and later on, as adults (Marschark & Spencer, 2016). Up to recent years, English had not been taught in Greek Special Primary Schools for deaf and hard of hearing students(henceforth d/hh) since there were not competent English teachers as users of sign language. With the emergence of the multicultural and multilingual societies, teachers and specialists, gained a deeper insight on issues that concern the target group and sought ways to design, enrich and adjust their strategies and educational tools in order to turn these learners into competent and independent users of the English language.

Aims and Methodology of the Study

Aims of the Study

The study aims at exploring the strategies and methods that the teachers who teach Greek apply as far as the students' vocabulary development, reading comprehension and writing production is concerned. It, also, attempts to investigate whether and to what extent, these methods can be applied by the English teacher while teaching English to deaf and hard of hearing students in primary education.

Methodology

The survey was conducted into two phases following a mixed method of both qualitative and quantitative research. In the first phase, in the context of the qualitative research, the participants/teachers were observed while teaching. The importance of qualitative research is unquestionable as an evidence-based practice mainly in special education. It constitutes a holistic approach that engages the researcher while providing new data to be analyzed (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2018). It is considered to be flexible research in which the investigator is called to adapt and reconsider the different variables and even proceed to self-reflection toward the topic(ibid). The observation took place from September to November 2020 as a multiple study case procedure. Throughout these sessions, the investigator kept diaries with the students' attributes, their learning difficulties and their demeanor while being at their learning environment. Diaries can help the teacher note ideas and reflect on them later, they can act as a discovery process for the teacher (Richards & Lockhart, 1996, p.7 as cited in Kourelis, 2007) and enhance the educator's memory as the observation goes on. That is why they are considered to be an integral part of every observational process. In parallel, an interview with the school's psychologist provided a useful insight on the students' sociocultural background. Throughout the second phase, a needs analysis questionnaire was designed on google forms, piloted to English teachers and teachers who teach Greek for reliability and was distributed online to teachers who teach the Greek language in different primary schools for d/hh. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section contained demographic questions concerning the participants' age, and their working experience in general and in special primary schools for d/hh students. The questions about their competency in sign language and whether they hold a Master's degree or not can provide useful information about the teachers' educational level and their training. The higher the teacher's educational level, the more accurate answers can be provided. The second part focused on vocabulary

teaching as the fundamental element for reading comprehension and the production of written speech. The third section entailed questions in relevance to the methods used for reading comprehension with the last part focusing on the writing production strategies.

Findings of the Study

An overview of findings

The findings, as derived from both the qualitative and quantitative research, provide us with a critical insight on teaching deaf and hard of hearing students in primary education. This paper, however, focuses on the responses of the teachers who participated in the research through the questionnaire (phase 2). The sections below present the main results on the areas under investigation; vocabulary building, reading comprehension and writing production.

1 Vocabulary teaching

30 teachers who teach Greek in primary education participated in the survey. The majority holds a Master's degree whilst all of them are competent certified users of sign language. The level of the respondents is deemed as a significant factor, since the higher their level, the more valid their answers can be considered.

Regarding vocabulary teaching, the importance of phonological awareness is apparent, taking into account the teachers' answers. As Webb and Ledeberg (2013) suggest, the acquisition of phonological awareness is vital for d/hh students, especially for the development of their reading skill. Furthermore, the participants stated that vocabulary teaching must be based on prior knowledge as learning directly new vocabulary is difficult for deaf and hard of hearing students especially in primary education. Vocabulary building can be facilitated through the visualization of the words and the use of technology as the connection with visual aids and the prior acquired vocabulary can assist the assimilation of new vocabulary (Gallion, 2016). 27 of the participants alleged that the aid of technology for the visualization of the words is of outmost importance as it can be motivating for the students and it can improve learning (Zirzow, 2019). Almost all of the participants, stated that the use of sign language for vocabulary teaching and vocabulary acquisition is compulsory since it can affect both the students' literacy skills (Pizzo, 2013) and their ability of word recognition(ibid).

2 Reading comprehension teaching

The participants stated that they choose texts according to the learners' interests and preferences in order to make their lesson more appealing and motivating for their students. Moreover, comprehension monitoring, generating questions and question-answer process are some of the strategies that the teachers who took part in the research suggested. More than half of the teachers, feel that they should incorporate easy texts to boost the d/hh students' confidence. The majority of the interviewees stated that they choose easy texts- simple, close to

their linguistic level- to boost their students' self confidence and encourage them to participate. Consequently, the learners will perceive reading as an interesting and worthwhile activity (Arias, 2007).

3 Writing production teaching

The starting point for teaching writing production to deaf and hard of hearing students in primary education is according to the respodents' answers is to make them familiar with the strict structure Subject-Verb -Object at a sentence level and thus build their piece of writing one sentence at a time. The majority of the respondents, stated that they connect the production of a sentence with vocabulary, grammar and notions that the students have already been exposed to, so one can infer that the activation of the students' prior knowledge and relevant schemata can facilitate the production of written speech. Substitute clauses, passive voice or even auxiliary verbs to form questions are parts that are difficult for the students to negotiate in primary education. The use of mind maps for brainstorming or dramatization are recommended by the teachers as useful methods for teaching writing.

Discussion

The research attempted to shed light on the unexplored area of teaching English to deaf and hard of hearing students in primary education. In this paper, basic notions and strategies were presented and analyzed in brief. The deaf community has recognized that the English language as *lingua franca* is widely used to promote communication among nations. Deaf people should be given the opportunity for access to information and knowledge that is why early exposure to the language is of outmost importance. On these grounds, teaching English to d/hh students is still a challenging but not a discouraging task for English teachers who will be called to prepare autonomous d/hh English learners to assert their place in a globalized world.

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Acculturation and mental health in immigrant children and adolescents

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Abstract

Immigration phenomenon constitutes a subject of systematic study and research internationally. During the immigration process individuals are often facing a set of disorders that significantly affect both adults and children. The current study attempts to present the theoretical approaches concerning the acculturation process of immigrants and the main findings of studies through a brief literature review, in order to establish a possible connection of acculturation with mental health variables in immigrant children and adolescents.

Keywords: acculturation, mental health, immigrants, children, adolescents.

Introduction

Immigration is a phenomenon occurring for many decades worldwide. Many citizens internationally choose to abandon the country in which they were born and live permanently and move to another country seeking for better life conditions and professional options. This phenomenon has increased during the past decades, when approximately 250 million immigrants and 24 million refugees were recorded worldwide (World Bank, 2017).

Many researchers study immigration and the processes connected to it. One variable of high interest is acculturation and its dimensions among different cultural groups in different contexts. Acculturation is linked to numerous other variables such as discrimination, social and school adjustment and mental health (Berry, & Sabatier, 2010; Cho, 2016).

The current article focuses on the possible connection between the preferred acculturation strategies of immigrants and mental health or psychological adjustment variables.

Immigration

Immigration is the phenomenon during which an individual locates from its place of permanent stay. Greece because of its geographical position and some sociopolitical changes that occurred and continue to occur in neighborhood countries, constitutes a host country for many immigrants and refugees. The larger immigrant wave in Greece took place in the early 90s (Eurydice, 2019). Later, in 2011 the conflict in Syria triggered a humanitarian crisis and forced many Syrians to migrate in neighborhood countries and later in Greece (Najimdeen, 2016). Nowadays, the largest immigrant group in Greece are the Albanians (52,7%) (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2016).

Mental health disorders and immigrants

Research has shown that immigration may affect the mental health of individuals and cause a series of psychological and emotional disorders, such as anxiety, depression, aggression, and behavioral disorders (Stevens & Vollebergh, 2008). Furthermore, it has been observed that immigrants are prone to drug and alcohol use and in cases when they have experienced traumatizing events during the immigration process, they show post-traumatic stress disorder.

Thus, psychological adjustment could be difficult in immigrants and especially in children and adolescents, who are in a sensitive developmental stage and are in the process of shaping their identity (Robles-Piña, Defrance, & Cox, 2008). In particular, when immigration occurs in a small age, it could affect the self-esteem levels of adolescents and cause a series of other psychological and emotional disorders, which continue during adulthood (Roebers, & Schneider, 1999; Sullivan & Kashubeck-West, 2015).

These disorders could be linked to the acculturative process, affect the adaptation levels of immigrants and are more prevalent in cases where there is lack of support from the social network (Michel, Titzmann, & Silbereisen, 2012).

Other factors that are linked to the levels of adaptation of immigrants to the host country are language learning, which is crucial for both their social and academic adjustment (Sullivan & Kashubeck-West, 2015), their age upon arrival at the host country (Roebers & Schneider, 1999), the length of stay to it, the differences among the acculturation strategies of parents and their children, the levels of parental supervision, peer relations and perceived prejudice (Chan & Chan, 2004; Miconi, Moscardino, Altoè, & Salcuni, 2018).

Acculturation

"Acculturation" term refers to "…*those phenomena, which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups*" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 149-152). In other words, "acculturation" includes the processes that take place during the contact of different cultural groups.

Throughout immigration people from different cultural backgrounds meet and coexist in the same cultural context. These people are characterized by different habits, customs, traditions, moral values, religions and use different communication codes (Kim & Omizo, 2006). During the acculturative process, some of them choose to transform their way of thinking and acting in order to approach the host country culture, while others choose to maintain their own way of behaving, which is in accordance with their heritage culture.

This choice is better described through Berry's acculturation model (1997), which classifies immigrants into four categories according to the level and the nature of the intercultural contact they choose. In this way, Berry's model of acculturation describes immigrants who assimilate into the host culture (assimilation), those who separate from the host culture (separation), those who integrate into the host culture but simultaneously retain their heritage culture characteristics (integration) and finally those who reject both cultures (marginalization).

In the next sections the methodology and a brief review of some research findings concerning the relationship between acculturation and mental health of immigrants are presented.

Methodology

The present paper is an effort to present research findings based on a brief literature review concerning acculturation and mental health of immigrants. The paper does not contain primarily research data but analyses the variables and the associations between them on a theoretical basis. The researchers employed the literature found in scientific magazines concerning the fields of Intercultural Education and Psychology.

Aims and importance of the paper

The main purpose of this literature review is to highlight the significance of the acculturation process in the adjustment of immigrants to the host country. In particular, through this review the association between acculturation and mental health is presented and research findings of studies are provided in order to support the theoretical background.

This paper will contribute to the better understanding of the way through which the acculturative process affects the mental health of immigrants, especially in cases when children and adolescents are concerned. The research mainly focuses on adults and the available literature on younger samples is shorter.

Acculturation and mental health: Research Findings

Regarding to the association between the four acculturation strategies proposed by Berry (1997) and mental health, research has shown that integration is linked to better psychological adaptation of the immigrants (Lau, McCabe, Yeh, Garland, Wood, & Hough, 2005). In particular young people who chose integration showed higher levels of self-esteem than those who chose marginalization (Berry & Sabatier, 2010). Assimilation and separation have been shown to be connected with same positive mental health outcomes (Postmes & Branscombe, 2002; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). On the other hand, marginalization was often linked to worse psychological and social adjustment (Yu & Wang, 2011).

Furthermore, Cho (2016) found that students who chose marginalization were more likely to report depressive symptoms, difficulties in doing homework and lower academic expectations than those who chose assimilation. Students who chose integration were less likely to report adjustment difficulties.

In general, Ponterotto, Baluch, & Carielli (1998) highlight that low acculturation levels are linked to high anxiety levels and bad mental health in adolescent immigrants and another research has shown that in teenage immigrants from 11 to 21 years old acculturative stress predicted psychological disorders (Goforth, Pham, & Oka, 2015).

Finally, Asvat and Malcame (2008) mention that acculturation processes are more stressful, and the mental health of immigrants is in greater danger, when lots of differences are located between the heritage and the host culture and when immigrants experience discrimination.

Discussion

Acculturation constitutes a complex phenomenon which entails many processes and depends on different variables such as the social context, the host countries' policies, and the perceived discrimination. Immigrants seem to better adjust to the host country when they choose to be integrated and when they are supported by a large social network (Berry & Sabatier, 2010).

In cases where children and teenagers are concerned, the existence of a social network, peer acceptance, second language learning and good academic performance could help them have greater self-esteem, which leads in better psychological adjustment. Moreover, the same acculturation orientation between parents and children seems to promote better psychological adjustment of the children (Goforth et al., 2015).

In conclusion, acculturation seems to be connected to mental health variables in complex ways and there is often a controversy in the scientific findings. This controversy could result from the different scales used to measure each variable, from cultural differences or from other factors that need to be examined.

Thus, further research to this field is necessary in order to investigate the manner through which different variables affect the acculturation process of immigrants and their mental health, especially in children and adolescents who are less frequently investigated.

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Citizenship education in the newly published Greek secondary curricula: A move to individualized citizenship?

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Abstract

The paper explores the promotion of citizenship education through the newly published curricula for secondary schools in Greece. A research was conducted in order to trace *adaptive*, *individualized* or *critical democratic* citizenship education in the curricula to be implemented from the school year 2023-2024 by using W. Veugelers' relevant typology. The research revealed that the recent curriculum reform is mostly oriented to individualized citizenship. Even though inclusive education is set as a basic principle, the curriculum leaves the critical-democratic perspective with its focus on social values and the common good, learning to live together and appreciating diversity, at the margin.

Keywords: citizenship education, adaptive/ individualized/ critical democratic citizenship, secondary school curriculum, inclusive education, Greece.

Introduction

Citizenship and citizenship education are central concepts in the theory, research, policy and practice of education. Citizenship education refers to how education can support students' development of identities. In the last few decades, the concept of citizenship has been both broadened and deepened. *Broadened* means that citizenship is no longer just linked with the national state, but also with regional arrangements and even with the whole world (global citizenship). *Deepened* refers to the fact that the concept of citizenship has been extended from the political level to the social and cultural. It is about living together in a particular society (Veugelers, 2019, p.14).

Based on the above and considering the recent development of new curricula in Greek education, which are to be implemented in school year 2023-24, it is particularly important to analyze them as to the citizenship that they promote. It is of utmost importance to trace the citizen's profile that Greek schools intend to formulate and the characteristics that students are expected to develop in the following years. Last but not least, it is considered vital to examine whether the new curricula have moved away from the strong ethnocentric character of the previous ones and whether they essentially aim at the development of the students' European and global identities.

Theoretical background

The Council of Europe (2016, p.35) defines citizenship education as a set of values, skills, attitudes, knowledge with a critical understanding of the world around us, placing *competence* as a central concept. Even though this approach is widely acknowledged and has served as the basic orientation for teaching citizenship in Europe in recent years, it also presents specific shortcomings. For example, critical reflection for a change, an emphasis on solidarity and social justice, as well as actual active student participation seems to be at the margin. Taking this into consideration, the theory of Wiel Veugelers was exploited in this research, as it tries to promote a balance between the social and individual spaces by highlighting humanity.

According to Veugelers (2020), there are three types of citizenship, the first one being *adaptive citizenship*. This type finds discipline and social involvement important. Social involvement here is not understood in a political sense, but as a moral commitment to each other. Autonomy is not so important for the adaptive type. In education there is much transmission of values, in particular adaptive values, and attention for standards and norms. Teacher-centred education, with students seated in rows is the dominant teaching methodology. Values are mostly embedded in the hidden curriculum.

The second type, *individualised citizenship*, finds autonomy very important and discipline fairly important. Social involvement is not essential. This type has a strong focus on personal development and freedom, not so much on the social. In education there is much attention for developing students' independence and critical thinking ability. Students work individually for much of the time. Values are a personal choice.

The third type, *critical-democratic citizenship*, finds social involvement and autonomy very important and discipline less important. This type is called critical democratic because of its focus on the social and on society, with a critical engagement with the common good, and leaving room for individual autonomy and personal articulation. In education there is a focus on learning to live together and on appreciating diversity, as well as on active student participation in dialogues. Cooperative and inquiry-oriented learning is often practiced. There is attention for social values and critical reflection on values.

Methodology

The main purpose of this research was to examine the promotion of citizenship education through the newly published curricula for secondary schools in Greece with the following research questions: 1) What kind of citizenship will Greek secondary schools prioritize in the following years? 2) Which values does the new curriculum promote toward preparing future citizens and how are these specified in aims, competences, course content and teaching practices? 3) Are the new curricula engaged in cultivating thoughtful, critical and responsible global citizenship for future generations, which nowadays is understood as a vital aim for education in order to secure inclusive societies?

In order to answer the aforementioned questions, we have focused on the analysis of the curricula of Social and Civic Education and History in year 9 to be implemented from the school year 2023-2024. The reason for choosing the course of Social and Civic Studies is clear due to its relevance to the subject of the

research. On the other side, History was chosen because, according to the relevant literature, it has the power to formulate students' consciousness, political belief and national identity (παραπομπή).

With regard to methodology, qualitative content analysis was implemented and the system of categories and subcategories (SC) was developed on the basis of the relevant theory. The first category was *Adaptive Citizenship*. In this framework, we were looking for adaptive values (SC1), the presentation of social commitment as a moral commitment (SC2), the pursuit of promoting discipline (SC3) and elements of teacher-centered education (SC4). In the category of *Individualized Citizenship* values were predicted to be presented as personal choice (SC1) and an emphasis to be given on personal development, autonomy and freedom (SC2). At the same time, the acquisition of skills and critical thinking ability were expected to be the prevailing goal (SC3), whereas elements of student-centered education were to be detected (SC4). In the category of *Critical – democratic Citizenship* the existence of social values was investigated (SC1), whether learning to live together and active student participation are set as priorities (SC2) and if critical reflection competence (SC3) and cooperative and inquiry-oriented learning are promoted (SC4).

In order to better understand the research process, it is important to describe the structure of the new curriculum. The *first part* of curricula includes the subject profile, aims, the content or thematic fields, the didactic contextualization and planning of learning as well as the assessment/ evaluation. In the *second part*, there is a summary and a detailed presentation of the curriculum. We mainly investigated SC 1 & 2 in the subject profile and aims, SC 4 in the didactic contextualization and indicative activities, while SC 3 was mainly looked in the expected learning outcomes.

Results

Regarding *values*, we have observed that both subjects under analysis promote values with a strong "social imprint". In particular, teachers are invited through the lessons to promote social cohesion, solidarity, social justice, respect, equality and freedom. Of course, these values are in harmony with critical democratic citizenship and set a good foundation for the promotion of inclusive education. However, it seems that there is not an appropriate and systematic curricular framework to support them; in particular, the analysis revealed that these values are not especially taken into account in the formation of the rest of the curricula, since, after all, the focus is mostly on the individual and its development. So, there is no adequate consistency in favour of the social values within the curricula.

At the *aims* level, the approach changes and the emphasis shifts from society to the individual and their development. To be more precise, it is the aim that students develop self-awareness and self-control, critical thinking ability and a multitude of skills. Learning to live together and active student participation are not set as a primary goal. The promotion of individualized citizenship is also confirmed at the level of *expected learning outcomes*. Perhaps the provision "*to reflect on choices (their own or others') that have serious implications in their lives*" could be part of critical democratic citizenship, but in this case also the reflection is directed at the individual and not at society.

The same approach is adopted also at the *content level*. For example, in the course of Social and Civic Education there are three thematic fields: "the individual as a member of social groups", "the individual as a citizen" and "the individual and the wider world". The analysis of the thematic sections and the general objectives showed that the emphasis is exclusively on the individual, his/her self-determination, his/her rights, obligations and duties. Furthermore, it is stated that it is important for students to understand values differently, as a result of personal choice. Reference to movements and collective actions to change society for the better is absent. Last but not least, only two units with global orientation were detected: "Migration as a global phenomenon" and "Ecological consciousness and action".

The *suggested teaching practices* correspond to the imperatives of modern pedagogical science and can well serve the promotion of individualised or critical democratic citizenship. However, if we take the pathologies of the Greek education system into account, such as the examination-oriented nature, memorizing factual knowledge, the large volume of teaching material and the strict 45 minutes teaching time (Kesidou, 2017), we can assume or rather expect that in practice it is probably the promotion of adaptive citizenship through the hidden curriculum that dominates.

Discussion

Based on the above, it follows that the curricula of Social and Civic Education and History are mostly oriented to individualised citizenship. In particular, schools are to develop creative citizens with substantial knowledge and up-to-date competencies. Other qualities highlighted are self-motivation and strong self-esteem, critical thinking, intercultural ability and a sense of responsibility. This is reasonable if we think about the framework of knowledge societies and the political ideology of the present government, which is compatible with the European path charted in the last two or three decades.

In addition, even though inclusive education is set as a basic principle, the promotion of solidarity and social justice do not seem to be considered to a significant extent, as the connection between the school and the local community is weak, volunteerism as a provision is absent and the active participation of students in society is placed in second place. Thus, the curriculum leaves the critical democratic perspective with its focus on social values and the common good, learning to live together and appreciating diversity at the margin.

Regarding the third research question, we could claim that the new curricula of the specific courses do not particularly promote a moral or socio-political global citizenship. In the course contents, there are some references to global issues, such as immigration and the ecological crisis, but to a limited extent. This particular objective does not seem to be achieved.

Based on the gap identified in the Greek literature, more research should be conducted in further subjects and at other levels of education, in order to shed light on all the parameters that can contribute to the effective promotion of citizenship education.

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The role of Parents Associations in the social-pedagogical orientation of kindergartens

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Abstract

This research examines the role of Parents Associations (PA) in the social-pedagogical orientation of kindergartens. Anonymous electronic questionnaires were distributed to PA. The results of 183 fully completed questionnaires showed: α) 50% understand the concept of Social Pedagogy (SP) as a scientific field that seeks to develop healthy relationships between all members of society, b) 60% are undecided about the social-pedagogical function of the kindergarten (neither agree nor disagree), c) the examination of the social pedagogical activities of PA showed confusion, as most of these actions concern the functionality of the kindergartens but are characterized by the members of PA as social-pedagogical. The importance of these results is great because there is a research gap regarding the social-pedagogical operation of PA in Primary Education.

