



OBSERVING IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND AND OPERATE IN MULTICULTURAL CLASSES

The Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion in Italian and
European schools: *Portfolio of Integration: the
European experience*

(edited by Lorenzo Luatti)



portfolio of  integration

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Portfolio of Integration

Introduction

In 2002, when Graziella Favaro and I elaborated and tested the first version of the Notebook of Integration, we never imagined that such a tool could end up in European schools after ten years of testing in Italy. It has been a long path carried out with many teachers from different cities and schools. With passion and professional determination, they understood the reasons and opportunities of a supervised educational proposal and research-action that allow them a wider and valid vision of the school and social integration process of their foreign students. The professional satisfaction constantly recorded among teachers at the end of the observation paths gave the motivation for the diffusion of the Notebook in Italy; in the last two years, thanks to the Portfolio of Integration (POI) project, the Notebook of Integration has been spread throughout Europe and its results are partially documented in this publication.

If I had to explain the reason for the success of the Notebook of Integration I would reference the “adaptability” of the tool to different contexts and situations (sometimes “too much” was asked, such as in the case of its blunt implementation with children and adolescents who went back to their native country); without forgetting its flexibility, which allows teachers to customise it, especially after a first trial stage, while adapting it to the specific reality in which they operate. The Notebook’s ability of helping people devise a wide and holistic, complete, vision of the factors (and interconnections) which outline the inte(g)ra(c)tion paths. Even more: the opportunity of exchanging the different point of views, representations, previous experiences and observations collected during the path within a group of trained teachers have always represented the strong aspect of the proposal (as the POI experience proves). There are moments of “conversational pedagogy” which answer the need of sharing and exchange perceived by teachers.

The (planning) need of reaching a shared version has led to the development of a new “Notebook” that collects only some of the changes and integrations emerged and validated during the POI courses in Poland, Scotland, Turkey and Italy. These integrations are generally valid and usable in the different contexts/countries - even different from those of the POI - where incoming migration flows are present in schools. Doing so, the published documents are lacking some peculiarities such as single national contexts, the proposals of

tools and the attentions adapted to the specific situation of each country. However, today we can count on a version of the Notebook that has passed the European test, even if it has some limits and potentialities highlighted in the contributions collected in the second part of this publication.

The first part presents the theoretic and methodologic references of the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion, as well as a concise reconstruction and analysis of the main results and acquisitions, which have been evaluated in the course of its ten-year experience in the Italian schools.

This first part was written by Graziella Favaro and Lorenzo Luatti, authors of the Notebook, and by Gilberto Bettinelli, who has contributed in a determining way to the renewal of the tool, since its two-year test in Florence.

The second part, as mentioned above, collects the summary contributions by scholars and operators who have followed the national experiences of the POI project: Stephen McKinney, Hazel Crichton, Julie McAdam, Arizpe Ewelín and Alan Britton report the results of the Scottish experience with reflections and proposals; Gökçen Aktaş writes about the experience in the Turkish schools in the Izmit district; Wanda Baranowska and Malgorzata Kosiorek present the Polish experience highlighting the strong peculiarity of that context; Nikoletta Ntelli reflects on the results of the focus groups with Greek teachers on the subject of school integration of migrant students. These contributions describe the contexts in which the experimentations were realised, while proposing an analysis of the significant materials produced by the teachers and, last but not least, reflections and advice on the Notebook from different points of view.

The absolute protagonists of this path and of the overall experience, in addition to the partners, were the teachers of the European countries involved with POI project. Thanks to their advice and their expert observations, this training proposal and its educational tools of observA(c)tion are further strengthened and are destined - we hope - for new applications. Therefore, we thank sincerely the teachers of the Portfolio of Integration.

Lorenzo Luatti (27 September, 2013)

Part One

Portfolio of Integration: Acquisitions and Points of View

Following through the Integration. A Notebook to Observe and Operate in a Multicultural Classroom

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It is rare that school results of a child are determined by a single factor, although powerful. The chances of defeat or success of a child are increased or decreased by a constellation of forces and factors.

B. Cyrulnik

1. A Tested Tool for Each and Everyone

In these last years, the Notebook of integration has followed through a large number of teachers and educators in observing the dynamics and paths of integration of newly arrived migrant children and adolescents. It operated especially in two directions: on one hand, proposing questionnaires, activities and indicators in order to collect data, describe and analyse the situation of each student before and after it. On the other hand, it promoted action and practice starting from the observation: it invited people to operate in order to improve and revise the system of reception, activate linguistic attention focusing on the single student's needs, support an inclusive relational atmosphere in the class and in the places they attend out of school.

It is an adaptable and flexible tool that exists thanks to a ten-year experimentation.

The proposal of using six integration indicators to observe the dynamics of inclusion of foreign children and adolescents at school dates back to the year 2002 (Favaro, 2002), a little bit after the first draft of the Notebook (Favaro, Luatti, 2004). In the course of its diffusion and of its “followed through” use, the tool has been enriched, integrated and renewed (see the contribution of Luatti in this book). The experimentation in the schools of some European countries and the expanded version, which is proposed now, are an additional evidence of the open use of the Notebook through which *a path of integration that is made proceeding* is drawn.

After ten years from its first trial, an open and flexible observing tool like the Notebook of Integration has to propose and facilitate a widening look. The observing teachers are invited to look at two directions: pay attention to migrant children and adolescents, but, at the same time, pay attention to the multicultural classroom as a whole too. The group is heterogeneous because of different origins, autobiographic backgrounds, school and linguistic biographies; indeed the class is a boiling microcosm made of daily interactions, unique learning paths and stories of plurally inflected inclusion.

Therefore the Notebook of Integration, in its updated version, is a tool that it is useful to “manage” the class as a whole, as well as to accompany the path of individuals. Foreign children and adolescents find themselves catapulted into a new environment, of which they do not know its implicit and explicit rules and references, without being prepared for it; they struggle to readapt and start again from scratch. They make a huge effort to reorient themselves inside their families, often without counting on effective mediation figures that can take them by the hand and be their compass along their path.

An environment that accommodates those who come from far away should be full of *resilience tutors*: resources, devices, professional figures and tools able to welcome the vulnerability of people who have been rooting out and transform it into the ability of resilience in order to face their new situation. These attentions enable people who operate in a positive way and enable newly arrived migrant students to find their place at school and in the new world faster.

Boris Cyrulnik states that minors who have experienced traumatic situations or a state of “fracture” in their life can always introduce a new course of resilient development provided that they find, *at least, a star* (Cyrulnik, 2009) on their path. Who can be “a star” for them? It is an adult who follows through the passages for a certain time, who is like a “ferryman” and datum point; he/she indicates the path to take in order to avoid confusion and abandonment. Usually, teachers and educators become the “star”, accompanying the path of integration of newly arrived children and adolescents with competence and effectiveness.