Keywords: Social Pedagogy, Parents Associations, kindergartens, Greece.

Introduction

The concept of SP concerns the relationship between society and education and the way one affects the other (Petrie, Boddy, Cameron, Wigfall, & Simon, 2006). According to Eichsteller and Bradt (2019) some of the main foundations of SP theory are the following: raise the feeling of empathy, emphasize the need for protection of human rights, enable people to achieve self-autonomy and self-reflection, to be able enough to change and improve their own lives and, to understand the enormous necessity for the protection of vulnerable social groups. Alongside, parents contribute to the promotion of new thoughts for school life. Their cooperation is valuable in various school activities. Together, teachers and parents seek solutions to increase student performance (Thompson, 2006).

Method of This Research

The purpose of this research is: a) to investigate the perceptions of PA for SP, b) to investigate the social-pedagogical role of the kindergarten, and c) to investigate the social-pedagogical actions of PA. The impetus for the research was the need to study the scientific field of SP, which needs more exploration in Greece, in contrast to abroad (for example in England there is an organized Social Pedagogy network called ThemPra). The questions were formulated based on the above objectives as follows: 1) What are the perceptions of

members of PA for SP? 2) What are the attitudes of members of PA regarding the social-pedagogical role of kindergartens? 3) What actions of PA are governed by social-pedagogical approach?

The research sample

The survey was conducted from May to November 2020 in the primary school units of α Greek Region called Thessaly and the questions concerned the pre-pandemic (coronavirus) season (2019-2020) and this was pointed out to the respondents. 183 members of PA answered the questionnaires. Regarding the gender, 77.78% were women, 22.22% men. Regarding the position in PA, 64% were presidents, 36% vice-presidents.

The research tool

The lack of a relevant research instrument led to the construction of a questionnaire (Vamvoukas, 2006), based a) on the international literature on SP, b) on the international theory about Curriculum for kindergartens and c) on the international theory for PA. SPSS-17 has been chosen to analyze the content. There were closed-ended questions (five-point Likert scale) and open-ended questions. The first part regarding the knowledge of PA about the concept of SP corresponds to questions 1-12. The second part regarding the knowledge of PA about the social-pedagogical role of the kindergartens includes 8 questions. While the third part concerning the social-pedagogical activities of PA includes 20 questions.

Results based on data analysis

Query 1st: Perceptions of Social Pedagogy

As regards the 1st question, 122 out of 183 (67%) answered quite a lot. Most respondents realize that SP is interested in a multidimensional understanding of people's well-being. To the 2nd question 137 (75%) replied very much, as many of the SP's actions concern healthy lifestyles. Then to the 5th question, 172 out of 183 (93%) answered a lot. Most respondents seem to realize that SP is concerned with the unilateral development of people, it treats people as multi-faceted personalities in need of comprehensive learning and education. To 7th question, "to what extent does SP aim to prevent conflicts", 110 (60%) responded briefly, and 30 out of 183 (16%) replied at all. This shows the challenge that SP is managing to focus on the need to prevent social problems. To the 9th "to what extent the SP promotes the development of healthy relations between all members of society" 76 (41%) replied very much. To interpret the above answers, the respondents realize that SP is about strengthening relations between teachers, pupils, and other members of the school community and society.

Query 2nd: Attitudes towards the social-pedagogical role of kindergartens

Concerning the 1st question "The social-pedagogical role of the school is not just to find the best solutions to a given social problem, but to prevent it through appropriate programs" the answers are below average. According to 120 (65%) who said they disagree, the role of the school preventing social problems within the school area is in question. In addition, the 2nd question "School in its social-pedagogical role can reduce cases

of social problems (e.g., bullying) by creating a positive climate of support and security" does not appear to fully recognize the role of school in reducing social problems and developing a positive climate of support, since 94 (51%) replied that they do not agree or disagree. There is confusion as to whether the school finally manages to reduce social problems within the school framework. The interviewees are equally confused, and in question 3, "School in its social-pedagogical role teaches children how to learn, how to do, how to live with others through cooperative activities," 99 (54%) responded that they neither agree nor disagree. There is a lack of confidence in the school's ability to bridge the differences between pupils through teamwork. Also, concerning 4th question, "Cognitive function has greater weight than the social-pedagogical function of the school," 162 (88%) said they agree. For most, the results show that the school should focus on pupils' cognitive and academic performance. In 7th question, "School in its social-pedagogical role aims to develop the social skills of students" only 18 (9%) replied that they disagree completely, 60 (32%) replied that they agree and 45 (24%) that they do not agree or disagree.

Query 3rd: The social-pedagogical activities of Parents Associations

As regards 1st question, 'You have taken initiatives as PA supporting socially vulnerable groups outside the school (food, etc.)' 128 out (92%) answered quite a lot, and they mentioned in the open question the concentration of food, clothing, and other kinds of basic need for charitable structures. As for 3rd question, "To what extent do you work with kindergarten on social education?" 113 (61%) answered enough. Also, in question 4, "Have you talked to the kindergarten teacher about possible problems faces in the classroom, about the socialization of children-learning social skills?" 89 (48%) responded sometimes. The percentage of negative answers to the 5th question "Have you spoken with the kindergarten about the care and support of children belonging to vulnerable groups within the classroom?", 170 (92%) answered at all, this seems to indicate a distance from the focus in specific cases within the classroom. In addition, in 6th question "To what extent do you work with the teacher on general school issues (classroom, events, festivals)", most respondents, 136 (98%), answered very much. The records in the open question concern frequent cooperation on cleaning and maintenance of class and school building (wall painting), yard issues (tree cutting and barrier maintenance), technical equipment issues (computer purchase, projector, photocopier), focusing on cooperation on operational issues. To 8th question, "Do you have cooperation with specialist scientists on social-pedagogical issues? 135 (73%) replied very much. Specialists in psychologists, health practitioners, doctors and members of medical associations, gymnasts, nutritionists for healthy nutrition and others, were mentioned in the open question. To 10th question, 'Have you organized seminars, workshops, training on social-pedagogical issues? If so, how did the issues arise and where did you target?" 183 (100%) replied that they had organized (pre-pandemic) events/speeches mostly concerned with health, development of toddlers, sports, nutrition, and more general issues. Regarding to questions (11th, 12th) concerning cooperation with other parents, we can see from the remarkably high rate of negative answers (114 out of 183), that the frequency of communication is of concern to elected members of PA. Then to 13th question, "Promote healthy lifestyles as Parents Association? If so, how?" the positive response rate is satisfactory as 121 out of 183 (66%) responded very much and in the open

question replied that they tried to promote healthy lifestyles (pre-pandemic) for example with sports events, seminars with invited nutritionists and more. Moreover, to 14th question 'Are you doing voluntary activities as PA? If yes, can you mention any?´ 153 (83%) responded very much and indicated voluntary actions concerning the protection of environment (cleaning of beaches, parks, tree planting, and others). The only voluntary actions involving social measures were visits to orphanages, Bazar with holiday structures as donations to decent institutions, and more. On the other hand, the 15th question, "Do you do social actions to respect diversity (e.g., against xenophobia, racism, etc.) as PA? If yes, give some;" 136 (74%) responded slightly and 46 (25%) replied at all. From the analysis of the data so far, the results show a mobilization of Parents Associations, which is functional and focused on matters relating to everyday life and the environment, but while the intention is good, a meaningful social-pedagogical approach is not being taken on more substantive social-pedagogical issues (such as disability or modern family forms, etc.).

Discussion and Conclusion

Initially, a satisfactory percentage (50%) realizes that SP aims to change the culture of school community and society, investing in dialogue, in respect, in positive experiences, in trust, and human values. It also understands the holistic viewing of well-being and the empowerment of the active participation of the individual in society. Then, a significant percentage (60%) is undecided about the social-pedagogical function of the school related to the social behavior of students. Most of the members of the PA believe that the school should focus on the academic performance of the students. A significant percentage (80%) mistakenly believe that the action of the AP is social-pedagogical. However, the action usually concerns functional issues but does not proceed to militant action on important social-pedagogical issues (for example for refugees, disability, modern family forms, sexual, religious, and other self-determination). However, it is encouraging that most respondents recognize the necessity of their training in social-pedagogical issues. This is consistent with many studies that claim that in Greece there is a formal relationship between school and family, which is limited to participation in school events, supervision of homework, and formal participation of the PA and Guardians (Vrynioti, Kyridi, Sivropoulou-Theodosiadou & Chrysafidi, 2008).

The present research identifies some limitations. It should be noted that due to the specific percentage of responses, the results cannot be generalized to all PA of kindergartens nationwide. Instead, the importance of research lies in the fact that research on school-family relationships has flourished in recent decades, however, most focus on the views of teachers and certainly the views of the PA were not investigated, regarding the issues of Social Pedagogy. The training needs of PA are another area of future research. In general, a further study of Social Pedagogy issues in school is proposed.

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Intercultural Education to raise global citizens at a Japanese Women's University:
Online contact with Chinese international students

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Abstract

This study explored the factors influencing Japanese students' favorable perceptions of Chinese students and their awareness of stereotypes after viewing an interview with two Chinese students. Qualitative content analysis revealed that the Japanese students' favorable perceptions were significantly influenced by the Chinese students' "Japaneseness," particularly their attitudes toward Japan and Japanese language fluency. Some students noticed that information from the media influenced their biased views about China and its people. The findings suggest the need for more university-led intercultural opportunities to broaden students' exposure to cultural diversity and help them mature into citizens respectful of diversity and minority perspectives.

Keywords: stereotypes, global citizenship, interculturalism, contact theory, COVID-19.

Introduction

China is one of Japan's closest neighbors, and Chinese people constitute the largest group of foreign residents in Japan. However, a recent government survey (Cabinet Office of Japan, 2018) revealed approximately 80% of Japanese respondents did not have an affinity toward China—a trend that was observed throughout the previous decades, reflecting deteriorating bilateral relations. Although the largest group of international students in Japan is Chinese (47.1%) (Japan Student Services Organization, 2021), contact between Japanese and Chinese students on campus remains limited, and only a few studies have been conducted on the effects of exchanges with Chinese students on Japanese students' attitudes toward Chinese people (e.g., Kagami, 1999, 2006; Teranishi, 2017). This study explored the reasons behind Japanese students' favorable perceptions of Chinese students and their awareness of stereotypes after watching an online interview with Chinese students.

Theoretical Background

This study drew on Allport's (1954) contact theory hypothesis suggesting that intergroup contact could reduce prejudice and improve relations between in- and out-group members. Pettigrew (1997) emphasized "friendship potential" (p. 173) as a beneficial condition for favorable intergroup contact. Wright et al. (1997) identified an "extended contact" effect: More positive intergroup attitudes are engendered when a person knows an in-group member who has a positive relationship with an out-group member. According to Miller (2002), personalized interactions (e.g., self-disclosure of intimate information) promote trust and empathy toward other-group members. These do not have to be face-to-face interactions. Kim and Wojcieszak (2018) consider reading

online comments as a means of intergroup contact. Those who read comments by out-group members had more positive emotions than those who had been given the same content as general information. Finally, Mazziotta et al. (2011) found that first-year German university students who observed interactions between Chinese and German students became favorably inclined toward direct contact with Chinese.

The author considered Japanese students' watching an interview of international students as intergroup contact and thus conducted an online interview with two Chinese international students in Japanese. This study examined the impact of the contact on Japanese students by analyzing their post-interview comments to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What influenced students' favorable perceptions of the Chinese students after the interview?

RQ2: Did the Japanese students become aware of stereotypes? If so, what did they notice?

Methodology

Participants were 132 first-year students who enrolled in the author's course on multiculturalism at a women's university in Tokyo: 61 from an online synchronous class in 2020 and 71 from an asynchronous class in 2021. The students had learned the basics of intercultural communication but knew little about international students and the difficulties foreign residents face. The interview was conducted in a conversational style in Japanese, and Chinese students A and B from the 2020 class were asked open-ended questions during a simultaneous online lecture for an hour. The interview topics were based on questions collected earlier from the students in the 2020 class and covered their reasons for studying in Japan, personal and professional plans, unpleasant experiences in Japan, Chinese people's perceptions of Japan, and the Great Cultural Revolution. The Chinese students' video was switched off as per their preference, while the interviewer's video was on. Students from the 2021 class watched the recording of the 2020 interview as part of an asynchronous class. Both years' students submitted their reflections after having watched the interview, which were analyzed.

Since this study was concerned with the students' perceptions, qualitative content analysis (QCA) (Mayring, 2000) was used to analyze the text of their post-interview reflections. QCA is suitable for inductive category development. To answer the research questions, the texts on what stimulated the Japanese students' positive remarks (RQ1) and the Japanese students' thoughts on stereotypes and China (RQ2) were extracted. The extracted segments were open-coded, and the resultant open-coded data were labeled for sub-categories and more abstract categories, respectively. This process was repeated several times to finalize the categories.

Results

The coding processes generated three main categories of favorable perceptions: attitudes, reflections, and languages (Table 1). About a quarter (32) of the Japanese students appreciated the Chinese students' command of the Japanese language; 22 students expressed an interest in forming friendships with them; 17 noted the Chinese students' positive attitudes toward Japan; and 14 admired the Chinese students' handling of delicate and personal questions.

Main Categories	Generic Categories	Sub-Categories (frequency)	Codes (example)
Attitudes	Chinese students' positive attitudes	Good impression of Japan (17)	-have a good image
		Mature behavior (14)	-think like grown-ups
	Chinese students' sincerity	Honest views on sensitive issues (9)	-real and frank opinions
		Good personality (6)	-nice and kind persons
Reflections	Impact on Japanese students' viewpoints	Renewed image of China (12)	-different from my image
		Awareness of similarities between China and Japan (10)	-same as us
		Acceptance of cultural differences (4)	-importance of mutual understanding
	Feeling of closeness	Confirmation of existing affinity towards China (13)	-had close feelings
		Desires for friendship (22)	-want to be friends
		Expression of moral support (8)	-pray for success
		Inspiration for themselves (2)	-work harder like them
Languages	Chinese students' fluency in Japanese	Appreciation of their good command over Japanese (32)	-amazed at their fluent Japanese
		Recognition of their efforts to learn Japanese (2)	-feel their efforts of learning Japanese
	Chinese students as a role model	Wishes to speak foreign languages (4)	-want to speak English
		Expression of struggles in learning Chinese (2)	-Chinese language is difficult

Table 1. *Reasons behind students' favorable perceptions*

Table 2 shows the two main categories associated with the Japanese students' awareness of stereotypes: reflections and languages. The subcategories with the highest frequencies related to the Japanese students' impressions before the interview in the generic category of "Japanese people's image of China." The Japanese students realized that news items influenced their perceptions of China, and they also noticed individual differences among Chinese people—some liked Japan, and others did not.

Main Categories	Generic Categories	Sub-Categories (frequency)	Codes (example)
Reflections	Influence on their image	News items reporting on China (13)	-news picks up negative issues
		History and news are not necessarily neutral (2)	-written from Japanese viewpoints
	Chinese people's image about Japan	Assumption of anti-Japanese sentiments (5)	-Chinese had negative image about Japan
		Chinese students' positive image (3)	-had positive image about Japan
	Japanese people's image about China	Personal impressions before the interview (16)	-I had negative image
		Observation of others' image (9)	-Japanese have negative images
	Adjustment of position	Finding mutuality (3)	-had same feelings
		Noticing individual differences (11)	-depends on individuals
	Experience with Chinese people	Observation of bad manners (2)	-observed bad behaviors
		Direct and indirect contact (6)	-had friends from China
Opinions	Importance of exchange	Contact improves mutual images (4)	-real voices changes images
		Realizing lack of contact (3)	-had no direct contact
	Need for wider perspective	Should not judge by limited information (5)	-against one-sided judgments
		Shake off preconceptions (7)	-not to have biased image

Table 2. *Students' awareness of stereotypes*

The Chinese students' sincerity, when responding to questions about a sensitive history or unpleasant experiences, evoked empathy (Kagami, 1999; Miller, 2002). Watching the interview influenced Japanese students' positive intentions toward future contact and exchanges with international students (Mazziotta et al., 2011).

The Japanese students did not talk directly with the Chinese students; they just watched an interview between the Chinese students and the instructor, which can be considered indirect contact (Mazziotta et al., 2011; Wright et al., 1997). However, Kim and Wojcieszak (2018) would interpret watching an interview as direct contact. The students referred to the experience as a "direct exchange" and commented that they "heard international students directly," which confirms that the students considered this direct contact. Their

perception of "directness" was strengthened by the interview's focus on the Chinese students' personal experiences and stories (Miller, 2002).

Discussion

RQ1 focused on the Japanese students' favorable perceptions of the Chinese students after the interview. The QCA revealed that Japanese students highly appreciated Chinese students' "Japaneseness," that is, closeness to the Japanese in terms of language and attitude, shown in their fluency in Japanese; having a positive view of Japan; and their calm and mature behavior. The Japanese students accepted and welcomed the Chinese students because they spoke the local language and behaved like the Japanese students. We can observe the same sentiment in Japanese companies' pro-diversity recruiting; they look for those international students who are fluent in Japanese, understand Japanese culture, and behave like Japanese, emphasizing Japaneseness over ability (Mizoue, 2022). Although exchanges with international students can be good intercultural opportunities for most of the students, which was the original focus of this study, it is necessary to be mindful that emphasizing international students' Japaneseness may enhance ethnocentric attitudes among Japanese students.

RQ2 focused on the Japanese students' awareness of stereotypes. The QCA revealed that many were unaware that the media strongly influenced their perceptions of China. Before the interview, they thought all Chinese people "thought ill of Japanese," "spoke loudly," and were "self-centered." Although the previous lecture had introduced stereotypes, the students did not seem to recognize their pre-interview perceptions as stereotypes. However, watching the interview made them aware of the disparities between their pre-interview beliefs and the Chinese students' remarks in the interviews. When the Japanese students examined the dissimilarities, they realized that the often-negative stories in the media had influenced their opinions. The interview heightened their awareness of the perceptual distortions caused by stereotypes.

One of this study's limitations was the possibility of researcher bias. The author believed that the Japanese students' lack of direct contact with international students kept them from feeling close to the Chinese. However, more than ten students claimed an affinity for China before the interview, perhaps because of the growing influence of Chinese entertainment. Some students said they felt close but were prone to stereotyping the Chinese. Future research should adopt a different research design to explore this complex issue in depth.

In addition, the interviewer's positive reaction and facial expressions, the only visible on-screen object, might have influenced the Japanese students' mood, leaving them with favorable impressions as an extended contact effect (Wright et al., 1997). Although this research failed to confirm, an extended contact effect may be observed in online contact.

We need further discussions on whether Japanese students' preference for Japanese-like international students might create new stereotypes rather than enhance the benefits of diversity. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that increasing Japanese students' opportunities to interact with international students would help promote intercultural communication and acceptance. University instructors must create successful intercultural

opportunities that encourage students to embrace diversity and look beyond foreign students' "Japaneseness," particularly communicating in Japanese.

Conclusions

Most undergraduate students in Japan are about 20 years of age, with minimal first-person exposure to people and cultures different from their own. On-campus diversity at a women's university, or a predominantly female/male university, can be challenging. This study investigated the effects of an interview with Chinese students as intercultural contact to identify the factors influencing Japanese students' favorable post-contact perceptions of Chinese students and their awareness of stereotypes. The study found that the Chinese students' "Japaneseness" significantly influenced the Japanese students' favorable perceptions. The small-scale study's results highlighted the benefits of universities facilitating students' intercultural contact to foster an appreciation for diversity by exposing them to different people and cultures and disconfirming students' stereotypes.

Japanese students generally learn in a homogeneous environment as majority members of society. Not all choose to study abroad or engage in intercultural communications programs, which can limit their experiences with and exposure to cultural diversity. University-led opportunities for interactions with international students in the Japanese language can broaden Japanese students' exposure to cultural diversity, offering valuable intercultural contacts and exchanges. Intercultural experiences can help them mature into citizens respectful of diversity, and minority perspectives.

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Teachers' personal theories of teaching concerning cultural and linguistic diversity in general and intercultural primary schools

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Abstract

The phenomenon of migration has transformed the Greek school into a multiethnic environment, reshaping the issues raised about good practices and the role the teacher plays in the smooth integration of diverse cultures, not only in the school but also in the wider Greek society. This paper examines how teachers' personal theories affect the way they manage cultural and linguistic diversity in Greek primary schools. The research also compares personal theories and practices between teachers working in general and intercultural primary schools. The participants are 20 primary school teachers in the Regional Unit of Pella and Thessaloniki who teach in multicultural classes. Qualitative research methods were used, through a variety of tools, such as in-depth interviews with teachers, who were asked to deepen the thoughts they made during their teaching on issues related to the way of managing culturally and linguistically diverse students. At the same time, with the use of teaching observation, data were collected regarding the teaching practices used by the teachers in order to check the consistency of their theory and their practice. The findings show the tendency of teachers to use assimilative practices with minimal exceptions of teachers from intercultural schools, since they tend to ignore cultural and linguistic diversity and they do not take into account the cultural elements of their students during teaching.

Keywords: Cultural diversity, linguistic diversity, migration, intercultural education, personal theory.