2. A Notebook to Observe Others and Oneself

The Notebook of Integration was conceived to improve observation and support a participating observation of those who accompany the integration

stories. It works like a *journey diary* that can explain achievements and obstacles; it can record where they have arrived, what happened along the journey and which path is still in front of them.

It could work as a real tutor of resilience because it assumes a focused attention, stimulates specific answers, allows the chance to record achievements and critical situations. It is useful to accompany students step by step in their daily adventure of learning a second language, in their relationships with peers, in the conquest of their place in the new school and inside a time that has to be completely created.

The direction of the observation that the Notebook proposes can appear linear and mono-directional at first sight: the teacher (or even, the teachers sorted in groups of two, three or more) observes migrant students and their dynamics of integration in the course of time. They do this at least twice a year; in the beginning of the admission and in the final part of the school year in order to gather the students' achievements and steps forward or, their obstacles and barriers. Even the latter is important for the school, it is useful to understand if the integration initiatives are effective or not, if the process shows signs of progress or standstills, if the dynamics of integration are intense and have a positive sign or if there is a situation of retreat or discomfort.

Even the setting of observation, expected by the Notebook, is now well defined: there are the observing teachers and there are the children and adolescents who are "observed" in specific contexts and with more or less "open" tools. Actually, there are more aspects and actors who take part to the observation, and there are numerous directions it can take. First of all, those who observe are not neutral subjects that look and record, but they are "observed" too, since the path of integration is fulfilled in a bilateral and participated way, both by who is welcomed and who is welcoming.

The ethnographic teachers observe the foreign students, but also themselves. There are newly arrived migrant children and adolescents who are observed in the early stage of their admission in the new school and then observed again a second time, after some months from the admission. They are not observation "objects", but they become participating observers of themselves and of the receiving context; they are invited to speak up and talk about themselves, both in the native and second language.

3. The Duration of Observation

In terms of time, the use of the Notebook provides, as already mentioned, a diachronic importance since the observations are collected in two different times during the school year and therefore the story of their path is still ongoing, or the diary of a dynamic course and not the recording of a static situation.

What about the observed context, places, “objects” and areas? Where is the observation placed? And what is observed? First and foremost, there is the school with its more or less effective, more or less bureaucratic integration logics and procedures, sometimes rigid and other times more flexible and focused. Then, there is the object “second language” that it is used to communicate and study: it is a theme which is the centre of attention and questions of teachers; the second language is credited to have the miraculous power of the “good” integration, sometimes emphasising or dramatising it. There are the context of the class, otherwise microcosm of relationships, inclusions or exclusions, and the out of school world, that is the neighbourhood or the areas where students meet up and pass their free time in sociality or solitude.

In the end, there is an explicit attention toward the foreign child or adolescent and his/her forgotten, denied or simply ignored story while looking at themes of memory and future. What are the traces, references, memories of the past and of the elsewhere that the school “authorises” and accepts or, vice versa? What are the messages of devaluation and non-identification that pass through in an explicit or silent way? When the memory does not have the chance to collocate itself into the present in a fluid and natural way, thanks to the attentive and continuous threads of reconstruction of the story, it risks to weigh too much on the here and now and to crush the chance to think to the future.

The Notebook of Integration is therefore a sort of point/light that helps people illuminate not only the corner of a room, which is the specific element of school integration of the foreign student, but also everything around, next to and outside of it, which very often is confined to the shadow cone and to the invisibility.

4. In the Rooms of Integration

The reason for the origin of the Notebook is the many questions that teachers and professionals have asked themselves in the last years, and still do, regarding the integration of foreign students.

When can we assert that a migrant child or adolescent is “well integrated”? How do we evaluate their progresses? How do we measure the linguistic levels? And why do some remain isolated and apart for a long time? What happens outside of school?

These are a lot of questions that take into consideration the many faces of integration, the variety and complexity of individual paths, which would like to count on clear answers, protocols to be followed, tools to be used.

Certainly the Notebook provides some compasses and anchors, gives itinerary indications and observation tools, but also it opens to new questions, stimulates confrontation and working tracks to be explored. At the basis of the tool there is a clear awareness: the integration is a path that crosses many rooms, it affects life and different places, at school, outside of it and in the learning and common places of elective relationships and friendships.

A *plurality of contexts* must build inclusion processes, give space to those who come from other places and now live next to us; it must become a “hybrid” place for everybody.

The Notebook demands for an exploration of the many rooms of integration: the school, the new language, the relationships in the class, the extracurricular time, the city, the room of the “past” where history, language and cultural references of the origins are located, and that one of the future, where the evolving motivation and personal projects are placed.

- ✓ The first setting to be explored is clearly the school. First of all, the observation tool examines the situation of the plural school and its organisational modalities: the resources and devices, the attentions and materials, the training of teachers and the common acquisitions. The tool encourages teachers to be more familiar with their work setting, which is sometimes taken for granted or disregarded.
- ✓ The second matter is oriented to the linguistic situation and to the learning/teaching path of the second language (L2). The aim of the observing tool is to make the basic references, the evaluation modalities, the descriptions of levels and stages of interlanguage more common and shared among the teachers of the same class and school. Doing so, they can

avoid, as far as possible, the discretion, approximation, dramatisation or underestimation of their task.

- ✓ The Notebook considers the relationships in the class and in the extracurricular time and places; it encourages observation of the dynamics between peers and to explore the world and time out of the school of foreign students too. In the last twenty years of integration practices, schools have adopted a compensatory model, trying to give an answer to the immediate and visible needs of the foreign students, to the linguistic gaps, to the problems of orientation and reception. The dynamics between peers, which were setting down in the meantime, have been mostly in the background; even the mutual representations derived from the concerned public debates and the stigma that penalises the people belonging to different groups share the same fate.
- ✓ In the end, the Notebook tries to bring to attention a dimension that often is removed or handled in a folkloristic way, that of the personal story, of the traces of the country of origin, and of the linguistic, educational, relational biography lived somewhere else. The reason is not because we want to put the newly arrived child or adolescent, who are forced to remember what some people would like to remove in the first place in the spotlight, but rather because we want to reaffirm the awareness that a good integration can happen only by starting from the *integration of the Self*, these are the different parts of their own story that create a singular identity of the individual.

5. Different Points of View

As mentioned above, the Notebook encourages observation of integration dynamics inside a plurality of contexts, but also demands the intersection and comparison of a *plurality of points of view*. There are the observations collected by the class teachers and those which are proposed by the teacher's aid for L2; sometimes the two observations can diverge. A student could be depicted as silent and "frozen" when observed inside the class and in a big group of people, or, instead, as expressive in a smaller group or in a less anxiety-inducing situation.

The comparison between the different perceptions and evaluations makes the observation less subjective and more articulated, but it is also an opportunity to make the "hidden dimension" and implicit references in the background

explicit: the idea of integration, the different expectations, the contexts that inform the evaluation expressed by both of them.

The Notebook encourages a collection of the point of view of foreign students on themselves, on their own path, conquests, fears, motivations and implemented learning strategies. The fragments of the autobiographic account can be encouraged through different channels according to the age and the personal story: using open questions and activities in L2; encouraging students to tell and express themselves in their own native language or through drawing and illustrations.

The main thing is to take one's time, whenever it is possible, to tune in, collect the account as it occurs, and make room for the point of view of the foreign child or adolescent on him/herself.

In its first draft, the Notebook had a *significant absence*: it lacked the voices of foreign parents and their point of view on the integration path of their sons and daughters. In the current version, this gap has been filled collecting the parents' opinion on the scholastic course of their sons and daughters, on the extracurricular time, on the projects and expectations.

6. The Notebook Structure: “Closed” Tools and “Open” Activities

The six indicators, which constitute the framework of the Notebook, refer to the different dimensions of integration:

- *The situation of the school inclusion and scholastic results* allow a plan for continuation of the studies with chances similar to those of their non-foreign classmates;
- *The expertise in L2*, which is observed in relation to the interpersonal communication abilities and language used;
- *The quality of the relationships in the class* and the chance to participate with the interactions and common activities, both in scholastic moments and recreational and elective moments;
- The quality and quantity of the exchanges in the *extracurricular time*, the participation and meeting opportunities during sport and recreational activities, the chance to establish and maintain exchanges and friendships, the opportunity to “live together in a territory” considered as a common home;
- The relation of the foreign student with their *native language*, which is spoken at home and with people coming from the same country (and the various

situations of bilingualism, loss, conservation or development) and the connection with his/her own origins, country of provenance and past;

- The situation of *self-esteem*, the faith in his/her own chances, the reception of challenges and common tasks. All these situations translate into the ability of anticipating and building his/her own future day by day.

The integration levels and the six indicators

SCHOOL INTEGRATION AND LINGUISTIC LEARNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of school integration and scholastic results • Proficiency in the “second language” (L2)
INTERACTIONS WITH PEERS AT SCHOOL AND IN THE CITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and quantity of the relations in the class • Quality and quantity of the relations out of the school
INTEGRITY OF THE SELF AND PROJECT FOR THE FUTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviours regarding the native language, the context and the country of origin • Self-esteem, projects and motivation

The Notebook is used in schools of different levels, from elementary to high school. The result is that, except for preparation and some common tools, there are different questions and activities for children and adolescents. This is true especially for the “open” activities that directly include foreign and non-foreign children and adolescents in talking about themselves and auto-representing themselves since they use different incentives and channels according to their age and personal situations.

The following chart describes some observation tools and modalities for each indicator.

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>What is Observed</i>	<i>Tools and Modalities</i>	<i>Who Uses them</i>
1. <i>School integration</i>	School career, school dropouts, school results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questionnaire on the school situation, - Student’s information form, - Data collection and analysis 	Teachers, social workers
2. <i>Competence in L2</i>	Knowledge in L2 for communication and study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEFRL levels description, - CEFRL illustrative scale, 	Teachers, social workers, cultural-linguistic mediators

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forms and materials created by and used in centres for literacy - Entrance and ongoing exams 	
3. <i>Relationships between peers in class</i>	Quantity and quality of relationships between peers in different moments of the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data collection questionnaire, - “Open” activities (e.g. sociogramme, flower of friendship, hands of friendship) 	All students, single student
4. <i>Relationships in the city/neighbourhood</i>	Relationships out of school, knowledge and use of places and opportunities of aggregation in the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data collection questionnaire, - Open activities (e.g. map of the most popular places in the city/neighbourhood) 	All students, single student
5. <i>Cultural reference and language of origin</i>	Self description, autobiographical references	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Autobiographical activities (e.g. drawing, self introduction...), - Individual questionnaire, - Linguistic biography, - The talents tree 	Teachers, social workers, single student
6. <i>Motivation</i>	School guidance, prosecution of studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student’s information form, - Integration diary in L1, - Data collection questionnaire in the moment of the school guidance, - Individual questionnaire 	Teachers, social workers, migrant students

7. Is the School Equitable?

The uses and results of the Notebook, as already mentioned, demand for a sharpened look at not only the paths of the newly arrived students, but on ourselves too. What did the school learn after this long time in which integration practices have been experimented, especially starting from the requests coming from the “suburbs” and single schools? And how can we take the lessons from the tools and projects of integration and implement them in the system to help the *inclusion* of future citizens?

How foreign students are integrated is, in many aspects, an incontrovertible evidence to understand the quality of school and to highlight possible malfunctions, shortcomings and stalemates. Difficulties for students going from one school order to another show that education steps often do not proceed harmoniously but rather as separate episodes, as if personal lives stop and start all over again. All steps should be part of one education process and not suffer interruptions or sudden restarts. Effective communication does not seem to exist between different schools levels, as foreign students (all students in fact) must start all over again. Moving from one educational level to the next should happen smoothly with time and ways to identify each student's process, so that a clear transition can be identified.

The offsetting characteristic of integration practices of foreign students makes learning the L2 language the main educational focus: a language to communicate in the first phases and a language as learning tool in the following steps. This is positive and understandable, especially when students of other nationalities are newly arrived and do not have sufficient skills in the L2 language. In Italy, for instance, the importance given to language skills highlights the paramount presence of verbal education in schools to the extent that who does not (or does not yet) speak Italian is considered a sort of blank slate, a student who "does not know in general". As a consequence, talents and skills that are not directly connected to language are difficult to identify. The fact that a number of foreign students prefer attending vocational schools should not be considered only a trend because it questions the school's ability to *create equality* from the moment students plan their educational future. Gaps and divergences from school to school and from city to city about availability of integration practices and tools draw our attention to the principle of school independence and its need to be supported by adequate resources to actually be *equitable, effective, and change-oriented*.

8. Time to Include and Acknowledge

Dealing with intercultural integration is nothing new. There are national and European legal references that explain the process; there are practices and devices realised in different schools and cities, even though they are not well known or shared. There are observation and self-observing tools of practices and processes like the Notebook of Integration. We should therefore follow two directions: on one hand, *spreading and refining specific quality actions for*

integration by following experimentations and innovation of materials and tools. On the other hand, however, *it's necessary to broaden our vision of inclusion* of future citizens, considering relationships between youngsters and adults, mutual exchanges and positive aspects of meeting different and same people. The term “inclusion” has referred in recent years to the ability and the vision of schools to positively welcome diversity, i.e. disabilities and “diverse abilities”. According to the 2012 National Indications issued by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research, schools that “include” are represented as the educational space for everyone and of everyone where “the universal challenge to be opened towards the world, to foster equality and understand differences” becomes everyone’s challenge. This is therefore a broader inclusion concept on different levels: it requires an inclusion culture and a vision of a cohesive society; it refers to open policies and principles; it is based on practices and actions; it fosters and promotes inclusive attitudes, representations and choices.