Introduction

Although immigration has been a dominant factor in the history of the Greek nation, in the last thirty years the phenomenon seems to have emerged strongly, as today immigrants make up 10% of the population of our country (Palaiologou, 2020). The reality created by immigration would be impossible not to affect education, not only because of the change in the composition of the student population but also because the educational system in general is the main institution in the process of social and cultural integration of immigrants in the host country (Banks, 2006; Palaiologou et al., 2019; Palaiologou et al., 2020).

The role of the teacher in this context is considered important, as it is faced with a series of demanding and imperative issues (Kesidou, 2008; Papanaoum, 2003; Tsaliki, 2012). One of them is the smooth integration of ethnically diverse students into the school and the wider social environment (Govaris, 2001; Palaiologou, 2013). It is important for both schools and teachers as key factors in the educational process to ensure this smooth integration, through the recognition and acceptance of the ethno-cultural capital of foreign students

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(Gurer, 2019; Kaldi et al., 2017; Ratini, 2019). The present research, therefore, examines personal theories developed by primary education teachers in general and intercultural schools concerning cultural and linguistic management, and whether these theories differ or not between teachers of the two school types.

Greek education in the context of multiculturalism

Given the interaction between society and school, the educational system of the host countries is impossible not to be affected by the presence of people with cultural and linguistic characteristics different from the dominant group and thus the school is called upon to play a decisive role, normalizing the relations between native and culturally different population through the cultivation of respect for diversity (Govaris & Kaldi, 2010; Palaiologou & Evangelou, 2012; Palaiologou et al., 2019; Papadopoulou, Theodosiadou & Palaiologou, 2020). After all, in the context of the socializing function of the school as well as the function of imparting knowledge, culturally and linguistically diverse people seek, through education, their smooth and complete integration in the host country (Palaiologou & Evangelou, 2012).

About the challenges faced by teachers in the context of multicultural classrooms, these concern the social and learning difficulties faced by culturally and linguistically diverse students due to insufficient knowledge of Greek language, the difficulty of communication and the development of social relationships in the school environment (Palaiologou & Evangelou, 2012; Papadopoulou, 2008), while it seems that teachers themselves face difficulties in creatively utilizing the cultural capital of their students (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2016).

It appears that despite the need to apply intercultural principles, in practice the cultural capital of culturally and linguistically diverse students is ignored (Govaris, 2001; Nikolaou, 2011; Palaiologou & Evangelou, 2012). Educators need to review their assimilative practices, reexamine many of their assumptions about otherness, and question their role as representatives of the dominant culture (Sharan, 2010). Thus, they will be able to meet the demands of a multicultural classroom (Beckett & Kobayashi, 2020; Domingo & Guerrero, 2018; Gibbs, 2020).

The meaning and importance of the study of personal theories

A person's perceptions and experiences influence the way he/she understands and interprets the world around him/her (Richardson, 1996; Yusoff, 2019). In this research, the theoretical framework for conceptualizing teachers' perceptions, opinions, beliefs and experiences is the concept of personal theory.

Personal theories contain assumptions about how we think, feel, act and also how we interpret our own and others' behavior (Cuadra-Martinez et al., 2017; Scheele & Groeben, 2010). The four main characteristics of personal theories, according to Scheele and Groeben (1988) are that: a) they represent a relatively stable system of knowledge, b) they are implicit but with appropriate guidance they can take an explicit form, c) they have the structure of arguments, like scientific theories, which is why they can be used to explain and predict actions, since they have the form "if...then..." and d) due to the structure of the argument they have, they fulfill functions such as defining a situation, explaining events, predicting future actions and reactions, and making plans and

recommendations. Finally, it should be noted that personal theories are reconstructed through the process of consensus dialogue (Christmann & Groeben, 2013; Kindermann & Riegel, 2016), a methodological line that we also followed in the present research.

The importance of studying teachers' personal theories lies in the fact that in ordinary situations one tends to act without knowing the cognitive processes that guide one's actions, which happens only when one has to deal with a problem or a critical situation. Therefore, it is vital for teachers to be aware of and understand the personal theory that guides their action. This process not only helps them improve themselves, but also enables them to face problematic situations in the classroom with more knowledge and confidence (Burkett, 2014; Ferris, 2019; Theodosiadou & Papadopoulou, 2014).

The purpose of the research

The purpose of this research is to explore the personal theories of teachers from public general and intercultural primary schools who teach culturally and linguistically diverse students, in order to examine how they think about and manage cultural diversity in their classroom. At the same time, a comparison of the theories and practices between the teachers of general intercultural schools is attempted, with the basic assumption that they will differ noticeably from each other.

The participants of the research

The participation of teachers from both general and intercultural schools was deemed necessary, since, based on the purpose of the research, our intentions were to study and systematize the theory they develop and which direct the way they manage cultural diversity and the comparison of the results between them.

The general schools that participated in the research are located in semi-urban areas that have some - relatively small - distance from the large urban centers of the wider area, while the intercultural schools are located in a large urban center or very close to it. Teachers working in general primary schools had fewer formal qualifications (most of them had only a basic degree) and worked in an area with a relatively small number of students from different culturally and linguistically background, while teachers working in intercultural schools had master degrees while some of them also a second degree or doctorate.

The total number of participating teachers was twenty (20), ten (10) from general and ten (10) from intercultural schools, a satisfactory number, as this is the maximum number of samples in similar qualitative research. Finally, it should be mentioned that the research was carried out in the school years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 for teachers of general primary schools and in the school year 2018-2019 for teachers of multicultural schools.

Methodology

The research methodology used was introspection (Introspektion), a combinatorial method. Specifically, to reconstruct and study each teacher's personal theory, a combination of two research tools was used; the first was that of "*thinking aloud*" ("lautes" Denken), which was mainly applied in psychological research to examine

the relationship between thought and action and the other tool was "*stimulated recall*", which enables cognitive processes to be investigated by helping participants to remember their concurrent thinking (Konrad, 2010). To triangulate the research methodology, we used teaching observation (Papadopoulou, 2015) through which we checked the consistency of theory and teaching practice.

Data collection

During the research preparation, we informed teachers about the aims of the research and the method we would follow. The data collection process was recording of each teacher's teaching. The recorded teaching hours ranged from 13 to 18 over four to five days for each teacher in various subjects covered by the primary school curriculum.

As mentioned above, another tool for data collection was teaching observation, which was systematic and structured with a low degree of structure. From the recordings of the teaching, we prepared the stage of think-aloud and stimulated recall, since the interview/discussion with the teachers was based on listening to the recording of the teaching and their trying to recall thoughts which they had had during the lesson. At this stage a discussion with each teacher on the recorded teaching was held, lasting on average for 2 hours. In a semi-formal personal interview/dialogue, with only a few predetermined questions (for the interviewer to be open and adaptable to the participant's attitudes and responses), the teachers were asked to express their thoughts on the points of instruction related to the management of cultural diversity. The next step was the in-depth dialogue. At this stage, issues emerged from the previous dialogue were discussed, which served to fill any existing gaps found in the processing phase.

Data analysis

Based on the collected data we attempted to reconstruct the teachers' personal theories, which, however, were finalized after the dialogue-consensus phase (see below). We formulated theories in the manner of: 'if … then …'. For example, based on the teacher's statement: "When [the migrant student] had first come, he was afraid, he did not speak Greek, and I treated him well. I spoke to him as I would speak to a Greek student", we formulated the hypothesis: "If you treat a migrant student like a Greek student, then does that mean that you treat them well?"

In the last stage, the "*consensus dialogue*" phase, teachers were given a questionnaire, with three columns: the first included the personal hypotheses we had formulated from their statements, in the second teachers had to state whether they agreed (A) or disagree (D) with the hypothesis and in the third column they could add comments if they wished.

Research Findings

The following are the most important findings that emerged from the research and concern the management of cultural diversity by the teachers. We also proceed to the comparative presentation between teachers of general and teachers from multicultural primary schools.

Regarding the integration of culturally and linguistically different individuals, students and adults, into the mainstream population, the majority of teachers from general schools and the minority from intercultural schools formulated hypotheses in favor of assimilation as the only way of effective socialization of these individuals.

Teachers from both school types who participated in the survey referred to the differentiation of teaching. The majority of teachers stated that they do not consider it necessary in a class with a multicultural composition, since most of the culturally and linguistically diverse students were born and raised in Greece. Therefore, they do not consider necessary to differentiate their teaching, explaining that "there students do not differ from their Greek classmates".

The teachers also mentioned hypotheses related to whether they believe that the teaching of the mother tongue of non-native students should be provided to them by the Greek school and how they think that the knowledge of the mother tongue is related to the knowledge of the Greek language. The majority of teachers of intercultural schools stated that the teaching of foreign students' mother tongue is essential in the Greek school (Kesidou, 2008; Palaiologou & Evangelou, 2012). Thus, they stated that it is important for these students to learn their mother tongue, not only because they should not forget their roots and identity, and their parents are not able to teach them in terms of grammar and syntax, but also because they will be able to better learn the greek language. However, some teachers from general schools argued that the mother tongue should only be taught in schools with a large number of foreign students, i.e., mainly in intercultural schools, as they mentioned, and not in schools with a small number of students from different culturally and linguistically background.

Finally, an important element concerning the way of managing diversity is the utilization of the cultural capital of foreign students by the teachers during the teaching process; utilization which also consists in the references made by the teachers to the cultural and linguistic elements of their students, such as language, traditions etc. Most of the teachers from both school types argued that they can only sporadically mention something related to the nationality of their foreign students and that no matter how many opportunities there are for such references, either in the school textbooks or in the speech of the students, Greeks and foreigners, it is left to their discretion whether and to what extent they will utilize them.

Discussion

The research resulted in four basic categories in which we can distinguish teachers based on the type of personal theory they belong to. Table 1 follows this categorization.

School type/ Type of personal theory	Assimilative (1)	Intercultural (2)	Assimilative with intercultural elements (3)	Intercultural with assimilative elements (4)
General primary schools	3	-	6	1
Intercultural primary schools with a large number of students from different culturally and linguistically background	-	5	-	-
Intercultural primary school with a small number of students from different culturally and linguistically background	-	-	1	4

Table 1.

An extremely important issue that emerged from the present research concerns the hypotheses of teachers regarding the inclusion of people from different culturally and linguistically background in greek society. In an attempt to categorize the types of teachers' personal theory that emerged regarding this issue, we would say that a) a part of the teachers supported absolute assimilation in a conscious and strict way, b) other teachers supported assimilation as unfair, but necessary process of integration into the dominant society and finally c) some teachers supported a position that manifests an intercultural and pluralistic tendency, claiming that integration is possible while preserving the different cultural and linguistic elements of individuals. Teachers belonging to the first two types made up the majority of teachers from general schools, while less than half work in intercultural schools. Some of them argue that assimilation is a practice that in many cases is chosen by the individuals themselves, because they wish to. But in reality, according to Kahn, Lindstrom and Murray (2014), people from different culturally and linguistically background are under pressure to give up their cultural beliefs and adopt the dominant ones.

About teaching differentiation, only a few teachers from intercultural schools with a large number of students from different culturally and linguistically background stated that differentiated teaching is necessary in a multicultural class due to the problems these children face in understanding and/or using the Greek language (Magos, 2004).

It is certainly noteworthy the finding that teachers working in an intercultural school do not consider differentiation of teaching necessary. According to the research of Kaldi, Govaris and Filippatou (2017), although primary school teachers seem to have a basic theoretical background in differentiated instruction, at the same time they may use traditional practices in their everyday teaching. This is also in agreement with the present finding which mainly refers to the teachers from the intercultural school with the small number of students from different culturally and linguistically background.

Hypotheses concerning the theory of additive and subtractive bilingualism occurred from the research. The difference in teachers' hypotheses between the two school types was quite significant, as the majority of teachers from general schools and the minority of teachers from intercultural schools supported the theory of

subtractive bilingualism, according to which knowledge of the mother tongue has a negative impact on the knowledge of the greek language and for this reason it is preferable for students to be taught exclusively the greek language.

Such a perception contradicts the relevant literature (Kesidou, 2008; Palaiologou & Evangelou, 2012), according to which knowledge of the mother tongue has enormous benefits and advantages for students from different culturally and linguistically background, as it helps to better learn the greek language. On the contrary, teachers working in general schools support the theory of subtractive bilingualism possibly due to the fact that they lack intercultural knowledge.

With regard to the pedagogical management of cultural and linguistic diversity and more specifically the teachers' references to the cultural and linguistic elements of their students during their teaching, teaching observation revealed that the majority of teachers from general schools did almost no reference to these elements. Similarly, the teachers who worked in 1 of the 3 intercultural schools with a small number of students from different culturally and linguistically background did not make references to the cultural and linguistic elements of these students. On the contrary, the teachers from the 2 intercultural schools with a large number of students from different culturally and linguistically background referred more often to elements of their students' homeland. This finding possibly shows that teachers believe that the utilization of the cultural and linguistic background is related to the number of these students in the classroom.

This finding is confirmed by the research of Arneback & Jämte (2022), according to which teachers who used the intercultural approach in managing cultural diversity did so mainly in cases where culturally and linguistically diverse students were the majority. Such a perception and practice, however, is wrong, since the utilization of diversity is not a matter that should concern only teachers who work with a large number of culturally and linguistically diverse students, but all teachers, since cultural heterogeneity characterizes every school class (Kesidou, 2008; Nikolaou, 2011).

In conclusion, our initial hypothesis that teachers' theories and practices for managing diversity will differ for the two school types is largely confirmed for teachers' theories but not for their practices, as it was found that these differences concerning the way of managing cultural and linguistic diversity is not related to the type of school in which the teachers work, but mainly to the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students that the school and their class host. In the two intercultural schools that accommodated a large number of culturally and linguistically diverse students, greater than that of the native students, the teachers seemed more aware and prepared to meet the needs of these students.

This leads us to the conclusion that the characterization of a school as intercultural does not necessarily make its environment "interculturally oriented", in the sense of knowledge, possibly, and especially of the application of intercultural principles by the educational staff. The research showed that only teachers who worked for a long time with a large number of culturally and linguistically diverse students had knowledge of the basic principles of intercultural education and mainly applied interculturally oriented practices of managing cultural and linguistic diversity during the teaching process. Of these two intercultural schools, one worked with a large number of culturally and linguistically diverse students, many of whom were accommodated in

refugee structures. In the other, a large number of culturally and linguistically diverse students also studied, while at the same time, as a school, it had an active participation in programs, actions and innovations of a cross-cultural nature.

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Learners with a migration background learning German as a foreign language in Greek Primary and Secondary schools

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Abstract

GFL-teachers work in mixed-ability classrooms every day. Research data in Greece are limited, and they either examine the phenomenon in a more general context or focus on a specific parameter of heterogeneity, such as learning difficulties. The main objective of the present study is to systematically document the heterogeneity in the GFL-classroom in its various manifestations and to identify the ways in which GFL-teachers choose in order to manage the heterogeneous classroom. In specific, the objectives of this study are: (a) to document the different sub-cases of learners that deviate from the typical learner in the GFL-classroom in both primary and secondary education, e.g. learners with a migration background, learners with dyslexia, learners with autism, etc. and (b) to document the ways, techniques, modifications of teaching that GFL-teachers use to address diversity in the classroom. It is furthermore examined which ways GFL-teachers choose in order to be effective and deal with heterogeneity and whether their training is sufficient and enables them to address heterogeneity in the classroom.

The data collection tool in the post-doctoral research, which was conducted in 2022, is a questionnaire, whose questions are mostly closed-ended. The method of stratified disproportionate sampling was used, in order to ensure the representation of each segment of the population, to decrease the standard error and to ensure the existence of a sufficient number of subjects from the subpopulations. The sample consisted of 135 GFL-teachers, who worked in primary or secondary schools. The participants teach in a fairly large number of courses and therefore have to deal with a large number of learners. Furthermore, in most cases (80%) GFL-teachers mentioned having learners with a migration background in their classrooms. Active participation was high in this category of learners. As far as the reasons, that influence the learners to participate in the lesson are concerned, it was established that for learners with a migration background, the most important motive is the positive atmosphere in their classroom. However, important difficulties were identified, when teachers tried to modify their teaching, which often led them to believe that they do not cope with heterogeneity in their classroom successfully, causing them difficulties in their work.

Keywords: heterogeneity, teaching German as a second foreign language, intercultural education.

Introduction

From personal experience, as well as according to the research presented in this article, there is insufficient training regarding the issue of dealing with heterogeneity in the GFL-classroom, even though it is an integral

part of everyday practice. Research in related disciplines has documented the need for teacher training in issues related to heterogeneity in the classroom (Tsakalidou, 2020).

By the term heterogeneity we mean the various cases of learners, who deviate from the typical learner. In our research, we specifically address the most common cases, namely learners with learning difficulties, gifted learners and learners with a migration background.

GFL-teachers, who completed their studies in the past years, while the Departments of German Language and Literature in Athens and Thessaloniki did not yet offer relevant courses, emphasize the lack of training in related issues. Therefore, it causes great difficulty to the GFL-teachers, who are not specialized in special education and multicultural education, to manage these cases in everyday practice. Of course, in recent years certain courses have been integrated into the university curricula, which concern teaching modifications, differentiated instruction and the application of modern teaching methods to deal with heterogeneity. Moreover, GFL-teachers can attend relevant seminars, trainings and lectures.

Research data in Greece are limited, and they either examine the phenomenon in a more general context (Kanella, 2019) or focus on a specific parameter of heterogeneity, such as learning difficulties (Tsakalidou, 2020, 2021). Therefore, the contribution of the present postdoctoral research is to systematically document the diversity in the GFL-classroom and to identify, which ways GFL-teachers choose to manage the heterogeneous classroom. Nevertheless, this paper examines whether teachers consider themselves to be effective in dealing with heterogeneity and whether they consider it necessary to have further training.

Immigration in the Greek context

Immigration, as stated in chapter 1.1 of the National Integration Strategy of the Greek Ministry of Immigration Policy (2019), is a multidimensional and multi-level phenomenon, as it is inherent in human evolution and, therefore, concerns many areas, such as politics, economy, culture, sociology and psychology.

In general, migration is defined as the permanent or temporary change of residence of an individual, a group of people or a social group both within and between countries due to social changes, economic and political crises, revolutions and wars, the asymmetric distribution of global wealth between developing and developed countries, the global deregulation of the labor market, man-made disasters (including climate change and environmental degradation of large areas of the planet).

The main reasons for migration are (a) the search for better living conditions and economic well-being, (b) family reunification, (c) escaping from life-threatening conditions, mainly in war regions and authoritarian regimes that violate basic rights and individual freedom.

The inclusion of children with a migration background in the country's school system has been supported for over two decades through the institutionalization and strengthening of the operation of intercultural schools (Law 2413/1996 and Law 4415/2016) and the establishment and operation of reception classes and tutoring departments as well as Reception Structures for the Education of Refugees in Greece (Law 3879/2010; Ministerial Decision Φ10/20/Γ1/7-9–99; Ministerial Decision Φ1/63691/Δ1/2017).

Research objectives and research questions

As mentioned in the introduction, aims of this research, which was conducted during the school year 2021 to 2022, were (a) to establish the most common cases of learners deviating from the typical learner in the GFL-classroom in both primary and secondary education in Greece and (b) to document the ways the GFL-teachers use to deal with heterogeneity as well as the need for further teacher-training in such matters.

The research objectives mentioned above are expressed by the following research questions: (a) What are the most common cases of learners who deviate from the typical learner in the GFL-classroom? (b) Are all learners actively participating in the lesson? If not, why is their non-active participation? (c) Do learners, who deviate from the typical learner, actively participate in the lesson? (d) In what ways do GFL-teachers deal with heterogeneity in the GFL-classroom? (e) Do the GFL-teachers consider the methods they choose to be effective? (f) Do the GFL-teachers believe that there is a need for further training in issues related to the management of heterogeneity?

Research sample

During the main research 135 GFL-teachers participated, namely, 127 women (94.1%) and eight men (5.9%), aged 29 to 62 years. The majority had a postgraduate degree (67.8%) and zero to 32 years of working experience (15.2 years in average). Most of the participants were full-time teachers (71.1%), 17.8% were part-time substitute teachers and 11.1% were full-time substitute teachers. The participants worked in: (a) Secondary Education (Greek Gymnasium): 31.1%, (b) Secondary Education (Greek Lykeion): 14.8%, (c) Primary Education (Primary School): 39.3%, (d) both levels of education (Primary and Secondary): 7.4% and (e) both types of Secondary Education (Greek Gymnasium and Greek Lykeion): 5.6%. Finally, the participants worked in 58 prefectures in Greece.

Research results

Active and non-active participation

According to the research results, 80% of the GFL-teachers had learners with a migration background in their classroom. These learners participated quite actively in the lesson (57,8%). The reasons for active participation, according to the teachers, are shown in Table 1.

Reasons for active participation	Learners with a migration background
Positive reinforcement in the classroom	56,8%
Positive classroom climate	55,9%
Course adaptation to learners' needs	41,4%
Playful activities, videos, songs	33,3%
Strong learners' learning motivation	32,4%

Table 1. *Reasons for active participation*

Furthermore, the reasons for non-active participation of learners with a migration background, according to the teachers, are shown in Table 2.

Reasons for non-active participation	Learners with a migration background
Lack of motivation	59,2%
Lack of attention/concentration	50,5%
Large number of learners in the classroom	48,5%
Curriculum pressure	7,8%
Incorrect time management (learner)	7,8%
Incorrect time management (teacher)	5,8%
Teaching	2,9%

Table 2. *Reasons for non-active participation*

Ways to deal with heterogeneity in the GFL-course

The ways that GFL-teachers chose to deal with heterogeneity in the classroom, in order of preference, were: their experience (94.9%), discussion with an expert (87%), discussion with colleagues (85.3%), their instinct (84%), the instructions of the child's parent(s) (67.1%), teacher-training (66.7%) and studying the related literature (64.5%).