Indications state as follows: “Italian schools develop their educational actions following inclusion principles of people and culture integration, considering openness to diversity a fundamental value. Schools fortify inclusive practices for non-Italian children and youngsters by promoting their full integration”.

An inclusive school is therefore an educational space that acknowledges and keeps together different stories and languages, plural origins and references, needs and common and specific learning steps and processes.

Thinking about inclusion of foreign students, let’s try to ask ourselves if our schools are actually inclusive. We can do this by starting with ten questions that we ask ourselves and that refer to attitudes, devices and relationships.

These questions can integrate and accompany the observation process described in the Notebook of Integration extending our understanding about schools and us.

Is my school...

- *welcoming?*

Does it organise, promote and support school changes with efficient devices (timing, modalities, first inclusion, multilingual materials...), **acceptance and vocational guidance** of foreign students?

- *effective when communicating with everyone?*

Does it refine **communication** modalities and forms by using multilingual tools and language-cultural mediation activities with migrant families?

- *endorsing today's language diversities?*

Does it know, realise and value **language biographies** of each student and multilingual cases in classrooms?

- *aware of plurality of stories and does it use an intercultural approach?*

Is it aware of the **plurality of stories of children and youngsters**? Does it know how to handle differences effectively and mutually by using an intercultural approach?

- *paying attention to relationships in and outside the school environment?*

Does it observe and promote good **relationships among children and youngsters in and outside school hours**? Does it prevent and repair possible gaps and discriminations between youngsters and adults?

- *acting in a context and society it knows?*

Does it have awareness of social, cultural and demographic features of the **context** where it acts? Does it know and set up modifications and changes occurred in the community?

- *taking and managing actions collectively?*

Are educational, training and organisational choices for the intercultural project based on **community** and participation or are they delegated to the people in charge for the inclusion of foreign students?

- *able to spread and support?*

Does it collect awareness and information? Does it **collect and exchange** materials, methods and proposals among internal teachers and out of the school?

- *recognisable in its plurality?*

Does it appear as an **educational setting** of everyone and for everyone, also referring to objects, images, messages and signs...?

- *long and short-distance cooperative?*

Does it **cooperate and work in a network** of communities, local bodies and associations to create common actions and projects to satisfy needs of inclusion in the school environment and outside of it?

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From the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion to the *Portfolio of Integration*: Ten Years of Ideas and Practices in Italian Schools

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1. A Bit of History: The Notebook and the Process of Research-Action

The observation activity with the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion in Italian schools lasted for more than 10 years. In this timeframe training and observation practices carried out with the Notebook went through different phases and were modified a few times; it is worth mentioning them here, even briefly. The European experience of the *Portfolio of Integration* (POI) was the latest experience and its realisation was possible thanks to scholars and teachers involved in the past few years.

There was an initial phase with the ideation and experimentation of the Notebook that went between 2001 and 2003; during these years many foreign newcomer students arrived in Italian schools.

The second phase is represented by the first diffusion of the Notebook (2004-2007).

The third phase started in 2008 by realizing a new version of the Notebook following a meaningful experience in the schools of Florence (2008-2010).

In the fourth phase the Notebook was deeply edited in accordance to the change in migration and in the profiles of “foreign” students in Italian schools, “summing up” the most recent observation processes with the Notebook.

The fifth phase is still going on: it concerns the internationalization of school education thanks to the Comenius POI project. Experimenting with the Notebook in some European schools and adjusting it to the specific needs of each country enriched the Notebook itself and the school education, building the premises for a broader diffusion. Let’s discuss these points highlighting the salient points of each phase.

In early 2000 Graziella Favaro – one of the most famous education scholars for school inclusion of foreign students in Italy – autonomously developed a theory about the integration indicators in schools: which indicators can be

used to understand the inclusion process of each child and adolescent as well as their integration process? Favaro identified three integration dimensions and indicators that relate to learning, interacting and personal identities. Thinking of translating every indicator into a point to observe became real: general patterns had to be translated in a sort of operational diary. In a very short time the first draft of the Notebook came to life: all we needed was to verify its usefulness as a training and educational tool.

This is how the first version of the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion was created. It is a supporting tool for research-action and training for teachers of all levels and grades. It is a tool that is able to facilitate the consideration, the observation and the self-observation of teachers in a more structured way and allows them to adjust their actions to different needs. It is a complimentary tool and it does not want to substitute any existing ones that have been used so far.

The Notebook was tested in Arezzo with a small group of teachers of the first school level (elementary and middle schools) between 2002 and 2003. The outcomes of the experimentations highlighted from the very beginning the qualities of the tool (it forces teachers to think, makes the lives of students come to the surface and to be discussed, allows the observation of the different steps of integration and the effectiveness of the tools adopted...) and its limits (too much subjectivity, low on the linguistic side, not very clear and defined items). The tool and the realised experience, albeit with some limitations, seemed immediately to be very innovative and they were presented in some public seminars; the outcomes of that first experience were published in books of various authors (Favaro, Luatti, 2004).

From 2004 to 2007 some groups of teachers in different cities experimented with the tool. Some Italian cities (Padua, Milan and Pesaro) promoted educational processes guided by observations through the Notebook; the relating results were presented in local and national seminars. These experiences, although confirming the validity and the originality of the tool, showed the need to modify the Notebook to better use its potential: mentors and experts who had followed the local experimentations highly recommended a change. This second phase was crucial for the following development of the experience because, on one side, it allowed the trial stage of the Notebook with groups of teachers and, on the other side, it helped share the outcomes of all experimentations among a group of experts who followed and coordinated those experiences.

The third phase started with a two-year experiment conducted in Florence with teachers of all levels and grades. Among the outcomes of the experimentation (2008-2009) there was also an “ultimate” review of the tool, which took into consideration the proposals and the reactions of the teachers involved (see the volumes edited by Favaro, 2008 and Ricci, 2010 for the two-year process in Florence). The Notebook version that derived from the Florence experience was then edited by other Italian schools (by Fermo, see Luatti, 2012) and by a Network of schools (the Network of schools of Treviso Integration 2010-2012, see AA.VV., 2013); modifications were made considering the empowerment of the tool and its adjustment to the local school contexts and it was the working basis for schools of different levels of the region Friuli-Venezia Giulia, which promoted the use of the Notebook in all schools of the region in the academic year 2010/2011 (see AA.VV., 2011; Zoletto, 2012, pp 81-95).

2. The Suggestions of the Experimentations

There are many methods and observations that can be drawn from these experiments. These are some that emerged from the Florence experience:

- The importance to support the *plurality of glimpses* in the observation activities (more teachers and facilitators, exchange moments between teachers and mentors to lower risks of self-reference, but also students, parents...);
- The *plurality of observation contexts* (the classroom, the school, the little group in the language lab; there are many places where to be “observed”);
- The *plurality of methods and tools to observe* (semi-structured tools, questionnaires and “open” activities...);
- The *diachronic feature of observation* (this used the same indicator as the second time, while favouring a critical “review” or at least a better balance than the previous outcomes);
- The *strong coordination and mentoring and the flexible use of the notebook* (a possibility to use it, as a whole or partially, throughout the academic year based on emerging needs).

The following experiences have enriched the tool even more, both for the “relational” facilitators and the subjects who observe or are being observed. Most of all, they tried to offer some answers to questions, critical points and limitations that emerged previously. Let’s have a look at some of them.

The Notebook was created as a tool to observe the integration processes of newcomer students in a period when school inclusion of these students was a daily experience. In recent years the Italian scenario has deeply changed: many “foreign” students are born in Italy or have a medium-long Italian academic experience. The Notebook was therefore divided up into parts that make sense for newcomer foreign students, foreign students (that is, newcomers, students who were born in Italy or reunited to their family and have Italian school experience) and the parts to be used with the whole classroom (therefore also with autochthonous students). The Notebook thus “covers” all possible statuses of “foreign student” and each teacher can take part in the educational-observation process. This is the most correct and aware method to understand the different school stories of foreign students.

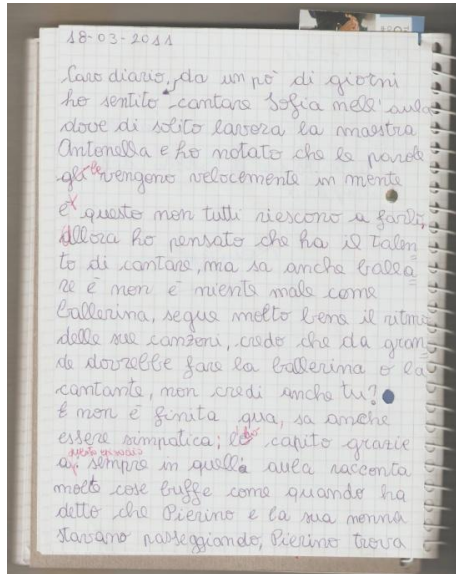
In the following experiences we worked to reinforce the examination of the students’ point of view on the classroom and on each classmate through the use of an activity called “The Tree of Talents” with children and “The Diary of Talents” with adolescents (Polito, 2011). Its adoption originates from evidence collected from the use of the Notebook. Since the first experiments we noticed that integration processes of newcomer students were “unblocked” especially to highlight and acknowledge skills or hidden talents. The “discovery” often happened spontaneously, by chance. It was necessary to find a simple, delicate, recreational method that could allow teachers to be aware of “directors” of integration processes. The goal of this educational activity is helping children and adolescents become aware of their own skills by discovering other peers’ skills. The Tree of Talents enhanced the general mood of the classroom by favouring the observation of skills and abilities among children. Students and teachers who adopted this tool appreciated it and it was food for thought for both students and teachers. It highlighted several unexpected features on how children see themselves; in fact, many of them drew a Tree of Talents for the teacher, who, in turn, was under observation. Why not consider a “Diary of Talents” kept by parents to support the observation of skills, passions, attitudes of their own child?



An overview of Trees of Talents (Treviso, 2011/2012)



Details of a Tree of Talents (Treviso, 2011/2012)



A page from the Diary in the native language (Fermo, 2009/2010)

To empower the voice/glimpse of students we proposed the “diary in the native language”, which was very successful (Favaro, 2010). Proposing to write a diary in the native language of newcomer students in high schools aimed at understanding the different points of view on the integration process (school, relationships with parents, with peers, nostalgia and memories...) in a very delicate phase and age: adolescence..

Past experiences enriched the Notebook with new and different “relational” and “identity” questionnaires (see, for example, chapter 6 in the book edited by Luatti, 2012). Parts relating to the assessment of quantity and quality of relationships in the classroom and in the city enhanced creativity of teachers who experimented other activities that were considered more adequate to the age of their students and to the programmed educational activity. Although each new activity should be carefully validated, the large number of proposals shows an active perception of the Notebook and a willingness to experiment with the tool and make it our own; it may have been seen as “fallen from above”. In a past experience a teacher highlighted the chance to “find activities that use different language codes (like for instance, music, cinema...) or expressions that allow emotions to come out in a free and creative manner”: my sense is the consecutive POI experience – documented in this article - somehow offered useful proposals towards this direction.

In the latest Italian experiences, at the end of the observation process, we asked teachers two questions that turned out to be very important (see contribution by E.G. Bettinelli). First question: “*You probably have a more detailed idea of the student you observed with the Notebook. Try to define his/her profile in a page considering the questionnaires of the Notebook and the relating changes and evolution*”. We therefore explicated what teachers needed to do in many cases: at the end of the process they reconsidered their observations and created a constant changing “profile” of the student. By doing this, teachers inevitably observed also their work: how they felt, what worked, how the Notebook helped and the process used... In the second question we asked teachers to clarify this point: “*What did you learn by using the notebook (discoveries, doubts, improvements...) when observing ... (name of the observed student)?*”.

If the answers to this last question confirmed the usefulness of the process highlighting the positive aspects of the past (Favaro, Luatti, 2004; Favaro, 2008; Ricci, 2010), the answers to the first question showed how to clearly define the profiles of foreign children and adolescents. These “portraits” are very useful for research and for educational purposes as well as for an exchange of ideas between teachers. They should be shared among all teachers because they help understand integration processes of new students and put adequate strategies into action by adjusting and integrating what previously worked. Despite the fact that every single student has a different and unique story, these profiles allow better focus on the variety of factors leading to good academic outcomes as well as factors that support integration processes, which of course, are not the same for everyone.

The experience realised in the schools of the region Friuli Venezia Giulia offered a way to take action that answers an “on-going” problem that influenced experimentation with the Notebook. The importance of involving schools in the process to avoid “loneliness” requires good teachers who accept new education proposals. There should be an on-going involvement of academic staff (board of governors, school heads, parents, intercultural committee...) in observing the work carried out by teachers with the Notebook: the school institution as a whole must be accountable for collecting and sharing data relating to the school context – as the first part of notebook explains – so that this knowledge is not destined to one teacher only. Finally, the wide partnership network involved (Region, Local bodies, school institutions, Regional School Departments), is an active impulse as well as an important factor that confirms the validity of the proposal.