Factors that constitute difficulties while making teaching modifications

Based on the collected data, the factors that created difficulties while making teaching adjustments according to the GFL-teachers were insufficient education infrastructure (82.2%), lack of time (79.3%), unsuitable classrooms (78.5 %), lost teaching hours (57.8%), the lack of cooperation amongst colleagues in order to adapt the lesson (57%) and/or the classroom configuration (49.7%).

Factors contributing to the successful management of heterogeneity

Factors that GFL-teachers believed would help them, in order to successfully manage heterogeneity in the classroom were the following: teacher-training on relevant topics (95.6%), discussion with experts in the field (95.6%), a classroom exclusively for the GFL-lesson (93.2%), the active support of colleagues (85.2%), teaching in fewer school units (83.7%) and teaching the GFL-lesson for more teaching hours per week (76.3%).

Existing knowledge and teacher-training needs

The GFL-teachers were found to be trained in intercultural education issues (42.2%) and some followed courses on this subject (30.4%). It was also examined, to what extent the GFL-teachers think that they should be educated on related subjects. Specifically, 79.3% of teachers believed that such subjects should be taught at Undergraduate level and 28.9% at Postgraduate level. Furthermore, 59.3% considered that they should be the subject of training for potential teachers (university graduates), while 80.7% believed that they should be the subject of training for active teachers (permanent and substitutes) . In addition, 34.8% of the GFL-teachers

thought that they should be a mandatory subject of introductory teacher training before being hired. Only 4.4% believed that they themselves should be responsible to study the existing literature with regard to these subjects.

Finally, a large percentage of the GFL-teachers answered that, if they had the opportunity, they would attend a relevant training programme (85.9%) or a speech on the subjects in question (57.8%). Furthermore, 38.5% of the respondents answered that they would try to study relevant material. In addition, 22.2% reported that, if they had the opportunity, they would attend a related Master's programme and 17% a related Undergraduate programme.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are many cases of learners in the GFL-classroom, that teachers are called upon to respond successfully, while at the same time they have to deal with the challenge of moving even to five school units on a weekly basis. This fact, combined with the few teaching hours they have in each course, makes the work of GFL-teachers very difficult, as they are called upon to respond to the difficult teaching conditions in a mixed-ability-classroom, without having the chance to come in contact with the learners and get to know them better, that is, to ascertain their preferences, needs, potential difficulties. The situation is probably similar for FFL-teachers as well.

According to the current international literature and research, but also taking into account the picture outlined for the Greek context in the present study, it is imperative to organize training seminars, which will inform GFL-teachers, as well as other foreign language teachers, about the most common cases of learners who deviate from the average learner, the potential difficulties and ways of coping in daily practice. Also, it would be extremely useful to carry out trainings on the possibilities provided by the implementation of differentiated instruction as a way of dealing with heterogeneity.

Moreover, GFL-teachers, as well as foreign language teachers in general, should be specialized in the implementation of suitable teaching programmes and have the ability to choose the right exercise material for each phase of language teaching. Regarding learners with a migration background, foreign language teachers should know the basic applications of differentiated instruction so that they can adapt the lesson to the learners' needs and be more effective. At the same time, they should know the basic principles of intercultural education, which state that each person comes to school with experiences from two or more cultural systems and the social or educational system must provide him/her the opportunity to develop them seamlessly.

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Teaching activities and practices that support multilingualism and promote multiculturalism

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Abstract

This paper is part of a broader research which elaborates on teaching activities, practices, strategies, and methods that promote multilingualism in a multicultural and multilingual school environment under the frame of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Curriculum. This paper presents the detailed lesson plans that teachers create to organize their lessons since from our findings it came up that all teachers in primary education in the school under investigation are required to write their lesson plans according to IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) curriculum framework. In this paper, we present lesson plans that have been designed and implemented in Kindergarten and grade 3 that focus on students' identities and develop language awareness. For the study, the qualitative research methodology was used (profile questionnaires and semi-structured interviews) and eight (8) primary teachers took part. The abovementioned tools and the findings are followed by the presentation of lesson plans that are designed and implemented in such multicultural classes and the teachers shared with us.

Keywords: multilingual teaching activities, primary education, second language acquisition, lesson plans.

Introduction

This paper is part of a broader research which elaborates on teaching activities, practices, strategies and methods that promote multilingualism in a multicultural and multilingual school environment under the frame of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Curriculum. It focuses on primary teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward multilingualism, the practices they follow to overcome the challenges, and how they can practically utilize multilingual activities based on the relevant literature (Cummins, 2001, Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012). This study aims to contribute knowledge to the teachers who work within such educational environments and to reveal practices on how they can better support their students.

In the study, the qualitative research methodology was used (profile questionnaires and semi-structured interviews) and eight (8) primary teachers took part. The abovementioned tools and the findings are followed by the presentation of lesson plans that are designed and implemented in such multicultural classes and the teachers shared with us.

From our findings, it came up that teachers create detailed lesson plans to organize their lessons, based on the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) curriculum framework. More specifically, we present lesson plans that have been designed and implemented in Kindergarten, grade 3 and 5 that elaborate students' identities and develop language awareness.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Curriculum

The IB Curriculum is organized as following:

➢ PYP (Primary Years Program) for primary education (Students 4-10 years old)

➢ MYP (Middle Years Program), DP (Diploma Program) and CP (Career Program) for students in secondary education aged 11-17 years old

It is based on four key elements: a) International-mindedness, b) The IB learner profile, c) A broad, balanced, conceptual and connected curriculum, d) Approaches to teaching and learning. Furthermore, the curriculum consists of six Transdisciplinary:

▪ Who we are

▪ Where we are in place and time

▪ How we express ourselves

▪ How the world works

▪ How we organize ourselves

▪ Sharing the planet

Year planning

Before the start of the school year, each grade level team meets and makes the year general planning based on the PYP IB curriculum. The first step is to place the Transdisciplinary Theme on specific periods and set the dates per Unit throughout the year. Then the team creates the Unit of Inquiry/Central Idea per Transdisciplinary theme and continues building on each unit's: a) Lines of Inquiry (Conceptual understanding), b) Learning outcomes, c) Learner Profile (*Open minded, Principled, Reflective, Risk-taker, Thinker, Caring, Communicator, Inquirer, knowledgeable, Balanced),* d) Approaches to teaching and learning (ATL's) (*Thinking, Social, Communication, Self-management & Research skills.*

The following lesson plans are representative of this philosophy and they are designed according to the key elements and the Transdisciplinary Themes. The first lesson plan is designed for Kindergarten and the second one is for Grade 3.

Lesson plan in Kindergarten (Lesson plan 1)

Day: Monday	**Unit: Who we are** **Central idea:** Roles and responsibilities shape our relationships.
Conceptual understanding + key concept	Line of inquiry: 1. **Traditions** and **values** define people's personal and **family identities**. 2. People communicate using different languages Key Concept: **Form, connection, perspective**
Teacher questions	**F:** What is identity? What are your family's traditions? What are values? **C:** Why are your traditions and values special to you?

What are we learning about (knowledge learning outcomes)	**PSPE:** **Identity** -Identify themselves in relation to other. -Describe some physical and personal characteristics **Social studies:** **Social organization and culture** -Find out where they were born and raised and placing their photographs, drawings and names on a classroom world map. **Continuity and change through time** -Respond to questions about their own past and places they belong to (older students only) -Give examples of repeating patterns and events in their lives. -Make a calendar of commemorative events that students, their family and friends celebrate and discuss why they are important. **Language:** **Written language - writing** -Makes links to own experience when creating texts.
What are we learning to do (Approaches to learning)	Approaches to learning **<u>Communication skills:</u>** **Exchanging information** **Interpreting** Interpret **visual**, audio and oral communication **Speaking** Express oneself using words and sentences. Participate in conversations. **Symbolic exploration and expression** **Reading, writing and mathematics** Take on pretend roles and situations. Understand symbols.

	Teacher	Students
Resources	Print students' pictures to create Identity maps. Strings	Print in small scale students' work of "physical traits", "traditions".
	Parents: Come in the classroom to write a wish for their child (a small sentence in their language)	

Starting point kids	The children just had the "physical traits", "traditions", "values" and "their family". Now, we connect them creating Identity maps.		
Learning experiences:	Introduction - tuning in	Who we are? What defines who you are? How can we see you are part of your family?	M
	Learning experience 1 **Sentence stem:** **My family is XXX** **We celebrate XXX** **My parents/mum/dad gave me my XXX** **I speak XXX at home**	Unguided: - Children without teachers, look at the family photos, previous week's work with the "physical traits" and "traditions". Discuss in pairs what they see. Guided: -Children stick their photo on the wall. Teacher asks, "Who are you?" Then add their work around their picture and connect the elements that shape their identities with a string. **Who are you?** **Who is your family?** **Who gave you your eyes, hair/skin color?** **What traditions do you celebrate?** **What are your values?**	

Lesson plan in grade 3 (Lesson plan2)

Lines of Inquiry and learning outcome(s)	Teacher questions	Tuning in	Main	Plenary	Vocabulary/multilingualism/ELA	Resources
Summative assessment	*What is the purpose of an advert?* *Who is the target audience?* *What is a slogan?* *What does the logo mean?*	Sell your language! You are going to convince people that they should learn your heritage language. You will create a poster to	Think/pair/share **Discuss – what type of things could an advert about learning a language make the reader believe?** Possible answers – Smarter More intelligent Unique and special Happier	Discuss Rubric with students – have we included the most important aspects? Is there an opinion? Is there a purpose? Who is the target audience?	Advertising Logo Slogan Product Purpose Opinion Target Audience	Powerpoint

		advertise your language.	More friends Similarly, discuss through think/pair/share **How do adverts catch your attention and stick in your memory?** Possible answers – Rhetorical questions Sense of humour Catchy slogan Logos Alliteration, rhyme and word play Go through powerpoint with students. Create Persuasive advert Rubric with students	Rhetorical questions? Is there emotive language? Is there imperative language? Is there a slogans?-catchy Is there a logos– neat, colourful, clear, simple Are there facts?		
Summative – **over two days**	*What is the purpose of an advert?* *Who is the target audience?* *What is a slogan?* *What does the logo mean?*	Tune in – Explain to students that now is advert writing time!	Students get to work on creating heritage language adverts. Students can use posters to create these, and/or film at TV advert where they convince people that they must learn their language.	In group circle, students share the slogan for their advert. Students share their advertisements at the end of the week and give TAG feedback	Home language Advertising Logo Slogan Product Purpose Opinion Target Audience	A4 paper

Implementation of lesson plan 2

The above-mentioned lesson plan 2 was implemented in a grade 3 class. Students, after having inquired into the advertisement's purpose and the elements that need to be included (i.e. target audience, clear, colourful, simple logos, catchy slogans, rhetorical questions, emotive language and imperative language), started working on the creation of their poster. Students were encouraged to write in their home languages and add cultural symbols.

In following picture 1 the students worked on the creation of their advertising posters and pictures 2 and 3 their final work is presented.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

A lesson **implementation's outcome: A student's presentation**

The following example is from the observation in the school during the Grade 5 exhibition. To graduate from primary school and move to secondary, the students are required to conduct and present a research project on a subject of their preference.

This student chose her subject from the transdisciplinary theme "How we express ourselves" and decided to make her investigation on the Visual Arts subject, focusing on paintings of gods from her culture. In the following pictures (4-6) we can see the student's research process. In picture 7 student's final product is presented, accompanied by one of the texts she created expressing herself in English.
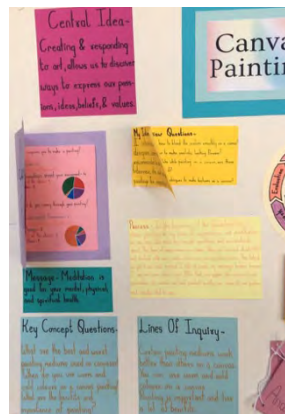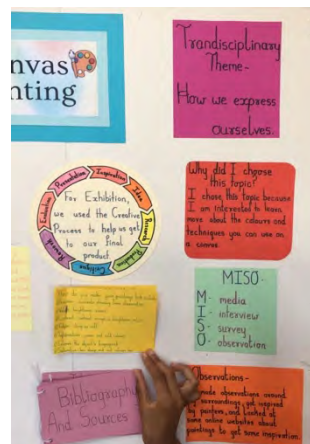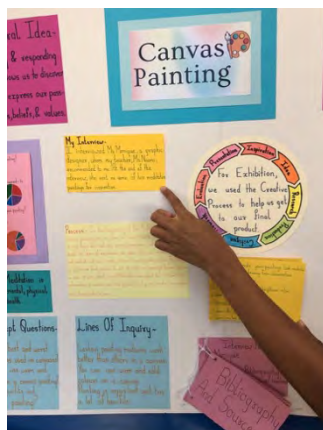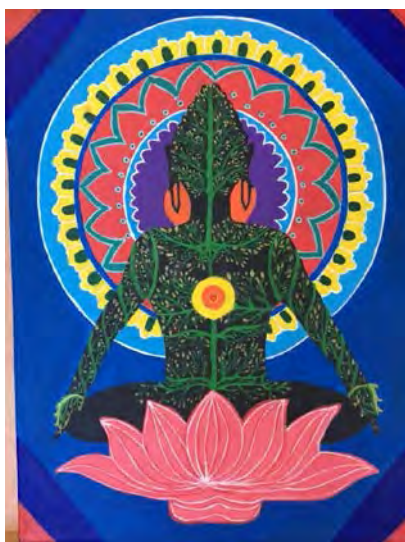

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

So, I have made an Indian God whose name is Buddha, and he is sitting down in the grass, and a tree grew on him, and that's how long he meditated for. Because as you know trees take years and years to grow. And then behind him I've done like a mandala art which is in our culture a symbol for calming down, and underneath the Buddha, I have done a Lotus which is India's national flower. I've learned that when you want to make green lighter you want to add yellow and not white.

Figure 7

Conclusion

The present study aims to aid teachers by providing them with concrete multilingual practices that can directly use in their classroom, making the necessary adaptations, to adequately support students' social and academic needs. A detailed lesson plan is a necessary tool that supports teachers to organize and reflect on their teaching practices as well as evaluating students' progress and the whole educational process.

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From multiculturalism to interculturalism: A critical approach

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Abstract

Nowadays multiculturalism is becoming a concept that is often at the forefront of political debate. As a result of this situation, multiculturalism has taken on many different dimensions and interpretations. To the existing problems of multiculturalism was added the shift in terminology from "multiculturalism" to "interculturalism". The aim of this paper is to highlight: a) the main views that have been expressed on the relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism; b) the reasons which imposed the shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism; c) the main points of interculturalism's criticism to multiculturalism. Finally, an introduction will be made to "critical interculturalism".

Keywords: multiculturalism, interculturalism, critical approach, critical interculturalism.

Introduction

Nowadays, there is a tendency to highlight diversity, and especially cultural diversity. In this context, diversity tends to be seen as an "autonomous value", which results in issues of managing cultural diversity being high on the political agenda. Hence, multiculturalism becomes a concept that is often at the forefront of political debate. As a result of this situation, the concept "multiculturalism" has taken on many different dimensions and interpretations. This "diversity" of approaches and assumptions about multiculturalism has caused more problems than its proponents have sought to solve, since, depending on the type or approach to multiculturalism chosen each time, there has been a corresponding change in the content of the concept, the policy on multiculturalism, etc. The change in terminology was added to the already existing problems of multiculturalism. The emergence of the concept of "interculturalism" aspired to solve the problems of multiculturalism, both by criticizing multiculturalism shortcomings and by developing its own theory. But what exactly is the relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism? Furthermore, what causes made it a necessity to change the terminology from multiculturalism to interculturalism?

A brief presentation of multiculturalism

Initially, multiculturalism was a model for managing the cultural diversity of societies. In this light, it sought to prevent and find solutions to problems that could arise due to the coexistence of culturally different people in the same geographical area. The responsibility for managing cultural diversity lay with the respective state. Given this, it becomes clear that multiculturalism is a political concept. This can be seen more clearly in the various forms that the concept of multiculturalism has taken, which have emerged mainly under the influence

of liberal and communitarian frames of reference. Thus, we have the emergence of symbolic, structural, and dialogical multiculturalism, as well as conservative, liberal multiculturalism, and other relevant terms. These variations in the terminology of multiculturalism can also be seen as the result of the influence of postmodernism on multiculturalism. The consequence of this influence is that multiculturalism develops under many different "partialities", in the form of many micro-narratives. Moreover, "grand narratives" have no place in the context of postmodernism.

In conclusion, we would say that today multiculturalism has adopted as its theoretical framework the ideology of cultural relativism. In this light, some contemporary assumptions of multiculturalism are (see Herskovits, 1948; Zechenter, 1997; Karanek, 2013):

- the equality of cultures,

- the adoption of a form of cultural determinism,

- the belief that knowledge is determined solely by cultural context, is entirely dependent on culture and is valid only by reference to culture,

- cultures are completely homogeneous internally,

- experience is man's primary relationship with reality and is interpreted by each individual in terms of their own "enculturation", etc.

The arise of interculturalism

These views have been strongly contested by advocates of interculturalism. They particularly use the lack of interaction between cultures, which they argue is the crux of their critique, as a point of departure for their criticism. On the contrary, interculturalism places a central emphasis on interaction, but also on intercultural dialogue. However, the critique of interculturalism on multiculturalism does not focus only on the lack of dialogue and interaction, but also extends to philosophical, moral and political levels.

More specifically, this critique can be identified in the following points (Donati, 2009, p. 61):

First, on the epistemological limits of multiculturalism. Despite promising the recognition of identities, the epistemological relativism of multiculturalism cannot offer this.

Second, on the moral limits of multiculturalism. As a moral philosophy, multiculturalism leads to the endorsement of an attitude according to which whatever is done, any act, is at the same time legitimate. This attitude results in the existence of moral aberrations, which may arise due to violations of human rights. Multiculturalism is not in a position to seek remedies based on certain moral limits, because if it does so, it would violate the founding principle of moral relativism. Thus, the promise to give society ethics for the coexistence of citizens is abandoned or overlooked.

Third, on the political limits of multiculturalism. As a political ideology, multiculturalism promises tolerance, but in reality, creates intolerance.

The relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism

From the above points, a large gap between multiculturalism and interculturalism seems to emerge. However, not everyone agrees that this "gap" actually exists. More specifically, the views expressed on the relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism can be divided into two categories. On the one hand, there are those who argue that interculturalism is something quite different from multiculturalism (Council of Europe, 2008; Levey, 2012; Cantle, 2012). On the other hand, however, there are those views that argue that interculturalism is not significantly different from multiculturalism, but rather that interculturalism simply places more emphasis on certain points that already exist within the content of multiculturalism (Meer & Modood, 2012; Levey, 2012).

A first point of differentiation, with regard to the first category, and the views that argue that interculturalism is something completely different from multiculturalism, lies in the fact that interculturalism rejects moral relativism, which is a key thesis of multiculturalism. In particular, interculturalism adopts a critical stance towards illiberal cultural practices that violate universal values, which are used as a basis in order to create a sense of a strongly cohesive society (Barrett, 2013, p. 26; Delafenetre, 1997, p. 92).

A further difference between multiculturalism and interculturalism arises from the fact that interculturalism is presented as a framework that attempts to challenge the way in which multiculturalism always tends to categorize people. In fact, multiculturalism is seen as placing too much emphasis on concepts such as origin and ethnicity, which are seen as being able to predetermine certain attitudes and beliefs. In this light, interculturalism challenges the basic assumption of multiculturalism that diversity should be interpreted only in terms of origin, ethnicity and culture, challenges the basic assumption which automatically translates culture of origin into cultural content (Zapata-Barrero, 2015, p. 5).

The second category, which lies in the position that interculturalism is not essentially different from multiculturalism, as the key features of interculturalism are already key features of multiculturalism (Barrett, 2013, p. 31), is, in fact, the basis on which the problematic of this paper is articulated. More specifically, if the thesis that all elements of interculturalism exist in the field of multiculturalism is indeed valid, then there is no point in discussing and engaging with interculturalism.

We do not accept the position that interculturalism is essentially no different from multiculturalism. We, therefore, consider it necessary to shift the terminology from "multiculturalism" to "interculturalism". Our above conviction is based on four main points:

1.   Multiculturalism, has taken many different forms, resulting in confusion as to which form corresponds to its meaning each time (Barrett, 2013, p. 21; Levey, 2012, p. 223). At the same time, it has been identified with cultural relativism (Wrong, 1997, pp. 291-292; Van der Merwe, 1999, p. 319), resulting in the term multiculturalism being fragmented. The need for further explanation each time the term "multiculturalism" is used, arising from this use of such different contexts, creates strong problems of understanding.

2.   The term "multiculturalism" has become so problematic and so abused in public discourse that its semantic capital, relative to the past, has now been lost, resulting in the need for a new or different "label" (Levey, 2012, p. 223).

3. Multiculturalism has been theoretically delineated by a plethora of contradictory narratives, all of which suffer from excessive ideology (Bharucha, 1999, p. 13). As a result, the very notion of "multiculturalism" has become an ideology, a mixture of policy options which have rather failed.

4. Interculturalism is an "open" concept, it is not anchored in strong political frameworks. Hence, there is scope for "working" with this concept (see Joppke, 2018; Bharucha, 1999, p. 13).

Critical Interculturalism: An introduction

The "tension" between the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism seems to be irreconcilable, as it stems from conflicting theoretical -philosophical and epistemological- positions. In fact, what is observed is a strong opposition of the intercultural approach to the epistemological relativism of multiculturalism. This, of course, does not mean that interculturalism is an approach that is articulated on strong epistemological foundations.

On the contrary, interculturalism itself must articulate a discourse that is embedded in specific philosophical foundations. This can be achieved without interculturalism sacrificing its "open" character for the sake of full integration into a specific epistemological framework. This, in our opinion, can be realized through that other form of interculturalism, which we call "critical interculturalism".

Critical interculturalism, extending its roots to the Marxist tradition, can "borrow" from the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School those tools which will allow it to exercise philosophical critique of other traditions -with particular emphasis on the cultural relativism of multiculturalism-, while it can maintain its "openness", being at the same time epistemologically shielded. Beyond epistemological armouring, however, "critical interculturalism" also provides a frame of reference for the management of cultural diversity.

By redefining the concepts of identity and diversity, and by highlighting the interplay between them, "critical interculturalism" can succeed where multiculturalism has failed. However, at the same time "critical interculturalism" must correct the failures of interculturalism.

By evolving interculturalism, "critical interculturalism" renews itself, since its basis is interculturalism itself. In this way, both the openness of interculturalism and its continuous evolution, depending on the circumstances at any given time, are preserved. And these are, in our opinion, two of the most crucial contributions that "critical interculturalism" can make to the intercultural education discourse.

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Towards a New Multi-Modality Campus: Unboxing the Pandora's box

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Abstract

Changing times force us to rethink our academic policy in higher education institutions. In this paper, we present an innovative model for student inclusion with the goal of producing a new framework for practice in higher education. We suggest re-examining the interactions between student characteristics and adopting a new holistic view of their identity-derived needs. The New Multimodality Diversified Campus (NMDC) model takes into account multiculturism, multiple technological literacies, multiple identities, multilingualism, multiple religions, and multiple disabilities. This model, based on multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations, and multiple policies, serves as a compass to reach our desired destination.

Keywords: Higher education, multiculturism, technology, multilingualism, learning, and evaluation.

The New Multimodality Diversified Campus Model

The modern campus is a meeting point for students from all over the world. When students come to university, they bring with them a constellation of intersecting identities, including, religious, cultural, and gender-based identities. However, a broad review of the existing academic literature reveals that each feature of student identity has tended to be treated in isolation (Banks & Banks, 2019, 2020; Mena & Rogers, 2017; Schwadel, 2016). The holistic interactions between the different aspects of student identity require further study. Campuses may overlook students' identity characteristics because of the fear of opening 'the Pandora's box' and facing the difficult philosophical and ethical questions it inevitably contains. For example, are students aware of the alignment between needs derived from their identity and the accommodations of the campus to these needs? Students registering at academic institutions may be unaware of existing campus policies that bear upon their religious identity and practices.

There is dual blindness in higher education to students' identity-derived needs on the part of both academic staff and students themselves. This blindness can result in conflict and frustration when the academic environment does not take into account identity-derived needs. Students entering academic institutions may fail to consider the potential conflicts arising from their identity-derived needs. The identity-derived needs of students and the responses of higher education to multiple cultures, religions, languages, nationalities, gender identities, and disabilities on campuses should be discussed. Therefore, the student must be considered holistically. With the goal of providing accommodations for complex, intersecting student identities, we have developed a new conceptual model named the New Multimodality Diversified Campus Model (NMDC).

New Multimodality Diversified Campus Model (NMDC)

On the student axis, the model is designed to take into account (1) multiculturalism, (2) multiple technological literacies, (3) multiple identities, (4) multilingualism, (5) multiple religions, and (6) multiple disabilities. On the institutional response axis, the model includes multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations, and multiple policies. The model is visually represented in the form of a compass, as shown in Figure 1 below, following which the various elements of the model are explained.

On the institutional response axis, the model includes multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations, and multiple policies.

Multiculturalism

Traditionally in higher education, differences between students have been considered an obstacle to educational equality (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Au, 2010). However, this perception has recently shifted towards acknowledging the value of diversity and cultural capital. Beyond economic capital, cultural capital, i.e. familiarity with the legitimate culture, is a driver of social mobility. Our approach emphasizes the importance of the culture and identity of the students and is designed to validate student diversity and harness it as a motor for academic achievement. A multidimensional Culturally Relevant Academic Evaluation (CRAE) model suitable was developed for the technologically advanced, multicultural environment of the 21st century using the CRP framework (Finkelstein et al., 2022).

Multiple technological literacies

Nowadays, students should acquire knowledge and expertise in different digital platforms, such as new media, and social networks, and navigate for academic resources, etc. Today, learners are expected to be digitally multiliterate. Nevertheless, students from different levels of preparedness in terms of digital literacy backgrounds are being accommodated in higher education. Digital literacy backgrounds may be a significant barrier to equitable access and participation in the curriculum. Technology provides endless possibilities in terms of pedagogical techniques, including problem-based learning, intertextual dialogue, argumentation, discussion, and debate. Humanistic technologies also bring the interdisciplinary dialogue to the front line of education. The cultural dialogue between lecturer and students stresses the significance of developing and mastering humanistic technologies in education (Barnová & Krásna, 2018).

Multiple identities as a sense of self

Nowadays, we should recognize that identity is fluid and dynamic. Thus, campuses must also acknowledge students' ongoing process of identity construction during their higher education experience – a formative moment in an individual's identity construction. Campus policies should accept living comfortably with multiple identities rather than simply describing multiple dimensions of identity. Integrating multiple identities also has important implications for learning. Universities are often highly multinational and multicultural

spaces due to the international mobility of both students and academic staff. The notion of transnationalism is highly relevant to higher education today. Transnational identity is relevant to students that live between two cultural frameworks and must establish a dialogue between their country of origin and their host country (Esteban-Guitart & Vila, 2015).

Multilingualism

Modern campuses are very often highly multilingual environments. Students from linguistic minorities have not been paid enough attention in research on minority students' access to and retention in higher education (Oropeza et al., 2010). They have a dual challenge – dealing with the subject material and studying in a foreign language. However, access to more than one language, if properly valorized and harnessed, can serve as a source of leverage for overcoming academic difficulties. Tools in higher education carry multiple meanings, that are interconnected with identity, culture, and language. Cultural tools have a central role in students' cognitive development in higher education. In the context of the highly varied and multilingual nature of modern universities, the linguistic resources of students should be valorized as a source of creative and innovative contributions to the learning and teaching process at both the curriculum development, teaching, and evaluation stages.

Multiple religions

Research has indicated that students' religious beliefs tend to become more liberal and less orthodox over the course of their studies (Mayrl & Oeur, 2009). Studies of tertiary students have found that peer groups and exposure to peers from different backgrounds play an important role in shaping students' beliefs (Bryant, Choi & Yasuno, 2003). Universities tend to emphasize rationalism, materialism, and empiricism. This may result in a potential conflict between the institutional environment and students who hold religious beliefs or wish to engage in certain religious practices on campus. For example, should university cafeterias cater to the dietary requirements of different religious groups or allow religious symbols, gatherings, or manifestations on campus? How can universities manage potential problems arising from students of radically different religious backgrounds studying together in the same space?

Multiple disabilities

Disability is another aspect of the diversity of higher education institutions. Students with disabilities in multicultural environments are being recognized as a unique cultural group with shared experiences. Universities have tended to approach disability from the perspective of the medical model of disability, which views disability as a personal medical problem. In contrast to the medical model, universal design for learning (UDL) reflects the social model of disability. UDL is a validated educational framework used to proactively design learning goals, methods, materials and assessments. The social model considers disability as a social issue and delves into aspects of inclusion and exclusion. This model observes disability as a social issue rather than a medical one and examines aspects of inclusion and exclusion. According to the social model, the

responsibility for inclusion falls on the community and society, which are obligated to enhance elements of inclusion (Collins et al., 2019).

The basis of the model: multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations, multiple policies

Higher education is changing; it no longer represents a single point of view and, therefore, must adopt a holistic and integrated perspective. The so-called 'average student' no longer exists**.** Teaching and learning processes, curriculum and assessment, technology and multiculturalism should be integrated into a comprehensive and holistic model. 'Inclusive higher education' refers to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into the higher education mission and throughout academic practices and policies. Every student is entitled to be included in academic classroom environments. The evaluation will be meaningful only if all conditions of alignment between teaching, learning, curriculum, and evaluation and also between the various levels (class, department, and faculty level) are met. Defining the goals of the academic process is crucial for establishing a cohesive and continuous policy – meaning evaluation, pedagogy, and curriculum. The academic curriculum should be based on setting uniform standards for defining the learning goals, content, and methods of evaluation. Multicultural evaluation, pedagogy, and curriculum design allow access to learners from population groups outside the dominant culture (Sleeter & Carmona, 2017). A multicultural curriculum (Banks, 2020) should be adopted. This means that inclusive content should be aimed towards creating equal educational opportunities for all students and provides extensive references to cultural and social diversity. We suggest expanding this scope and propose that evaluation, pedagogy, and curriculum development should be driven by diversity policy.

Discussion and summary

Globalization and its related political and social processes have created a multicultural world where students from many social groups are present in institutions of higher learning**.** The NMDC model might serve as a guideline for designing the new campus. Globalization, migration, and technological developments require that a new holistic and integrative learning framework be adopted. Our model represents the complexity and incorporates the relevant components that characterize pluralist societies today – multiculturism, multi-technological literacies, multiple identities, multilingualism, multiple religions, and multiple disabilities. The model is based on multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations, and multiple policies. This model portrays a new academic vision in which students' identity-driven needs are considered. In the globalized world, higher education institutions comprise a variety of religious, ethnic, and immigrant groups that have different cultures and languages as well as students with disabilities.

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'Escaping' with puppets: The contribution of puppetry to the development of intercultural dialogue among inmates

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Abstract

The present study is part of post-doctoral research focusing on puppetry's transformative power. The research in a detention center for young inmates in Volos, Greece, employs action research to identify whether applied puppetry encourages an intercultural dialogue among inmates promoting their reflections on their experiences during their immigration "journey." According to the results, intercultural puppetry supports and provokes intercultural understanding, dialogue, and reflection on the inmates' intercultural experiences.

Keywords: puppetry, intercultural dialogue, prison.

Introduction

Prisoners are subject to various forms of painful experiences (extreme poverty, displacement, exile, forced migration, experiences of neglect, physical and sexual abuse, and other forms of mistreatment). These extremely painful and devastating memories may often be awakened when these offenders experience prison life, with its dehumanizing, harsh, and unloving environment and lifestyle (Brewster, 2014). Thus, it is necessary to support prisoners deal with the avoidance, stress levels, depression, self-blame, and anger that inevitably haunt them through applied puppetry.

This research aims to investigate the effect of applied puppetry on inmates in improving their lives inside detention centers. Our study provides an alternative to the "lock them up and throw away the key" approach to incarceration in Greece.

Puppets in Prison

The reason that puppets can effectively activate memory and empathy and the potential to act in a transformative way has its basis in established research (Astles & Tsaplina, 2020; Markovits, 2020; Smith, 2022). There are several delightful examples of puppet programs that activate collective memory and advocate for justice and social change (Balfour et al., 2019; Lucas, 2021). The program 'Puppets in Prison' by Gary Friedman and Nyanga Tshabalala demonstrates the basic abilities of puppets to act as metaphors (Kruger, 2012).

Accordingly, puppets and objects become an extension of the physical presence and a co-presence between the performing object and the puppet. Puppets challenge the participants to reflect on their processes of

participating in their performance and act as active witnesses, present the traces of immigration and imprisonment on their bodies, and act as an intercultural medium (Marxen, 2018).

Methodology

In this research, we consider prison ethnography, based on a transformational worldview, as a key approach. We define prison ethnography as an in-depth study involving the systematic and impressionistic recording of human culture and social life in the field. This research, in the form of a case study, is ethnographic in that it has used a combination of observation and interaction with inmates and in-depth interviews to gain a view of how inmates in this particular institution experience their incarceration (Drake et al., 2015).

The specific research aims to empower the group participants, i.e., the detainees individually and in groups, to improve their lives in prison and redefine their future when they reintegrate into society.

Our research questions were the following:

- How will the detainees be affected by their participation in an applied puppet program regarding identity?

- Will the puppets lead to the evoking of collective memory and empowering the participants?

- Will puppetry encourage intercultural dialogue among prisoners and present the traces of immigration and imprisonment?

Research Tools

Data were collected through different research tools, such as participant observation focus group interviews after the completion of the interventions, and the research diary of the researcher (Bryman, 2017).

Context, target group, and process

The project was applied to the Detention Centre of Young Inmates in Volos, Greece, from October 2021 to February 2022 and was implemented for 90 minutes once a week for a series of 15 meetings. The participants were 16 young detainees aged 18-22, immigrants from Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Morocco, and Tunisia. They were in prison on charges of illegal immigration and had similar life biographies experiences.

During the implementation, prisoners negotiated various scenarios through the puppets. Stories with common references (refugee, immigration, poverty, fear, violence, ethnocultural and religious conflicts) were animated with puppets. Gradually space was given to essential processes, such as expression, exchange of opinions, active listening, and development of the empathy of the prisoners.

Each intervention was followed with questions such as: *"What would you do in his position? Why do you remember this scene? How did you feel?"* The responses to these questions were then categorized into three subsections a)Identifying with a Character, b)Recognizing a Situation, and c)Generating a Moral Lesson.

Method of analysis

Data from participants' observations, research diary, and focus group discussions were thematically analyzed (Braun & Clarke, 2012) as shown in table 1:
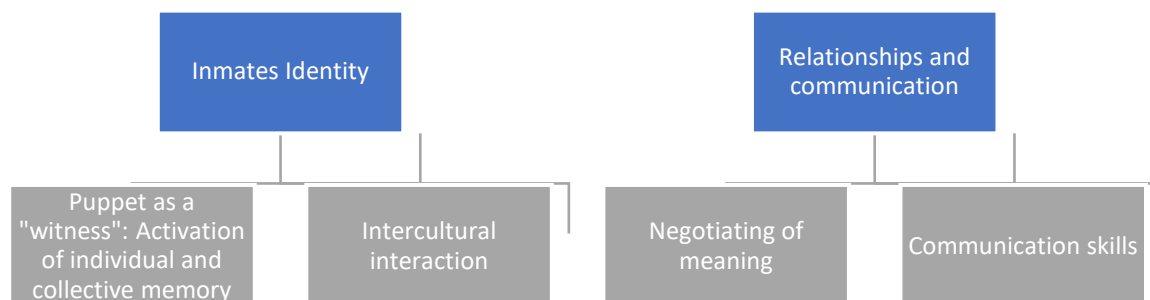

Inmates Identity		Relationships and communication	
Puppet as a "witness": Activation of individual and collective memory	Intercultural interaction	Negotiating of meaning	Communication skills

Table 1. *Thematic categories*

Results

Inmates Identity

Puppet as a "witness": Activation of individual and collective memory

In terms of identity, participants broke their silence, recalled memories, expressed feelings and views, and explored identities. Puppets acted as "witnesses," which activated individual and collective memory. The "objects" achieved to elicit participants' memories and feelings as shown in the following research note.

"P12 chose a small book…it reminded him of his mother, who was very angry with him because he did not do his homework…he did not want to read because he was thinking about leaving the country and meeting his father and brother, who had already gone". [research note,15/11/21]

Puppets were highlighted as "eyewitnesses" of the migration by presenting (by joining objects and making a boat) the scene of them crossing from Turkey to Greece by boat) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. *Animating objects*

Corresponding border crossing scenes were often animated, with puppets recalling their way of "crossing" and migrant trafficking. The refugee identity prevailed as they had a common route. They described themselves as teenagers with dreams for the future who embark on the journey to escape the dangers that exist in the homeland (e.g., Taliban, war, civil war), poverty (to help the family):

P3: *"Taliban kill mother, father...mother said to go", "money not Pakistan. "*

P12: *"Me Turkey...2 years of camp, I spent Mytilini, camp...there difficult one year. After camp Athens...better", "I am a refugee...I want asylum...but difficult. "*

The same assumptions are presented in the focus group discussions in which most concluded that the role of the refugee and immigrant is challenging as they were treated everywhere as strangers and 'bad':

P1: *"and in Turkey the same...and Greece the same, camp, the whole day the same...all the same"*

Furthermore, the prisoners emphasize the stereotype of the "prisoner," and the prisoner's identity prevails.

P8: *"here, in prison and outside of the prison, we are just prisoners...not humans... we are bad, thieves, and murderers."*

P2: *"I want a job...when I go out...I want to be normal, I want to have a life like everyone else... "*

Intercultural interaction

Puppet activities revealed several views on intercultural differences and promoted critical awareness of relationships in the community or regarding power as shown in the following extract from the research diary:

"The "guards and prisoners" animation shows the relationship between power and oppression...it is so interesting how they represent those inequalities with puppets...they exaggerate but feel free to express themselves without judging…"[research note,8/12/21]

The activation of memory and personal involvement in their inmates' stories created a sense of community, leading to conflict resolution between different ethnic groups.

"Three Iranians mocked T for his Romanian origin: *"we should not work together... He is not from Iran...he doesn't understand anything"* and *"Romanians are... thieves"*. T. reacted by cursing and said, *"you think you are better? you are all Taliban"*. I tried to stop the argument and work out the issue through discussion. I asked them to animate the scene in different ways without personal characterizations and in specific circumstances, e.g., "you share the same cell, and you are happy". They struggled at first, but then they got along and animated the puppets pretending to play cards and having a good time together." [research note, 27/10/21]

Relationships and communication

Negotiating meaning and communication skills

The focus was on making meaning through various puppets' improvisations. All linguistics repertoires were available. Through puppets and object animation, participants embodied knowledge or language and negotiated meaning through actions and translanguaging.

P: Ναι (yes)…εσύ [you] friend, أنت صديقي، and εσύ βοηθήσει εμένα πάρει δουλειά [you will help me when I go out to find a job]…Here no one cares φυλακή [prison], εγώ βοηθήσει εσένα (I will help you one way or another).

In terms of communication, they practiced their communication skills through animations with verbal and non-verbal means. Visual dialogues, spatial, acoustic & physical representations enabled all to negotiate for meaning in a multimodal way.

K: شكرا اي صاح, *thank you φίλε (my friend), εσύ βοηθάς εμένα καλό (you help me good…)*

Many prisoners reported the beneficial effect of this approach on communication. It was also highlighted as a positive that they could use all their linguistic resources.

P.8: *"I felt free to talk as I wanted. It was so fun mixing all the languages…farsi, Greek, Arabic"*

Conclusion and Discussion

According to the results, puppetry supports and provokes intercultural understanding, dialogue, and reflection on the inmates' intercultural experiences. Moreover, the results have shown that contact and engagement with the applied puppetry dramaturgy have contributed to the development of inmates' critical thinking, to the understanding of misconceptions about their choices, and to the internal will to change their selves and the dominant social stereotypes (Smith, 2022).

Puppet animations allowed participants to connect their own experiences with the experiences of the rest of the group, the way that human lives and memories are very often connected, as mentioned in the research of Astles & Tsaplina (2020), Markovits (2020). The incarcerated were empowered to talk about their past, to bring to the surface elements of their cultural identity, to know and "interact", and to express their opinions, feelings, and attitudes. From this perspective, this study of an artistic-aesthetic pedagogical practice with puppetry

managed to rescue the identity, history and memory of the prisoners. In this setting, puppetry re-signified everyday prison life (Marxen, 2018).

Regarding communication, collaboration and interaction, applied puppetry allowed participants to gain synergies and develop their communication/multilingual skills in relation to the research of Bengochea et al. (2020) and Vitsou et al. (2020).

Through animations, inmates discovered new emotional, expressive dynamics, externalizing any concerns, anxiety, and positive and negative emotions through the entertaining, imaginative and allegorical dynamics of puppetry. The conditions were thus created for the inmates to move from the emotional monologue to a safe dialogue and to discover new positive perspectives as their stories met the stories of others (Smith, 2022).

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Aiming to an inclusive history curriculum:
Children approach critically cross-cultural interactions among Arabs and Byzantines in Middle Ages

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Abstract

A significant objective in the contemporary historical education is critical knowledge and understanding of oneself and the world. The advent of refugee students at Greek schools derived from the arab-islamic countries constitutes a new pedagogical challenge for critical reflection both on teachers' intercultural competences and on the history curricula to be more open to cultural diversity. The present paper, based on a research and educational program in which primary and secondary school students actively participated, discusses which changes, both in terms of the content of history curriculum and of teaching history methods can be implemented in order that history curriculum can be more inclusive.

Keywords: inclusive history curriculum, Byzantines, Arabs, cultural interactions.

Introduction

For a long time, school history in Greece had an ethnicizing and moralizing role, seeking the formation of a national identity influenced by the glorious past of the ancient and byzantine period and furthermore the promotion of the national identity as superior in comparison to any other ethno-cultural identity (Koulouri, 1988, p. 33; Kokkinos, 2019, p.180). Even today the importance of unity through a superficial homogeneity is being highlighted. In several European societies ethnocentrism and nativism raise walls of hostility towards newcomers (Bertossi et al., 2022). But unity without otherness results in cultural oppression and hegemony (Banks, 2004, p.291). It is equally prohibitive for promoting the aims of the participating, democratic culture in school. Additionally, the argument of homogeneity gives priority to the acquisition of specific, predefined knowledge and indisputable narratives. In contrast to, the development of historical and research skills can be promoted through learning processes which are more experiential and encourage students to make new assumptions, to search the past and create historical knowledge. History Curricula is important to be open-ended allowing teachers to select different methods and sources comprising the knowledge and the experiences of students who derive from different ethnocultural backgrounds and thus turning the deficit into wealth. History Curricula should conduce to the development of a wider historical consciousness which recognizes otherness and includes an understanding of variability and change (Kölb & Konrad, 2015). Approaching cultural similarities and differences among different peoples in the past can be a means in order history curriculum to be more inclusive aiming to the promotion of intercultural communication and bridging differences in the present.