This is the excursus of the Notebook before arriving in Europe: the following steps are documented in this article.

3. At Least Once

Working with the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion and sharing its experience among teachers during 10 years of practices shed light on some important observations.

The objectivity of observation does not exist. It's important to be aware of this: the observation activity is always characterised and influenced by the subjectivity of who is observing. What we see is often what we want to see. Anthropologists have sometimes radicalised critics about objectivity by saying that what we see is what we want to see about other people wanting to show what they themselves wanted to see (Faeta, 2011). This means that we can never take what we discovered in our observations as a “revealed and incontrovertible truth”. Our observation depends on the context, the point of view and the role of who's acting, including his/her perception of what other people want to know. This is not a problem: the problem is not being aware of it or even hiding it. Misunderstandings and false representations when observing will likely deceive us and support misunderstandings and misinterpretations, if we consider observation-based evidence as a hard fact: obstacles and possible misunderstandings are on the way. Doubts must always be taken into consideration. Observations are professionally relevant if they are shared.

Processes are as important as tools. There is no doubt the educational, research-action, exchange and sharing process that supports the work with the Notebook is as important as the tool itself. When processes are supported and monitored through recurring gatherings that “build” and motivate the group, the outcomes (such as professional enrichment and satisfaction) are strong, diffused and clear. On the contrary, when it is not possible to grant or to offer support and strong coordination, the whole process will be affected. A supported process is also the best context/place to share and assess the effectiveness of some educational actions for integration that we take. If through the activities proposed by the Notebook we notice that the classroom mood is not positive, that we are dealing with a strong fragmentary classroom, that some youngsters are isolated and so on, we will take action and not only observe and consider the situation. We will try to adjust our actions to act

more effectively. The supported research-action process becomes essential *also* to share, exchange ideas and think about proposed interventions.

Diagnosis and prognosis: observation and active actions. The experimentations of the Notebook highlighted a dual value of many activities of the tool that can be considered “diagnostic” and “prognostic” at the same time; their use offered important elements to consider when examining a specific situation but they also acted actively on the situation and influenced it. Teachers, on the basis of the collected evidence, developed a specific educational plan. This dual feature can be noticed at its strongest in many activities like the Tree/Diary of Talents because, on one side, it supports observations among peers (and the observations by teachers) and, on the other side, observing itself enhances a positive and helpful mood. A new version of the Notebook should develop/think/propose an “activity” that best satisfies this need: observing and actively taking action in the observed situation.

Thinking of observation settings. We already confirmed how important it is to experiment and share those educational activities that aim at building settings and contexts to put activities and/or Notebook’s questions in place. It is important to explain situations and methods by which observations are collected, especially thinking of those relating to “activities” because situations and contexts are never neutral and can influence feedback of observed subjects. Using activities suggests an educational plan and the necessary complimentary actions that must be taken by teachers; too little time was sometimes taken to introduce the observation activity with the Notebook and this lack of time negatively affected that aspect.

4. Final Note

Thanks to the work carried out with the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion and especially after the most recent experimentations with such tools and their use in Europe, we have a great corpus both for quality and quantity of observations, considerations, evidence, indications, proposals, confirmations, surprises, stories and constant-changing portraits of foreign students and entire classrooms that we have to reorganise and systematise to better understand the deepest meaning of our actions, what we have learned and what we can learn to improve the quality of our actions in the process of school inte(g)ra(c)tion. We should do all this as reflective professionals and directors of inclusion processes of our students.

Considering what we have learned, I believe that the educational proposal of the Notebook was confirmed to be more than valid: years of experimentation – if we also consider what most teachers confirmed – witness a steady usefulness of the tool also thanks to its versatility and multiple uses in the educational, relational, research fields, etc of the proposed process. The answers of teachers to the final question, “what I have learned from the observation,” highlighted that the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion allows a sharpened focus and makes a detailed and aware observation, favouring a greater awareness of the role of teachers in promoting integration of foreign students; it also gave teachers the chance to compare and mediate different points of view and overcome the relating subjectivity. The notebook, as we already mentioned, might become a sort of “identity card” for students during their educational development and go along with possible changes. What we can take from what teachers said is related to two recent institutional documents; the first one carried out by UNESCO (2013), which deals with the importance of developing basic intercultural skills (like, among others, respect, accepting other people’s perspectives and ideas, listening, relationships) and the second one carried out by the European Commission (2013), which, focusing on an European framework for school integration, proposes policies, strategies and actions to promote integration of newcomer foreign students.

On a final note, we hope that a tool like the Notebook can have a broad diffusion and that at least once in an entire school year every teacher would use it among a group of “observing” teachers; the Notebook and the supported process train teachers on how to become more aware and skilled directors of students’ inclusion processes.

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The Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion, a Training Opportunity for Teachers

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In this experience, teachers were “followed through” their use of The Notebook of Integration, which over the course of time became The Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion. They gathered together periodically both with experts and local tutors, had the opportunity to ask questions, while confronting themselves and emergent critical situations regarding the use of the tool. These exchanges and comparisons of ideas have led to copious improvements in the Notebook itself. During the gatherings and, later, analysing the notebooks filled out at the end of several experiences, general matters of pedagogical and educational relevance have arisen too. The in-depth analysis of the latter allows a more aware use of the Notebook. In this contribution I synthetically identify and develop four subjects, which were studied over the course of years, and reflect on the overall experience.

1. The PoI, a Tool Made to Observe and Follow Through the Course of Integration

The Notebook is not simply a tool that leads teachers to the understanding of the levels and quality of newcomer students’ integration; it is not an aseptic tool of survey but intervenes in the process of integration in at least two ways. The first one is indirect and concerns the training of teachers and their idea of integration: the proposed integration tools and its indicators offer a clear and articulate cultural picture. This section recommends aspects which often are not fully or are partially contemplated in the daily educational activity: the future picture and expectations of children and adolescents, their relationship with the language and culture of their family, community of origin, etc. In other words the Notebook directs teachers and “warns” them against the complexity of integration, expands the range of variables that have to be contemplated and helps teachers connect these variables among each other and

to educational objectives. The second way is more direct, meaning that it explicates itself in the contact with students, which constitutes the principal dimension of the educational relationship. The proposal of activities and tools, which have to be used with students, has significant consequences on the process of integration of individuals, and many teachers' statements prove it. One of the many testimonies explains how students being "subjected" to a questionnaire concerning themselves has increased the opportunities for relating to one another and, therefore, has been a positive change in many cases. For example, a middle school teacher describes a boy who does not want to talk about himself, shows impatience and rejection in class; the student opens up only when he feels that something "is made specifically for him", when the teacher comes in direct contact with him using the tools and activities of the Notebook: he understands that there is a personal interest, a sort of recognition. From that moment on, he started working a "little bit more" and even showing humour and self-irony, which are essential ingredients for resilience, something people who have been exposed to traumatic events develop. Therefore, the use of the proposals of The Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion in teaching underlines that no educator can be simply an external observer or a data detector. A teacher gathers together information when operating and while doing so he/she introduces changes in the situation and in the relations that he/she wants to gain and monitor: a *circularity* that, becoming aware, represents the basis of the research-action. In fact, the use of the Notebook indicates for teachers a path of research-action that explicates its educational potential when it is associated with ongoing periodic meetings of the teachers involved. During these meetings, with the support of a tutor, teachers reflect and compare the different ways in which the proposals of the Notebook are implemented in classes, discuss incidents along the way, analyse particularly significant cases, and elaborate supplementary activities starting from the practical work situations.