Aims

In contrast to the war conflicts of the Byzantine - Christian and the Arab - Islamic world (7th - 11th century) that dominate the Greek school textbooks, the educational activities applied as a part of the described educational program focus on the peaceful side of history and the achievements in sciences and the arts, in which two different cultures, the Byzantine and the Arab, meet (Vlachaki, 2022).

In specific, the research and educational program in which students of two age groups, i.e 11-12 and 13-14 year old participated separately aimed to:

a. Reveal and provoke stereotypes towards the Arab-Islamic world by cross - curricular activities which promote the dialogue among cultures in the past and reflect on the influence of Arab culture in Europe especially its contribution to the sciences and arts.

b. Change the stereotypes towards Arab-islamic culture which are embedded in the historical representations.

Methodology

Research data collected during an action research present the 11- to 12- year -old and 13-14-year-old native and refugee children's perspectives on the cultural "other", especially the Arab- Iaslamic people before and after their participation in specific learning activities according to an inquiry- based process. Twenty - two primary school students and twenty - four secondary school students participated in the research. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were used as main data collection methods in the beginning and in the end of the research process. Additional information on the interactions between students during their participation in the activities was collected through observation and dialogue sessions in groups. *Content analysis* was used as a research tool to determine the presence of certain concepts in students' aspects according to the research aims.

Results

As for the initial students' perceptions, both students of the first age group and the second believed that there are no similarities between Byzantine and Arab culture. In fact, in order to document this 'distance', students of the younger age group invoke differences in language and religion. Students of the older age group used representations from movies as examples to substantiate their views, focusing on religion, language and appearance. Both age groups had mainly a superficial perception of the 'other'. In addition, students of both age groups argued about the differences among the two cultures by using contemporary representations of the refugees coming from Arab countries (e.g. Syria, Iraq), emphasizing on the cultural deficit in comparison to Greek culture. Furthermore, during this initial phase, Greek culture was linked inextricably to Christian religion, and it was considered by students of the survey completely opposite to the Arab-Muslim culture.

In the second phase of the program, stereotypes which were embedded in historical representations were discussed, such as the concept of "barbarian" which was given by the Byzantines to the Arabs because of their different customs and religion (*Schwartz, 1939*). The specific stereotype was challenged by approaching

secondary historical sources which showed that Muhammad (571-632 AD), the founder of the Muslim religion and political leader of the Arabs, corresponded in a positive climate with the Byzantine emperor Heraclius (575-641 AD) (Badawi, 2011). Also by approaching other additional sources students proved that there were several similarities between the two religions. Furthermore, in contrast to a generalized cultural identity, students examined different secondary historical sources and mentioned that Arabs believed in other religions too even more in Christian religion (Christides, 1969, p. 319).

During the third phase of the program, the shift the learning process from the military and political history to the scientific, commercial, cultural activities of two peoples in the Byzantine period reduced the students' negative disposition and the perception of Arabs as enemies of Byzantium. Moreover, it allowed a better, non-superficial understanding of Arab culture. Cultural interaction, as a first-order historical concept, enhanced cross-curricular educational activities essentially by introducing significant fields of interaction such as language, literature, mathematics, chemistry, architecture, coinage, painting, ceramics. Students highlighted aspects of culture in which there were interactions in the past and discovered similarities and differences through the critical approach of primary and secondary written and material sources. As for the interactions, it is indicated that in several fields especially in physical sciences, in astronomy, in mathematics the initial inventions of Byzantine scientists were improved by the Arab scientists (Theodosiou & Danezis, 2010). Students ascertained that the comparison among the achievements motivated each country's self-improvement as well as the development of science in the past overall.

Native students' attitudes towards the Arab culture were transformed when students identified the effect of Arab culture on modern daily life. In specific, students of the first age group especially understood the continuity of influences on language and art through secondary written and material historical evidence. Students of the second age group found out the influence of the Arab-Islamic culture on the sciences, especially in mathematics and astronomy, using additional knowledge of their own in the specific fields.

During the fourth phase of the program the concept of cultural interaction is used again, this time in the present, encouraging students to create their own documentary, highlighting on the one hand characteristics of the cultural identity of the Arab-Islamic communities in their region nowadays and on the other hand examining interaction as a feature of the sustainable continuation of cultures.

Students of both age groups actively participated in activities that were exploratory, creative and multi-sensory. Students metacognitively and reflectively enriched the content of the activities by making use of their familiar knowledge but also by creating new ones. Both groups of students acknowledged the importance of the dialogue between the two cultures due to the collaborative nature of the activities in which they participated. This is also achieved through historical sources that highlighted the concepts of change or continuity from the past to the present. Students of the first age group focused on everyday habits in the past and today. Students of the second age group examined technology issues nowadays. Mutual interaction enabled critical, reflective understanding of the each one's familiar culture (CoE, 2018, p.4). Additionally, it contributed to the individual cultural achievements in a wider and global context of cultural developments. The applied learning activities allowed the formation of an inclusive educational framework in immediate connection to the

contemporary reality, a framework which was meaningful to each student individually (Stearns, Seixas, & Wineburg, 2000, p. 4).

Conclusion

The proposed activities in the framework of the described educational and research program of teaching history formed opportunities for dialogue by expanding the concept of culture beyond the boundaries of a national history. It is important a history curriculum to include topics and points of dialogue and reflection that concern the European and global community (Singer, 2020). Culture can constitute a means of communication, promoting coexistence and bridging differences with the aim of a more inclusive history. But it is equally crucial to discuss the historical representations of other cultures that are embedded in each country's history and deconstruct lasting stereotypes, which are related to national myths such as the myth of national superiority or the myth of homogeneity by using in history teaching appropriate historical sources.

In contrast to close-ended curricula which comprise specific predefined knowledge centered objectives, the described research proved that students are interested in activities in which they can be reflective and creative too and they make use of their own knowledge and experiences. Acquiring knowledge about different perspectives on the past, providing chances for expressing views and understanding the historicity of the self constitute characteristics of a pluralist democracy which is important to be promoted in history education (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Körber, 2016; Grever & Adriaansen, 2019).

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Secondary education teachers' perceptions on teaching and assessment of refugee students

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Abstract

The main purpose of this research was to investigate secondary education teachers' perceptions regarding their teaching of refugee students and their practices concerning the assessment of their school performance. Research results indicate that teachers strongly believe that schooling can meet refugee students' educational needs, while it can promote their integration in host society. Interviewees underline that a more intensive teaching of the Greek language is of major importance. They also suggest alternative ways of assessment which may work as an incentive in refugee students' learning. Finally, interviewees' descriptions reveal serious deficiency in teaching conditions and refugee students' assessment framework.

Keywords: refugee education, teachers' perceptions, refugee integration, refugee school attendance, assessment in secondary education.

Introduction

It is a fact that over the last few years Greece has been transformed to a host country of many migrants and refugees who look for a better life (Nikolaou, 2011). Greek society has been differentiated to an extent, as far as the homogeneity of its population is concerned, since the population is gradually enriched with people from other countries with a different cultural and linguistic background. Of course, this new situation is also depicted in several aspects of our society's function and certainly education is one of them. It is advisable that refugee students, regardless of their age, be included in the educational system of the host country so as to be active citizens of the country in the future (Cummins, 2001). This is a challenge to schools as organizations, since they have to deal with this new differentiation, and to teachers as individuals, because they have to adapt to this new circumstance and offer the same learnings opportunities to all their students. All previous related research, in national level, has pinpointed crucial issues regarding refugee education. What seems to be of importance for educators is not school performance but student integration in a school normality to avoid school dropout as well (Kalomenidou et al., 2019). Aspects that need to be taken into consideration are the composition of student population, the different cultures, the temporality of the students' stay in the country and their learning level (Anagnostou & Nikolova, 2017).

Stimulus and aims

The stimulus for the research was the realization that the number of refugee students in Greek schools was rising (Asylum Service, 2019). Therefore, the collection of data on the matter in order to facilitate the refugees' learning experience was considered of vital importance. Teachers themselves have also expressed their need to speak their views out since in many cases they were the last whose opinion on the matter was asked. The need for further research on the matter was depicted in the already existing bibliography as well (Crul et al., 2019) The main purpose of the research was to investigate secondary education teachers' perceptions regarding their teaching of refugee students and their practices concerning the assessment of their school performance. More specifically, an effort was made to report teachers' views on the matters of the educational context that has been developed to cover the refugee students' needs. With the term educational context, we refer to the level and grade of difficulty of the teaching process, the utilization of the knowledge gained but also to the expected outcomes of all the above. An attempt was also made to report teachers' perceptions on the way refugee students are assessed.

Research methodology

A qualitative approach was chosen, and the sample consisted of 12 secondary education teachers of different subjects, who taught or have still been teaching in school units with refugee students. The research tool was the semi-structured interview and the data collected was analysed via thematic content analysis.

Research results

The first block of questions was related to the educational context that refugee students are asked to participate in. Even though the government has made some effort to cover the refugees' educational needs, this effort shows signs of slovenliness in design and of problems in the process. Participants also feel that refugee education is largely dependent on the teachers' will, attitude and experience rather than the administrative organization and provisions of the government itself. Moreover, many teachers have talked about delays on behalf of the decision-making centres and stakeholders regarding the appointment of teachers in reception classes. Language is also considered a barrier as far as the quality of the provided education is concerned. When it comes to whether refugee students acquire at school the necessary knowledge to live and work in Greece, teachers seemed divided. It is also interesting that while all teachers rigorously mentioned teaching goals such as student integration, Greek language learning, familiarization with the Greek culture, the majority thinks that the existence of refugee students in the classroom negatively affects their lesson, since they are compelled to slow down their pace in order to help refugee students. Again, in this case language is hindering their efforts. Teachers' suggestions for more effective results in refugee students' education are: 1. Emphasis on Greek language learning, 2. Teachers in reception classes should remain for more than one school year in the same school, 3. Integration classes for all school subjects, 4. Teacher training.

The second block of questions investigated the issue of refugee students' assessment. Teachers mentioned different criteria that affect the way they evaluate and assess, and these factors are mainly related to the students' experiences and their psychoemotional circumstances. That is, teachers believe that they are

affected by the refugee students' past and by their hardships but also by their psychological state. For all the above reasons it seems that the criteria teachers mostly use, when they need to assess refugee students, are effort, presence, and achievement of objectives, such as integration and participation, rather than school performance. Teachers also pointed out the fact that refugee students' assessment has no positive outcome nor plays any important role for the students themselves if the students are given a mere grade. Teachers' proposals on how specific measures or practices could improve or make more effective the whole process of refugee students' assessment followed in the study. There were various suggestions but what was clearly articulated by all teachers is that refugee students' assessment needs to be altered. Descriptive assessment was mentioned as the most appropriate approach. Teachers also proposed an assessment based on criteria such as consistency, participation, effort, and skills acquisition. Furthermore, they believe that there should not be any grading evaluation for at least two years of schooling and finally they prioritize Greek language learning as the basic objective. Teaching of other school subjects should begin, after students have acquired the language.

Conclusions

The conclusions which were drawn agree with findings of previous research on the same or related matters. Teachers' views and perceptions seem of major importance since their experiences on the matter are significant (Kurbegovic, 2016). Research has pinpointed serious deficiencies and space for improvement. Although effort has been made, in practice there are issues that need to be addressed both in pedagogical and administrative level. Administrative deficiencies and any procedural difficulties hinder the teaching process and students' efforts while creating a sense of neglect, as teachers claim (Gözpınar, 2019). Secondly, without proper organization and appropriate means, refugee education relies basically on teachers who do not have the necessary training and guidance to support it (Kipouropoulou, 2019). Furthermore, integration is vital for teachers (Maligoudi & Tsaousidis, 2020). They also opt for Greek language teaching, but they do not make any references to students' mother tongues. Another point is that while teachers assess refugees according to the existent grading system for Greek students, they consider students' traumatic past and their present hardships (Ahearn & Athey, 1991). Therefore, the assessment criteria they mostly use are presence, effort, and participation, rather than school performance. Another point that stakeholders and decision-makers should keep in mind is that teachers believe that present assessment methods are neither helpful nor important for refugee students. Grades do not facilitate or reinforce refugees and that is why most teachers propose alternative assessment methods which are probably more effective and could act as an incentive for refugee students' learning (Van der Veer, 2000).

Discussion

There were some research limitations such as time and space which did not allow data collection from other geographical areas apart from Attica. The research may lack the validity of a national quantitative study, but it sheds light on qualitative aspects which are not easily depicted in quantitative research. The authors believe that there is a need for more qualitative research with the same or similar research questions to verify the already

existing findings. Furthermore, it is advisable that more quantitative research on a national scale regarding the issue of refugee education be conducted. Finally, the issue of refugee students' assessment could be investigated in-depth since the existing assessment context does not seem to be effective.

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Teaching international studies in the COVID-19 era:
The digital native generation of Japanese university students

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Abstract

It is evident that information and communications technology (ICT) developments have drastically become intertwined with globalization and play an outsized role in our daily lives. Across the world, younger generations are heavy users of online platforms such as social media in conjunction with portable computers, smartphones, and other devices. Despite differences between each country's location, culture, and history, advanced technologies and the rapid growth of the internet and social media are pervasive and relevant to the daily lives of most young people. Though slow, the education sector has sought ways to incorporate such new technologies into improved teaching and learning methods. The need for modern technologies within higher education became apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic when many universities were forced to quickly adopt a blend of traditional lectures, video presentations, and virtual learning environments or other videoconferencing software solutions. Though the most severe COVID-19 lockdown and mitigation measures are now ending, there are many opportunities to consider how higher education can continue to adapt to modern technologies in meaningful ways. One area to consider is that for younger generations, social media and online media platforms have always been a part of their lives. Current students often incorporate social media in ad hoc informal forms of education, which shapes their knowledge and identity, especially regarding international subjects. Additionally, COVID-19 compounded the importance of social media, as students became further isolated from their peers and social interaction and had limited ability to travel and study abroad. Focusing on how much social media plays a significant role in the lives of new cohorts of students, this presentation will consider how it can be of value within the educational context. A case study of Japanese university students will show how they use social media in the context of learning and identity creation in modern times. For methodology, a questionnaire and follow-up in-depth interviews were conducted for this research from September 2021 to January 2022. First, a questionnaire was given to 28 Japanese university student volunteers ranging from first-year students to senior undergraduates. We aimed at how students positioned themselves for learning from university faculty versus searching for information by themselves. Subsequently, follow-up in-depth oral interviews were conducted. This study will look at the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing social media in education while paying close attention to the viewpoints of actual students.

Keywords: Online learning, COVID-19, Digital native, Intercultural and International Education.

Introduction

Over the last few decades, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) developments have become drastically intertwined with globalization, playing a particularly important role in higher education. Despite differences between various countries' geographical locations, history, and culture, it is obvious how advanced technologies, widespread Internet access, and digitally driven media are commonplace and relevant to people's daily lives. In particular, younger generations have been raised entirely within this technologized era, and many can be considered digital natives, fluent in these new technologies. Such individuals include heavy users of online social media and social networking platforms, who access them on portable computers, smartphones, and other devices. Because ICT is increasingly pervasive in the daily lives of younger generations, educators need to understand how contemporary students use such technologies and whether they can serve as effective tools for learning.

The foundations of internationalization in higher education are rooted in intercultural studies, foreign languages, and international topics like politics or economics. Study abroad programs complement such classroom learning to give students exposure to authentic first-hand experiences that can connect theoretical studies to practical application and in-depth understanding. De Wit & Altbach (2021) state that "The traditional emphasis in internationalization has been on exchanges and cooperation, to contribute to a better understanding of different cultures and their languages" (p. 33). They also note that since the 1990s, there has been a marked shift from cooperation to international competition. This has made internationalization a vital issue as institutions seek to attract the best global talent while also seeking increased revenues from international admissions.

However, despite the prioritization of these internationalization processes, they were severely interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic brought about various restrictive national and higher education institutional policies prohibiting and severely limiting travel and in-person gatherings, making new technologies crucial for communication, socializing, working, and learning. This essentially resulted in a new hybrid era, forcing people across all generations to incorporate new technologies into their lives. For example, in higher education, video presentations and virtual lectures became primary replacements for traditional lectures. Lacking access to the physical components of international studies, we can imagine that students shifted their interest toward social media and other digital platforms that allowed them to access international information virtually. Focusing on the significant role social media plays in the lives of new student cohorts, this paper will examine how educators can harness it for educational purposes.

Study Focus and Methodology

This study focuses on the use of internet and social media-based information as tools for higher education, especially within the context of intercultural fields. COVID-19 severely interrupted traditional means of internationalization, making it nearly impossible for students and teachers to be exposed to direct intercultural exchanges. As a result, we sought to identify unique learnings based on experiences during this unprecedented era. One key aspect to consider in delivering intercultural education is the uniqueness of the younger

generations, who have been familiar with online media platforms for most of their lives. Current students often incorporate social media in ad hoc informal education, which shapes their identity and knowledge, especially regarding international subjects, providing a comparative point of view and stimulating them to form their own opinions.

This research used a case study of Japanese university students to examine how they use social media for learning and identity creation in modern times. Participants were recruited from students taking a course on international and intercultural topics. In this course, in-class studies were extended by incorporating additional information sources via social media, and students began to compare sources and information from multiple angles. This cohort of students faced the incredibly unique and unprecedented pandemic era, unable to travel the world compared to before COVID-19. These students started using new sources from social media and video platforms as elements to understand and see new aspects of international topics. This study looked at the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing social media in education while paying close attention to the viewpoints of actual students.

Our methodology comprised a voluntary questionnaire and in-depth follow-up interviews conducted from September 2021 to January 2022. The questionnaire was distributed to 28 volunteers ranging from first-year to fourth-year undergraduates. The questionnaire aimed to determine how students positioned themselves for learning from university faculty versus searching for information alone and how they perceived intercultural studies despite not being able to have first-hand experiences facilitated by traveling. The questionnaire was also designed to help establish how digital learning environments and situations affected their perception of intercultural studies. Subsequently, in-depth oral interviews were conducted. These interviews focused on understanding the students' learning methods during the COVID-19 period of online education, specifically, how they used their knowledge to apply critical thinking in understanding international topics.

Summary of Findings

The variety of social media sources and the amount of online information these students consumed increased at an unprecedented rate during the COVID-19 pandemic. We will examine a very abbreviated sampling of the most representative views shared by case study interviewees. Students gave responses in Japanese, but translations are provided for subsequent quotations. Most of the student interviewees mentioned that by learning about different countries' challenges with COVID-19, including travel restrictions, and international opinions on these matters, they became aware of the commonalities across countries. Many students noted that this changed their perception of these sources and usage. Their responses included how they perceived social media and its potential as a tool for general learning and, more specifically, international knowledge. For example, Interviewee A stated:

Online information, social media, and COVID-19 were uniquely connected. I had never realized how much we are connected worldwide, regardless of where we come from or where we live. We all faced the same challenges in dealing with and living with the pandemic. Some people in different countries faced racial discrimination.

Through a process of deepening intercultural knowledge online and juxtaposing local topics against those in a global context, students became more exposed to internationalization and gained new perspectives towards both. For example, Interviewee A explained how they viewed COVID-19 in a global context:

Some people faced the challenge of wearing a mask or not; others faced discrimination for testing COVID-19 positive. Most students dealt with online learning and not attending classes or events at school. I think it is unique how across the world, we were all facing the same difficulties related to COVID-19. Online sources showed me the commonality between different countries and made me aware of the further challenges people must face. I was trying to look more at students from foreign countries accessing information from online sources. If the pandemic had not happened, I do not think our generation would have faced other challenges as universal as those created by COVID-19.

While students learn comparatively about new topics from both a global and local perspective, they develop ways to respond to international matters in their local sphere or adapt international learnings to their local contexts. By understanding the complexity of intercultural issues, students can determine what elements can and cannot be used in their daily social situations. The intention behind the provided international education courses was to help students acquire knowledge and to further utilize it in meaningful and actionable ways.

One example of this is that although higher education internationalization processes were largely halted, there were still opportunities to learn about up-to-date global topics via social media. Interviewee C also expressed how they thought about this process:

By taking this course, I was able to understand how race and diversity apply differently to each racial group. Even though these concepts are related to people in the United States, how it applies to individual groups differs, making me think about how this phenomenon can apply within Japan.

The subject of race and cultural boundaries in Japan is very distinct from many other Western countries due to its largely homogenous society. Viewing such topics from remotely obtained international perspectives gives domestic students new ways to consider analogous local issues. The Statistics Bureau of Japan (2021) reported that Japan's 2020 census provides a limited view, showing that only 2.2% of the population were foreign residents. In comparison, the United States Census Bureau (2021) data shows that in 2020 the foreign-born population was estimated at 13.5% of the total U.S. population. Breaking down the total U.S. population reveals very significant minority populations: 59.3% white (not Hispanic or Latino), 18.9% Hispanic or Latino, 13.6% black, and 6.1% Asian. Thus, for Japanese students, race and immigration issues aren't at the forefront of issues like in other international contexts like the U.S. Comparing these issues and how people respond to them can provide an eye-opening perspective.

While social media and internet-based information sources pose a massive wealth of instantaneously accessible information, they have their own risks. Unlike traditional news sources, the trustworthiness and biases in the information they offer are not as clear as established media sources. Anyone can post information or videos commenting on a particular issue, but one cannot easily assess the quality of that content without thoughtful consideration. One large theme in this study concerns students' abilities to approach social media and online sources with media literacy and critical analysis. Thus, critical thinking and reconsideration of

previously accumulated knowledge are essential when taking in new information. This process can be seen as a new learning skill for digital native generations. For example, interviewee B responded*:*

I had some doubts about the information I was getting from television, magazines, or newspapers since reviewers might edit content before publishing stories. Social media were another way for me to confirm the information from these sources and be reassured that the more official information I received was correct. Before using social media and online sources, the sources that I could obtain were limited. Social media and online sources enabled me to access information quickly. I view online references as materials that can be used for confirmation; however, both traditional and online sources might not be truthful.

Overall, the student responses indicated that online sources were a valuable alternative source of new viewpoints that either validate, reinforce, or undermine traditional information sources. These students demonstrated a reasonable degree of literacy in objectively considering the factuality and value of Internet sources and with due skepticism. Mason et al. (2018) explain how media manipulation is not new and has been used throughout the 1900s, often for political purposes. However, they note that social media severely fragments the information space into smaller communities that are often more polarized than traditional mainstream media sources. If we consider further integrating social media and online news into education, we need to rethink how to teach media literacy and critical analysis of these sources.

We conducted this research with students eager to undertake intercultural studies during the pandemic and showed high interest in online media and relevant literacy. In the future, we aim to focus on students unfamiliar with online learning and less interested in acquiring media literacy. We will examine how such learning differs from this first pilot study sample. As a result of COVID-19, we have seen first-hand how higher education institutions and teaching methods can significantly and rapidly adapt when needed. Although most COVID-19 social distancing measures are now gradually ending, there are still many opportunities to consider meaningful ways for higher education to continue adopting modern technologies, using the experience acquired in hybrid teaching and learning.

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Can Internationalization at Home (IaH) in the COVID-19 pandemic effectively promote students' cross-cultural competence?

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Abstract

Many universities have promoted the Internationalization at Home (IaH) during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it is unclear about the role of IaH in developing students' cross-cultural competence. In this study, questionnaires and interviews were conducted to analyse students' experience of IaH. The questionnaire shows only 19.41% of students agreed or strongly agreed that IaH had increased their cross-cultural competence. Despite the rapid progress of international curriculum, interviewees raised concerns about the limited chance to increase cross-cultural competence. To develop students' cross-cultural competence in IaH, it is essential to merge the informal curriculum and hidden curriculum with formal curriculum.

Keywords: Internationalization at Home (IaH), international curriculum, Cross-cultural competence, COVID-19, Chinese students.

Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, because of international travel restrictions, the majority of students could not physically migrate to foreign universities and had to study in their home countries. To combat this challenge, many universities in the world, for example, China, have promoted the Internationalization at Home (IaH) (de Wit & Altbach, 2021), particularly internationalization of the curriculum, teaching and learning, and learning outcomes for students during the pandemic.

IaH was first proposed by Bengt Nilsson, Malmö University, Sweden in 1999 at the European Association for International Education (Nilsson, 2003). In the last two decades, IaH has developed quickly. Beelen and Jones (2015) suggested IaH is "the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students, within domestic learning environments". IaH is for the whole student body, and the aims are to extend beyond mobility, to encourage interaction between domestic and international students, and to gain deeper cross-cultural awareness. The prospective positive aspects of IaH include improving academic quality, enriching international practical experience, internationally oriented students and staff, national and global citizenship for students and staff, studying more foreign languages, and increasing opportunities to find a job at home or abroad (Harrison, 2015). In the UK, Higher Education Academy (HEA) has developed a strategic framework of internationalising the UK HE:

"*prepare 21st century graduates to live in and contribute responsibly to a globally interconnected society*" (The Higher Education Academy, 2014).

Obviously, the main goal of the IaH in the COVID-19 pandemic is to create an international curriculum and support students who would like to study abroad but have to stay in their home countries, due to the travel restriction (Li & Xue, 2021). In terms of the multiple goals of IaH, however, it is unclear if IaH during the COVID-19 pandemic can effectively improve students' cross-cultural competence, e.g., the "*understandings, competencies, attitudes, language proficiencies, participation and identities necessary for successful cross-cultural engagement*" (Heyward, 2002). While the world has become more connected in person or virtually, even the interruption from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to equip students with the ability to understand people from different cultures and engage with them effectively (Rasmussen & Sieck, 2015). To bridge the knowledge gap, we can conduct a series of survey and interviews to 1) evaluate students' learning experience of IaH in one Chinese university, 2) estimate the role of IaH in improving students' cross-cultural competence.

Methodology

A mixed methods approach using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used in this project (Bryman, 2016). An online questionnaire was carried out to understand students' IaH learning experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The semi-standardised interviews were performed to produce a micro-level view of students' opinions and experience of IaH study experience. A thematic analysis was applied to analyse the interview data.

Results

Questionnaire results

In total, 260 students participated the questionnaire. Around 52.61% of participants are male students, while 39.93% are female students (Figure 1a). More than one quarter (23.88%) of the surveyed students achieved the 1st class scores, and 38.43% and 25% of the students obtained 2:1 and 2:2 results (Figure 1b).
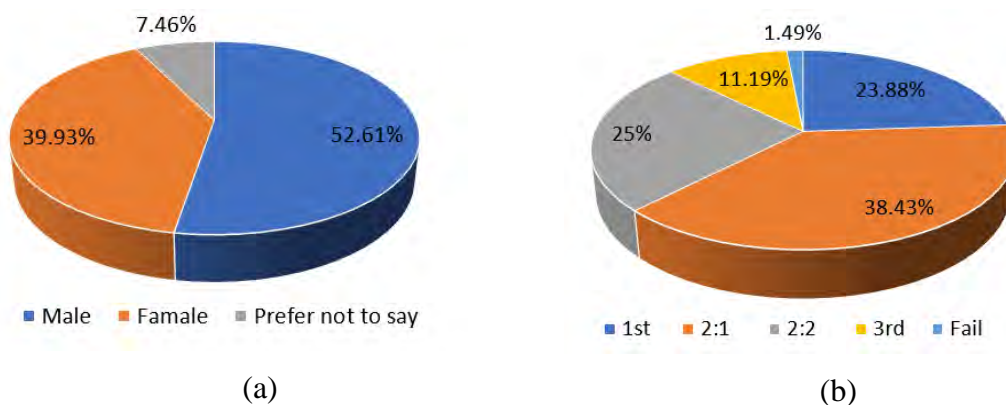

(a)   (b)

Figure 1. *The genders (a) and average scores (b) of the survey participants*

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When students were asked if they agreed that IaH in the COVID-19 pandemic had increased their cross-cultural competence, 41.79% of the surveyed students disagreed or strong disagreed, while only 19.41% agreed or strongly agreed, indicating the limited contribution of IaH to the development of students' cross-cultural competence.

Figure 2. *Do you agree that IaH in the COVID-19 pandemic increased your cross-cultural competence*?

Interview results

A total of 20 students were interviewed about their IaH learning experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interview scripts were summarized as a word cloud (Figure 3). Obviously, the words "Abroad", "Environment", "English", "Chinese", "Learning", "Communicate" and other words were frequently mentioned by the interviewees.

Figure 3. *Word cloud of interview results*

Students confirmed the positive contribution of IaH during the COVID-19 pandemic

The suspension and cancellation of flights make it impossible for international travels. For the students who desire to study abroad and cannot do so, the IaH is probably the only and best choice, in addition to deferring their study to next year. During the interviews, many students confirmed the positive role of IaH during the pandemic. One student clearly praised the IaH.

"Even if you cannot go abroad (because of the COVID-19 pandemic), you can still remotely enjoy the study environment abroad."

Although it is impossible to travel abroad, some students thought IaH was a helpful transition to their study after the pandemic. One interviewee commented:

"We can have a learning environment at home like abroad. I think this is a good transition to learning abroad."

Another interviewee shared a similar thought.

"Although learning experience IaH is not good as actually studying abroad, it will help you adapt a little faster when you go abroad."

Lack of opportunities to develop cross-cultural competence

Despite the internationalized curriculum, interviewees mentioned the limitation of IaH during the pandemic for developing their cross-cultural competence, including making international friends. Specifically, students emphasized the little chance to experience different cultures and practice the cross-cultural competence in their daily life. One interviewee elaborated:

"Although the classes are taught in English, we usually communicate with each other in Chinese in daily life."

Students realized the importance of different language/culture environment after class, particularly the English culture, but it still lacks in the IaH during the pandemic. Two students expressed the similar concerns.

"The living environment is still all in Chinese. It is hard to change them all to English."

"I feel like there is no English language environment after class."

Discussion

This research highlighted the challenges of IaH, particularly the limited contribution to developing students' cross-cultural competence. As Figure 2 indicated, around 42% of surveyed students strongly disagreed or disagreed that the IaH in the pandemic has promoted their cross-cultural competence. During the interviews, students also expressed their concerns about little progress in their cross-cultural competence development. The COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented challenges to the world, including the education sector. To rapidly cope with the challenges, most universities just quickly moved their teaching online, without sufficient preparation time, so-called "crisis pedagogy" (Khanal, 2021). In terms of IaH, most efforts have focused on formal curriculum, especially the teaching content, while limited consideration has been given to developing students' cross-cultural competence.

It is key to further promote the development of an international curriculum, not least by adding international learning content. However, to fulfil the comprehensive aims of IaH, it is indispensable to merge the learning objectives and means with global perspectives and knowledge.

While the formal curriculum, such as teaching content, teaching methodology, learning & assessment activities, have received a lot of attention in the IaH, the informal and hidden curriculum should not be ignored. Essentially, it needs to create a campus culture and environment that motivates internationalisation in and outside the classroom (Leask, 2009). More attention should go to the informal curriculum, different kinds of extracurricular activities on campus. These extracurricular events, such as various cultural celebrations, festivals including around Christmas and Easter periods, and public displays of artworks, are not compulsory

parts of the study programme or degree, but they contribute to campus culture in different ways and can be an important part to form an international landscape on campus, becoming an important supplementary to the formal curriculum. The hidden curriculum, "*values, dispositions, and social and behavioural expectations that brought rewards in school (university) for students*", also plays an important role in higher education IaH (Kentli, 2009). The hidden curriculum can be transmitted through the practices and structures of institutions and human behaviours.

In the post COVID-19 era, it is likely the IaH will further develop. The world has paid a high price for the COVID-19 pandemic; thus it is essential to take advantage of lessons learned during the pandemic. Realizing global learning for all, it is important to make use of online expertise, not just by replacing onsite with online learning. Along with creating a formal international curriculum, improving cross-cultural competence should be an indispensable part in the IaH. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) have been the global agenda, and IaH needs to be integrated with UN SDGs, particularly quality education (the 4th SDG Goal) (Hong, Calderon, & Coates, 2022). Climate change has been a global challenge, and using new technology and stimulating low-carbon IaH is essential (de Wit & Deca, 2020).

Conclusion

This study analysed Chinese students' IaH learning experience during the COVID-19 pandemic in one university. The questionnaire and interviews show that IaH played an important role in providing international education during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, due to the disconnect between life and the learning environment using English, there were limited opportunities to develop students' cross-cultural competence. In addition to the formal curriculum, the informal and hidden curriculum, for example, extracurricular activities and experiences, should receive more attention for improving students' cross-cultural competence.

Acknowledgements

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Cross-sectoral teaching and the interplay of languages among EFL teachers in Israel

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Abstract

Israel's separated educational systems, for Jews and Arabs, is changing. Cross-sectoral teaching is more common, as Arab teachers work at Jewish schools (Blass, 2010), due to a shortage of teachers in the Jewish sector and a surplus in the Arab sector. In 2013, 465 Arab teachers taught in the Jewish sector, 805 in 2019, and the number rises annually (Kadari-Ovadia, 2019). This examination of the dominant language constellations (DLCs) of Arab EFL teachers (English as a foreign language) employed at Jewish schools reveals that they activate English, Hebrew and Arabic and there is interplay among them as each serves distinct functions. The success of cross-sectoral teaching depends on an understanding of and support for plurilingualism.

Keywords: dominant language constellations (DLCs), English as a foreign language (EFL), cross-sectoral teaching, Arabic, Hebrew, English.

Anyone who speaks more than a single language possesses a dominant language constellation (DLC), comprising of their "most important vehicle languages, functioning as an entire unit" (Aronin 2006, p.146). Aronin (2019) studies multilinguals and how they optimize their linguistic assets. Lo Bianco (2020) ties DLCs to linguistic diversity, to an affordance-based approach, whereby the dispensations afforded to individuals by their languages become advantages in language teaching. Researchers confirm their value, academically (Menezes, 2011), and professionally (i.e., institutions) (Bjorklund, Bjorklund, & Sjoholm, 2020).

Inter-cultural teaching is a complex combination of personal and professional factors. Israeli researchers (Yavelberg, 2018, Jayusi & Bekerman, 2019) reveal that Arab teachers employed in Jewish schools report positive experiences, but tension may be present. This is supported by Saada and Gross (2019), who observe Arab teachers' effort to defuse tension. The Head of Arab Teacher Integration at *Merchavim*, an NGO (non-governmental organization) that arranges cross-sectoral teaching with the Israeli Ministry of Education states that if an Arab teacher fails at a Jewish school, he/she will assume that it is because he/she is Arab (Kadari-Ovadia, 2019). With challenges present, it is imperative that cross-sectoral teachers developing their identities, bottom-up, receive simultaneous support, top-down. The benefits teachers are offered by their DLCs are significant for the strengthening of one's identity, social relations, collaboration, a recognition of shared values and a maximizing of educational resources. Supporting sustainable patterns of intercultural communicative interaction contributes to increased mutual understanding and tolerance.

The methodology of this qualitative research combined narrative inquiry with a grounded theory approach. Digitally recorded, 30-40-minute narratives were coded thematically to reveal patterns of language

use and attitude. Narrative inquiry is based on Bamberg's (2011) assertion that speakers reveal relevant information, permitting a view into their multi-dimensional reality. Narratives were analyzed according to intrinsic (i.e., personal development) and extrinsic themes (i.e., support within schools), focusing on an individual level and institutional level. The eight participants, seven females, and one male, range in age from 24 to 43 and had two to ten years teaching experience. All studied at Israeli teacher training colleges and are employed at public and private schools in northern Israel. All are native speakers of Arabic, and all, but one, have taught in the Arab sector. Five participants are Christian; two are Muslim, and one is Druze. Assured confidentiality, their names were changed.

In Jewish schools, cross-cultural teachers are exposed to unfamiliar linguistic, metalinguistic and educational practices. The significant role of Hebrew is exemplified in everyday educational activity and administrative tasks. Native Arab speakers confirm that despite having studied Hebrew since elementary school, their Hebrew skills are inadequate. One teacher relates that in her initial hiring interview, she moved from Hebrew into English because she admits, "I felt threatened by all the Hebrew-speaking teachers sitting outside." She explains, "I studied and understand Hebrew. I even wrote papers, but I never spoke Hebrew. For four years [at college], I spoke only Arabic and English." To cope with linguistic challenges, teachers implemented socio-emotional factors, stressing to learners the similarities of their circumstances – just as students are mastering English, they are mastering Hebrew.

There are circumstances in which teachers are compelled to use Hebrew. One teacher, Noor, says, "[At] the lower levels I can't speak English because they don't understand me. I try as much as possible to use more English, but all the classes that I have taught so far have difficulties in English." With a realization that the use of Hebrew is inevitable, they introduce self-imposed strategies. Lila declares that she will speak Hebrew in her classroom, but not write in Hebrew, and that she will submit paperwork about EFL in English, and other administrative paperwork in Hebrew. Teachers work to improve their Hebrew. Saja shares that she paid a lot of attention to Hebrew conversation and built up "a word bank of useful words and expressions." So prevalent is Hebrew in their environment that in their narratives, speakers codeswitch between Hebrew and English, using Hebrew for jargon (e.g., *hasavah* [retraining program], *tomech hora'a* [teaching assistants]), and frequently-used lexical items (e.g., "It was a *ka'ev rosh* [headache]", "*It was a haviya metakenet*" [a 'make-up' experience]."

Arabic serves as a means through which teachers strengthen student-teacher relations. Naima inquires as to what her students are learning in their Arabic classes, and she helps them, as they compare Arabic to Hebrew and English. She notes, "I think the kids enjoyed [it] when I spoke Arabic." She says, "They giggled and laughed. Some of them did not even know I was Arab." Arabic also facilitates the establishment of a connection with other Arabic-speaking teachers and students' parents, the latter with whom EFL teachers speak to in Arabic or codeswitch between Arabic and Hebrew or Arabic and English. Lila introduces Arabic into her classroom in the form of conversational fillers and interjections, like *hallas* [enough].

Cross-cultural teaching also brings different ethnicities, religions and cultures into contact. English language teaching offers cross-cultural teachers an opportunity to share their culture with others. Initially, they

state that they are apprehensive, not wanting to upset the school principal or parents by raising controversial topics. They share their failures and successes in their effort to enhance cultural awareness. Lila notes that her introduction of Christmas to a sixth grade EFL class, from a religious point of view, was met with comments like, "What do we need to know this for? We are Jews." "Almost in tears," she describes this as an "utter disaster," but that approaching this topic from a different angle – the commonalities between Christmas and Chanukah - is more successful.

English is used as a *lingua franca,* a neutral language, common to both minority and majority groups. Amina divulges that she speaks English to students who are recent immigrants from Russia, Ukraine and Germany, to connect with them, until they can do so with peers. English plays an essential role in teachers' professional identities. Lila asserts, "They have to talk to me in English because I am the English teacher…An Arab teacher in a Jewish school actually needs English to communicate because they do not know Arabic." Use of English establishes a comfort zone, one where cross-cultural teacher are less vulnerable to self-doubt. Moreover, English creates unity. By conversing in English, native Arabic EFL teachers convey to staff and students alike that they are collaborative, cooperative and form a cohesive unit. When supported, cross-cultural teachers take risks and exhibit initiative. Jihan describes the introduction of her after-school English program. "It was great. We had…over 60 children…from the second to the ninth grade…staying after school and learning English," she says.

Cross-sectoral teaching is mediated by an implementation of the dispensations afforded to teachers by the languages they know. A sharing of teachers' assets facilitates learning and establishes a positive learning climate, one characterized by acceptance and respect. Cross-sectoral teaching perpetuates intercultural relationships, with cross-sectoral Arab teachers making a substantial contribution to their students, to a school, a community and the educational system as a whole. Challenges did arise in teachers' narratives, issues of age and relations with non-EFL staff. Also mentioned were parental and community connections, concerns shared by the research of Duffy and Gallagher (2014). Not obliged to partake in military service, Arab teachers in Israel are younger than their Jewish counterparts, which resulted in the impression that were too young to be competent. While EFL teachers attest to strong ties with EFL colleagues, some noted strained relations with other teachers and with parents who were unaware that their child's English teacher is Arab. Since Arab teachers often do not reside where they work, they do engage with the local community. Also worthy of further examination is the English teaching curricula that portrays Arabs and Arabic in a limited in scope. There can be no equality without the equal representation of people.

Observed in the table below are the roles each language plays in cross-sectoral EFL teaching. The pragmatic functions of Hebrew are evident. Arabic, while not a direct component of teaching, is introduced for social purposes that strengthen teachers' identities. The table reveals the role of English as a bridge language, one that allows teachers to negotiate differences. The interplay between languages is also evident.

Language used	Language and identity	Communication with…	Language used in an educational setting	Language used on a daily basis (at school)	Language used for administrative purposes	Teachers' linguistic competence
Arabic	Personal Linguistic Cultural Ethnic Religious	Students Teachers Parents	Little	No	No	Yes, their L1
English	Personal Professional Linguistic	Students Teachers Parents	Yes, predominantly so	Yes	Yes (No, Hebrew also used)	Yes
Hebrew	National Professional	Teachers Parents Students	Yes	Yes, but not always in the classroom	Yes	Partial competence

Table 1. *A summary of the language use of cross-cultural EFL teachers*

The implications of this study extend far beyond the use of language in the Israeli EFL classroom, and findings uncover the benefits that Arab EFL teachers bring to Jewish schools. There are presently 200 Israeli schools, 600 teachers and 3,000 students involved in several types of cross-cultural partnerships (e.g., joint Arab-Israeli English centers, collaborative online projects) (Yitzhaki et al., 2021), but cross-cultural teachers reach individuals on a daily basis and introduce intercultural competence into the Israeli educational system. Their unique DLCs and language use in EFL classrooms transforms diversity a concrete reality and the the value of different languages and cultures is materialized.

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Views and attitudes of perspective teachers towards multiculturalism:
A comparative study among students of two departments at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

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Abstract

In this paper we present research whose aim was to explore the perceptions and attitudes of 200 students of the Department of Primary Education and the Department of Mathematics at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. These two departments were chosen because the former has a strong tradition in teaching multicultural education, while the latter seems to focus on the subject and not on preparing its students to become teachers. The results of our research showed that although they consider issues of social diversities important, students in the Mathematics Department lack the knowledge and skills needed to deal with.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, education, teachers' training, Greece.

Theoretical considerations

The prolonged economic crisis has changed the economic conditions in the countries of Europe, which has influenced the prevalence of conservative and far-right ideas and political parties. As a result, the climate favourable to social variations seems to be reversed and the balance has shifted towards processes aimed at the assimilation of "different" people. Nowadays, multiculturalism retreats and "different" people, like refugee, immigrants and Roma are being persecuted.

As it concerns its development, multiculturalism, multicultural and intercultural education has been characterized by different conceptual orientations, so that we could say that these concepts mean different things to different people. We support an Intercultural Education for Social Justice (hereafter IESJ), an approach which aims at democracy and equality in schools and society. IESJ is not a separate, isolated, once-a-year activity or a program or supplementary lesson for minority students or a separate course, which concerns other cultures, nor is it a limited number of modules or projects on religion, clothing and eating habits of different students (Zachos, 2022). IESJ proposes the total transformation of the education system so that it fights racism, economic inequalities, nationalism, sexism, and all kinds of discrimination. For these reasons IESJ concerns all students, no matter of their social class, "race", ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, mother tongue, abilities / disabilities. It is a stance towards people, social relations, and social phenomena which (should) qualify the entire curriculum, as well as all the educational practices and relationships in the contemporary school (Zachos, 2023). As it concerns its cognitive, affective, or behavioral goals, its objectives are the students to acquire the knowledge and skills that will help them to fight against racism, sexism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, and prejudices. In addition, valid and accurate information about the contributions

of members of "different" groups to the society in which they live and work, will help students from these groups to gain more self-confidence. This will also assist in them feeling welcomed in schools while knowing that their culture is recognized. Those feelings-as expected-will help them commit to the school's goals and improve their academic performance.

Closing our short theoretical part, we underline that teachers play an important role in the application of IESJ. So, teacher preparation and certification has a significant impact on student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Specifically, as it concerns teachers' intercultural competence, we underline that it is not innate (Stockwell, 2018; Risannen, 2019). It takes systematic preparation and study to acquire the appropriate pedagogical and teaching skills. However, it is not enough to acquire and cultivate pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills, but it is essential to cultivate appropriate attitudes, as these are -to a large extent- what determines both the choices and actions of teachers (Gay, 2011). So, it is not only the governments which need to transform the schools' curricula, but it is the schools per se which must revisit and eventually reshape their syllabi and course of studies.

We believe that Case Studies related to the training of future teachers on issues of multiculturalism, and in particular on the impact of their perceptions of the subjects taught, can help their professional preparation. They can also help future teachers to work with diverse students, as well as to help politicians, education officials and primary / secondary teacher education schools to work more effectively.

The research, results and discussion

Our research was a quantitative case study (Bryman, 2017) and its population was all the undergraduate students who were enrolled during the spring semester of the 2021-2022 in the Department of Primary Education and the Department of Mathematics of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The participants in our research were all students of these departments who attended classes during the week between 14 and 18 March 2022, when we distributed the questionnaire in the classrooms. Our sample was a non-probability one, since each unit (person) of the population did not have the same chance of being included in our survey. Participants' number reached 200 individuals. As it concerns their gender, 51.5% of them were men, 48% were women and 0, 5% identified themselves as "other".

To serve the purposes of our research, we chose questionnaire with a three-point Likert scale. Note that we omitted the answer «I don't know», so as to avoid neutral responses. The responses of the participants had to clearly present their knowledge on the researched topic, in order for the researcher to be able to draw conclusions.

Our survey's first -after the demographic data- question concerned students' knowledge of multicultural issues. More specifically, in the question "*Are you familiar with the concept of multiculturalism?*", 74.7% of the students from the Department of Primary Education (hereafter DPM) answered "Very well", while the corresponding percentage of the students from the Department Mathematics (hereafter DM) students reached 20%. The results were the reverse the response "a little", i.e., 68.3% of the students of the MD answered that they know "A little" about multiculturalism, while the corresponding percentage of the students of the DPE was

24.2%. The smallest percentages for both departments are found in the "Not at all" option, 1% for the DPE and 10.9% for DM. From the answers to this question, it seems that the students of the DPE know the concept of multiculturalism to a satisfactory degree, while the students of the MD have little knowledge about the issue.

In the (next) question "*In your educational course in primary, secondary and tertiary education have you dealt with issues of multiculturalism?*" the answers had no significant statistical difference. Undergraduate students of both departments have been involved throughout their educational course to a relatively small extent with multicultural issues. Specifically, 40.4% of the students of DPE and 5% of those from the DM have dealt "a lot" with these topics. At the same time, 54.5% of the DPM and 78.2% of the MD have dealt "a little" with multicultural issues. The smallest percentages are found in the "Not at all" option, 5.1% of the DPE and 16.8% of the MD.
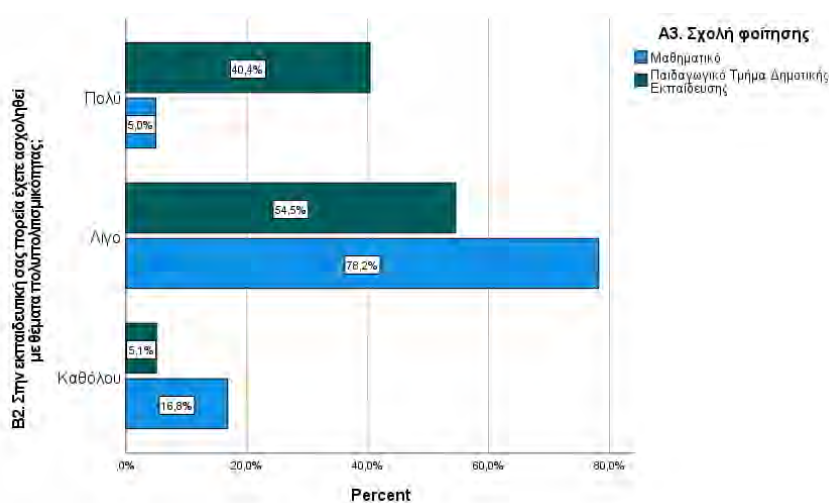
In the next question: "*To what extent do you consider that the university provided you with sufficient knowledge on the topic of immigration?*", the answers vary as those in the previous question, with the students of DPE presenting themselves as more informed. More specifically, 48.5% of the students of the DPE answered "Very much", which shows that their department provided them with knowledge on the topic of immigration. As far as students of the DM are concerned, only 6.9% gave the same answer to the same question. "A little" was answered by 46.5% of respondents from the DPE and 37.6% of respondents from the DM. "Not at all" answered 5.1% of the DPE and 55.4% of the MD. This discrepancy is indicative of different directions that the two departments have, and possibly more broadly, the different approach which the schools of Pedagogy and so-called secondary teachers (kathigitikes) schools have in Greece.
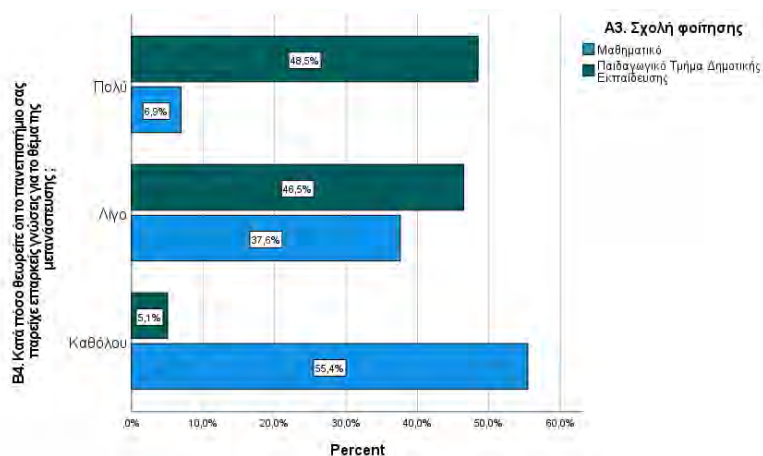
The next question specifically raised the issue of racism: " *Drawing upon your personal experience and knowledge to what extent do you consider racism to be a problem in Greek schools*?"
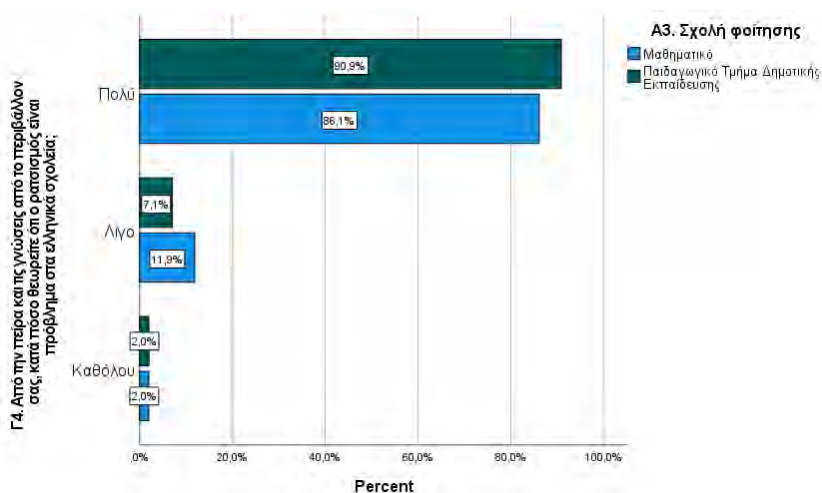
The majority of students answered that racism is a big problem in Greek schools. More specifically, 90.9% of DPE students and 86.1% of MD answered "Very", 7.1% of students of the DPE and 11.9% of the DM considered that racism is a small ("Little") problem, while they who consider that there is no such issue (" Not at all") are 2% of the students of both departments. It seems that students of both departments have common experiences and that they consider racism as a basic problem for Greek schools.

In the following questions the respondents had to value the responsibility of the school and especially its teachers for identifying and dealing with racism. More specifically, those question were: "*To what extent do you think every school should be responsible for identifying and combating racism or discrimination in school?*" and "*To what extent do you think a teacher should be responsible for identifying and combating racism or discrimination in the classroom*?". Students' answers for the hight responsibility ("Very") of the school reached 94.9% DPE and 93.1% DM. Fewer were those who consider that the school is not to blame: 3% for the answer "A little" and 2% for the answer "Not at all" among DPE students and 5.9% for "A little" and 1% for "Not at all" among DM students. The answers concerning the responsibility of the schools and teachers vary. Specifically, 94.1% of DM students and 98% of DPE students consider the teacher's responsibility as great ("Very"). 1% of the DPE students estimate that the responsibility of the supervisors is little or non-

existent ("A little" and "Not at all"), while the corresponding percentages of the DM students are 2% for the answer "Not at all" and 4% for the answer "A little". From the analysis of the data, we understand that the participants of both departments consider that the schools and the teachers themselves have a great responsibility for identifying and evaluating racism and should be properly trained for this.

Conclusion

From our data and analysis, it appears that the students of the Department of Primary Education of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki have the knowledge and skills needed to respond effectively to racism, ethnocentrism, and discrimination of any kind. In contrast, students in a typical science department, a significant proportion of whom will be called upon to teach in schools or tutorials, do not have the appropriate knowledge and skills to respond to social differentiation. Our research confirms the lack of pedagogical knowledge of so-called secondary teacher training tertiary Schools and underlines the need to fill these gaps.

We believe the Greek State, as well as other states, politicians, people who can influence "public opinion", but also universities, should fully endorse more strongly support the preparation of teachers at all levels, so that they can respond not only to the specific issue we have explored in this paper, but to all the needs arising from changing social conditions. Prospective teachers who receive multifaceted pedagogical and especially Intercultural Education for Social Justice courses, will be able to support an inclusive curriculum and create a warm but challenging climate in their classrooms. In addition, teachers who adopt such an educational approach and put it into practice, become free of prejudice and ideological distortions and able to contribute to the demand for a better society, a society without prejudice, discrimination, racism, oppression, unequal distribution of power and huge economic inequalities.

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Youth stories from a refugee camp in Greece

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Abstract

This paper refers to a study conducted with the purpose to explore the lives and day to day experiences of eight young refugees residing (or having resided) at a camp in the Greek provinces by simultaneously extending an effort to unveil their often oppressive life-circumstances with the ultimate aim to ameliorate them and assist them on achieving integration through linguistic and educational inclusion. By means of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) in data collection and analysis, the employed semi-structured interviews and informal discussions, revealed that the young refugees are faced with multiple challenges concerning their legal status, their life inside and outside of the camp, in their contact with their school and the local society. However, against all adversities, they exhibit enormous perseverance, self-determination and agency for their future.

Keywords: young refugees, coping mechanisms, protracted encampment, refugee education.

Introduction-Background

The present research attempt highlighted the experiences of eight young refugees residing in encampment conditions in Greece with the ultimate aim to bring them into the open and utilise them as a tool, a platform for visibility. Regarding the Greek context and the experience of living in encampment conditions from the young refugees' perspective, in particular, limited research projects have been made. The bulk of scholar papers in relation to young refugees delve into matters of second language and education enquiries, issues of identity or the perspectives of other stakeholders, so this research effort-even in its limited scale-aims at shedding a light on the youth residing in the Greek camps, in spaces of multifarious "liminality" (Arvanitis et al., 2019), on the margins of the communities that host them, in order to voice and bring forward their personal stories, worries and aspirations. Therefore, it could serve as a tiny platform to accommodate their stories about their day-to-day struggle in this closed setting, at a very crucial developmental stage of their being, not from a position of helplessness, but from a position of agency.

Refugees in Greece

According to UNHCR (2022) there are 114, 685 people seeking refuge in Greece, with the 71%, of them being labelled as recognised refugees, 26% as asylum seekers and 4% as "stateless". Furthermore, in 2021, the number of refugees arrived in Greece decreased significantly by 31.7% compared to 2020 (European Council

for Refugees and Exiles, 2022). However, these numbers may not correspond to the actual amount of people attempting to access Greece due to the frequently purported pushback practices of the Greek government (European Council for Refugees and Exiles, 2022).

Additionally, the Asylum services received a significantly lower number of applications in 2021 examined in the framework of the 'safe third country' logic, issued on June 7, 2021 by the Joint Ministerial Decision in Greece, extending, in essence, the EU-Turkey 2016 deal, which is further translated into examination under "fast-track" "admissibility" procedures, that, eventually, offer the ground for inadmissibility terms, in reality, on deciding the entry in (European Council for Refugees and Exiles, 2022). But even in this case, from March 2020 ,Turkey suspended readmissions, leading large number of people in Greece, in a state of protracted "limbo" (European Council for Refugees and Exiles, 2022; Human Rights Watch, 2022) who mainly remained "trapped" in accommodation centres, camps or even detention centres (European Council for Refugees and Exiles, 2022).

Seeking asylum and the effect of migration decisions

The prospect of a positive or negative asylum decision is directly connected with the right to remain in the host country and be eligible to a residence permit and thus, bears enormous significance for their future life. Being "on hold" for prolonged periods of time, waiting for a decision, makes it impossible for them to exert some sort of control over their lives and plan ahead (Esaisson et al., 2022; Varvin et al., 2022).

On another level, the prospect of the decision influences the building of a trustful relationship with the host society and as a consequence, affects the asylum seekers' attitudes towards the host environment (Esaisson et al., 2022).

The camp

Partly understanding the lived experiences of the participants of this project has to do with an understanding of the space of the camp. What was set out to be a protected and neutral place- although resembling in a lot of aspects the military camp -serving as a temporary shelter for vulnerable people has transmuted in Agier' s comments, into a place of "waiting apart from society" , an "outdoor imprisonment" for people who are "residue of wars" (Agier, 2008, p.40). Camps act as spaces of humanitarian aid co-existing with a system of securitisation and control, fostering "dependence", exclusion, passivity and victimisation of the populations residing in them.

Refugee education in the Greek context

Indubitably, education is a tool of empowerment and a key mechanism to escape poverty (UNESCO, 2020), apart from being a fundamental human right (UN, 1948). Learning the host language evidently serves as a tool for integration (Council of Europe, 2014) and as a consequence, a tool for visibility.

Greek educational efforts in respect to refugees started after 2016, in order to respond to the surges of displaced populations at the time, marking a significant progress in ensuring that all refugee children could

have access to schooling (UNHCR et al., 2019). Education in the Greek context is compulsory for all children from the age of five to fifteen, despite the legal status (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, 2016).

The pandemic almost rendered distance learning and physical presence at schools inaccessible for refugee students, especially for those residing in camps and on the Greek islands. Refugees' drop-out rates and reduced school attendance has multiple causes. In the Greek context, a lot of structural obstacles can be recognised, stemming mainly by the inability of the Greek state to respond to the arising challenges, especially during the pandemic, in terms of appointing promptly reception class teachers, ensuring transport from the reception centres to schools, sufficient tools for distance learning and the like. In addition to these, an ill-communication with the local municipalities has been recorded (The Greek Ombudsman, 2021).

Reactions to refugee education on the Greek mainland and on the islands must also be mentioned (Aggeli, 2021), at times, supported by local authorities (Alexiou, 2021) in conjunction with how the concept of the Greek national identity is constructed, promoted and reproduced inside and outside the education system, on the public discourse and media, as opposed to the "other" culture (Kalerante, 2020).

Research methodology

This research effort revolved around the following basic questions:

- What are the main challenges these young people face in their day-to-day life inside and outside the facility?

- What do young refugees do to cope with them?

- How does the local community "outside" the camp impact their life?

- What are their priorities and most urgent changes they need to make?

- What are their main expectations and aspirations for the future?

Drawing on three principles, the idiographic, the inductive and the interrogative (Smith, 2004, as cited in Schweitzer & Steel, 2008), the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was selected as the most suitable design for this project in order to obtain a detailed insight into the individual, as well as shared "universe" of the young participants in addition to the potential of unmasking an underlying structure across the individual stories (Demuth & Mey, 2015).

Eight, audio-recorded on a mobile phone, semi-structured interviews were obtained during the period of April-May 2022, supported by informal discussions and observation before, during and after the interviews (Swain & King, 2022). The participants of the study were three junior high school adolescents, one high school underage student and four young adults, ranging from eighteen to twenty one – three of them attending morning and evening vocational high schools and one of them, although enrolled, never wished to attend high school. Three of them were from Congo, one from Guinea, two from Afghanistan and two of Kurdish origin and their legal status varied.

The "human subject" (Alase, 2017) in this project was safeguarded and protected throughout the whole process. The vulnerable participants' privacy, anonymity and dignity could not be compromised. Issues of the researchers' positionality were also taken into account.

Results and Discussion

In regard to their overarching challenge and at the same time major priority they were faced with, all participants almost unequivocally pointed to their legal status playing a determinant role in their overall health, psychosocial well-being and hope for the future. Simultaneously extensive references were made to the long waiting time of asylum processes and the frustration associated with it.

In particular, the participants with rejected decisions associated every aspect of their current life-world with the lack of documentation**.** It is beyond any doubt that the state's decision whether to accept or reject an asylum seeker's application shapes and defines refugees' future (Esaiasson et al., 2022). A family's legal status seems to affect substantial aspects of their daily life, such as basic food provision and cash assistance termination, as verified by a number of participants. Furthermore, protracted uncertainty (Horst & Grabska, 2015 as cited in Varvin et al., 2022) constitutes a central feature of the life of refugees and renders planning ahead almost impossible and consequently prevents them from "activating psychosocial resources" (Sagbakken et al., 2020 as cited in Varvin et al., 2022).

Furthermore, all participants recognised an array of multiple challenges and inadequacies they have been subject to during their stay at the different camp(s) experienced in their trajectories, ranging from sustenance and poor conditions to free movement and security issues. Moreover, the pandemic exacerbated the sense of seclusion by a number of additional barriers imposed, while the new rules and changing nature of the facility (Kalaitzi & Fallon, 2021), to a more closed-controlled one, seemed to have played a definitive role in shaping their psycho-emotional state and attitudes in diverse facets.

However, against the adversities encountered, the participants of this project struggled to maintain an everyday contact with their school, in terms of available study time, working conditions and more importantly, their basic provisions in life (Magos & Margaroni, 2018). They all appreciated the value of educating themselves and maintained a positive attitude towards Greek language, recognising it as an indispensable tool to come into contact with the local community and to become visible, as one more asset to enrich their skills, as well as their identities (Council of Europe, 2014), ultimately, to boost their confidence. Moreover, they found their school as a supportive mechanism to move them forward into their future and help them establish a sense of routine in their lives, although they highlighted some gaps and deficiencies regarding refugee education and linguistic integration. Non-formal education, within and outside the camp, also, proved significant in many respects, especially when formal education during the pandemic was rendered impossible.

Interview data, also, showed that the participants had acquired, on the whole, a positive impression on the host society of the particular town and its people. The young refugees' attitude towards the local community and the host country seemed to have been overall positive. They described their relationships with the locals as, more or less good, yet limited on the interpersonal level.

The lack of tailored adult language programmes and more integration vocational projects for refugees were also underscored. The limited employment opportunities were also underlined rendering their staying in

the country almost impossible. Lastly, some remarks were made in respect to specific constraints set by the location of the camp, rendering the contact with the rest of the town difficult.

Finally, most of them showed increased sensitivity in terms of human rights issues, solidarity and advocacy and all of them exhibited some kind of resilience and a sense of flexibility to negotiate reality against the adverse conditions.

Concluding remarks

Against all adversities, the young people of this project showed an amazing perseverance, self-determination and resilience, keeping their focus on their future and the possibilities ahead of them.

The limited scales of this research, as well as the lack of other perspectives imposed certain restrictions. All in all, this paper has been an attempt to amplify the young refugees' voices and extend their stories to the world by offering them a platform to speak back and become visible, to voice their worries, experience, resilience and resistance against an oppressive and ostensibly inescapable framework, exhibiting incredible courage and agency.

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