2. Observing the Relationships

The dimension of social relationships at school and outside school has been examined mainly through the proposal of tools and activities (also known as *direct tools*) that demand the active participation of students, while also addressing the observation of teachers. First, the Questionnaire "Relationships in Classroom and in the City" for students of all school levels; for the

elementary school, the questionnaire can be integrated or replaced with two *activities*: the “Flower of Friendship” (preparatory to the sociogramme of relationships between peers in the class) and the “Map” of popular places in the city. Teachers were told to assess relationships in the classroom before using the given tools with students. It was thus possible to find convergences as well as total and partial divergences between what teachers assessed and what students declared. Discovering divergences was important because it led to more focused observations. This perspective showed that some teachers did not consider certain issues before filling out the questionnaire, for example, considering foreign students with classmates outside the classroom environment. Proposing direct tools to all students helps consider foreign students in the classroom itself and does not separate them from other students, while highlighting situations and relationships that had been overlooked by their teachers. Moreover, a teacher surprisingly declared that on the basis of the information given by the implemented activities, a newcomer foreign student experienced a positive social integration whereas another foreign student, who had been around for more years, experienced isolation both in and outside the school environment. Therefore, this teacher started remembering some signals she noticed but otherwise overlooked because the student was shy and seemed to “get away with it” on the cognitive side. Here it seems appropriate to confirm an element that commonly appears while doing a research: *people often look for one thing but find something else*. Comparing teachers’ perceptions with what students declared, we also found out a teacher stated that one of the students meets up with some classmates outside of school, whereas the student stated that he never meets anyone outside school hours. It also occurred that declarations of teachers and students were inverted. These relevant divergences stimulate us to go deeper into our knowledge of children and adolescents beyond generic images and representations.

Next is the topic of socialisation and of relationships in the classroom, which go hand in hand with education and student performance outcomes. These relationships are complex and they differ depending on the age range; however, there is no doubt that the focus and “rediscovery” of this socio-relational dimension helps explain many behaviours of foreign students. Many teachers agreed with this. For example, one of them highlighted the case of one isolated foreign student who, after having worked with a classmate on a specific duty, was able to create a friendly relationship with him, which

positively influenced his participation in school activities: this can be considered a breakthrough, which “unblocked” a stagnant relational and learning situation. Therefore, the Notebook helps identify relationships among sociality, learning processes and outcomes, statements of cultural and personal identity and other important proposed indicators. A paradigmatic example can be found in a high school notebook: *according to the teachers, the boy, who rejoined his family in the school year 2006/2007 and is attending the first year of a high school, is poor in the Italian language especially in written competence and literature, but not in oral competence. His performance is sufficient or even satisfying in all the other subjects. He says some classmates are his friends but he never hangs out with them outside the school but, rarely, to study for tests; he only hangs out with friends from his country of origin. At school he looks happy and motivated; he expresses his cultural belonging by speaking his first language and talking about his country. His social life outside school does not seem dull; he plays sports and attends the functions of his religion. He is aware of his difference, especially when he states he feels “different because I feel like a toy; if girls and boys like it, they play, if they do not, they throw it out”. He affirms exact intentions and prospects for his future.*

Surprising *profiles* of children and adolescents can be found in the comparison of indicators. Our boy seems to have established a clear separation between his life in school and out of school, at least on a relational level; the fact that Italian classmates do not frequently appear has a functional use. This confirms that a different life in and outside the school does not necessarily cause poor school outcomes. A deeper understanding of the elements that build such an integrative pattern is needed here; it seems there are no difficulties in his way but we can understand from his words that divergences are unavoidable instances, perhaps as a way to defend oneself.

Some children declaring friendships with classmates – at least partly shared – show a different direction, which is more on the assimilative side; they might establish a particular relationship with an Italian classmate and meet up outside school; in some cases they try to avoid every kind of activity that might separate them from their classmates, such as being reluctant to take part in Italian classes for foreign students; they do not like to talk about their personal experiences, their own country or speaking their native language. Moreover, teachers state that their school performance is generally sufficient or even satisfying. Social life outside school hours seems to be devoid of relevant moments. As a result, it seems that putting aside the elements that highlight the differences with their classmates these children are able to establish

relationships with their peers and this enables them to enhance their language and communication skills even though written language is sometimes poor. These kinds of students ask teachers questions that do not only relate to the best behaviour to have, but also to the meaning, the modalities and the timings of intercultural education. There are more portraits in between the two depicted above, and they are all with different and variegated aspects. The analytical data that the Notebook aims at collecting merge into these portraits; these data must be re-elaborated, connected and reinterpreted by teachers in order to be useful. Summing up the situation concerning relationships offers a way to understand things and induce us to look for ways to take actions that can take into consideration students as a whole.

3. Activities and School Setting

Direct tools, by asking students to take action and to actively participate, let teachers think of a shared and meaningful *educational* setting to use them. It is not a superficial matter. Proposing to fill out a questionnaire leads to explain why it is asked. The authority of the teacher role is a *frame* per se, an interpretative frame that highlights the existing educational contract in that specific classroom. However, educational researches highlight that in every research environment – including the one based on the use of our Notebook – the contract, whether declared explicitly or not, influences the outcomes. This can be confirmed by a high school teacher who presented one of the questionnaires of the Notebook as part of an initiative of the municipality that aimed at collecting lifestyles and needs of young people; this teacher found out that many answers presented proposals, protests and demands. To what aim should a student answer a questionnaire or, by asking a deeper personal involvement, carry out the activities proposed by one of the activities of the Notebook, especially when personal information is required? The aim and sense must be clear and shared. It can also differ between teachers and students but teachers/researchers must be aware of that: this is the issue between the setting and the educational frame. The context in which tools are proposed must be analysed carefully and the people involved must be ready to understand how students, especially children, consider tools so that they are then able to supervise the ratio between emerging data and initial process. In an elementary classroom a child interpreted the activity of the flower of friendship as a sort of poll or plebiscite of his popularity among classmates:

maybe being influenced by TV programmes, he went around the classroom asking classmates to write their names on the petal of his flower of friendship. This accident, as it often occurs when children take part actively in an activity, shall not just be removed to establish a more controlled situation but also considered a chance to think about the existing relationships in the classroom and the relational and emotional needs of children. During meetings teachers highlighted several such “accidents” and they were sometimes hilarious, while others were critical and alarming: however, they did witness participation and motivation of students when they were asked to think about highlights of their personal daily life. Some high school teachers highlighted the importance to hand out the questionnaire to foreign students individually when it is distributed to the classroom as a whole. As a matter of fact the direct relationship with the student allowed to “*build a new empathic condition of opening, a new positive relationship between teacher and student*”, a situation that some teachers acknowledged as a “little event” in the process of integration. How to introduce more complex activities? An elementary school teacher explained how herself and the facilitator tried to integrate the outcomes of integration dynamics of foreign students in an educational process: *the educational activity was integrated into another activity about happiness which teachers had already started in the second half of the school year. The linguistic facilitator (a person known by the students but external to the class) asked what they have done, produced, invented and written about happiness. After having listed the activities, the students primarily focused on the poetry they wrote about happiness. The facilitator asked students what they had chosen to explain happiness. Since he observed that nobody had chosen friendship, he asked if they thought friendship was part of happiness. Then they discuss about their idea of friendship; and, in the end, the activity of the flower with three petals (or more), on which they had to draw their friends in the class and outside of school, was explained.*

4. PoI and Students’ Assessment

Among the questions asked by teachers who meant to use the Notebook, it seems to be relevant to highlight those who are related to a detailed and in-depth assessment. Specifically, teachers asked if and how this tool can contribute to the main functions of teachers and, especially, to assessments. The Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion is not an evaluation tool of a single student for sure: its goals and objectives are very different. However, the data it aims

at collecting are part of a pedagogic approach that we could define as “authentic assessment”. In fact, considering assessments, Rezzara (2000) identifies some functions like the pedagogic one, which regulates the students’ process and, in a broader sense, their educational process. This function finds its broader sense in the so called epistemological function by which “the related data inform and talk about the enabled process, look for reasons and explanations for the correctness of goals, of the adequacy of educational actions, relationships, methods and communication”. It encourages teachers, both as individuals and teams, to ask themselves questions about the adequacy of education and of the educational process in general. All this is related to the topic of personal learning processes of newcomer foreign students with an eye to the pedagogical instance and the related intercultural approach. The Notebook finds its space and usefulness right in this epistemological function. The observing data and autonomous expressions collected by the Notebook of Integration contribute to define children and adolescents as people and not just as mere “learners”; their characteristics change in time and they are defined by assessments made at different times of the school year. Experiences, emotions and perceptions arise from these assessments and they allow teachers to understand behaviours and attitudes of students as well as their performance outcomes. The Notebook is a guide to assess school integration of foreign students in the different dimensions included in the six proposed indicators. Among them, the second one is, with no doubt, the closest to a school concept of assessment since it deals with education in different disciplinary fields and, more specifically, proficiency in the Italian language, which is measured according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Teachers are asked to assess students by observing six skills (listening comprehension, reading comprehension, oral and written production, orthography control, grammatical accuracy) evaluating them according to the competence levels of the European Framework (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) to which we added a pre-basic level where performances lower than A1 level are collected. The other indicators help teachers focus their attention on aspects that, despite not being related directly to education, cannot be ignored since they influence the learning process. Defining an accurate framework of internal and external relationships in the classroom allow teachers to think about the mood of the classroom, the integration process started and the related adequacy considering both a single migrant student and the classroom he/she is part of. Some researches (Rich,

Ben Ari, Amir, Eliassy, 1996; more recently Santerini, 2010) that tried to identify the characteristics of school contexts helping integration and education of migrant students show that those schools who aim at making sure children do not only reach academic goals but also foster their social competences are the most successful ones. Relationships, sociality and education are strongly interconnected. Inclusion is not just an ethical and political objective but also a condition to make sure students learn and achieve good results.

How students see themselves, their difficulties in school and their interests are also relevant data that help define their personal framework; these answers are given by children and adolescents to the activities proposed in the Notebook. The elements the Notebook collects help define the profile of students, identify their shortcomings and their resources but also think about actions and facilities provided by the school; these elements are important for teachers and the board of governors since they help them provide a more deliberate assessment to the students involved. The Notebook is not an evaluation tool but a support for a conscious and, I would say, systemic assessment that “reads” the goals of education by giving them a broader perspective, which do not consider qualities and faults of students. It is about going beyond an “individualistic” vision that explains and attributes school outcomes to “original” individual traits and features like skills, commitment and will; it is about favouring a systemic approach that considers integration contexts and actions taken by schools. In a nutshell, The Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion contributes to support pedagogical instances of assessments¹.

5. The Profile of the Student

In this perspective, during the course organized in the schools of some Italian cities (and with the schools involved in the Comenius POI project [Curator’s note]), teachers have been asked to push themselves further than their previous experiences: They had to compile a final “profile/portrait” of the observed student, which was developed on the basis of the elements gathered thanks to the NoI. The Notebook guides the observer’s analytical look to the important aspects and dimensions that allow teachers to have a description of the student and his/her integration process in the class context. From the analysis data, an overall view of the child/adolescent can arise. This allows

teachers to produce a narration of the observed student, in other words a narration of the “threads” of his/her path, which are “orally” connected. The draft of the written “profile” stimulates an additional moment of reflection that allows one to consciously intertwine and connect different aspects, bringing them to light and verifying them among the large quantity of the collected data. The written profile can also lead to a more accurate comparison with other teachers, especially if the statements have a confirmation in the documents collected thanks to the Notebook. According to the original intentions, the observations suggested by the NoI should be carried out a second time some months after the first one, so that teachers can understand the course and process that the student and class have accomplished. Often it has not been possible, because the diachronic aspect of observations and the use of activities were needed so that the impact of the Notebook could be felt. By elaborating the final profile including events that might have supported or, on the contrary, blocked integration, teachers identify the history of integration and interactions of each student; this step is, from their point of view, of paramount importance in identifying a common framework that sets up the basic information needed to take educational and training decisions for the future.

Different typologies and personal stories can be found among the profiles of students and they all represent a sort of “gallery of portraits”, a real repertory of integration stories that will be useful to “interpret” and help understand attitudes and situations of new students. Useful information about strategies that did not work or unexpected events that influenced positively or negatively integration can be found among these profiles. Profiles help implement more adequate and conscious strategies by adjusting and integrating what did not work beforehand in the new situations. This information can also be used as an *educational tool* for teachers who want to deepen integration and interaction processes starting from real individual stories. As we will see later on, many meaningful events for the integration process were unexpected where students were acknowledged by classmates and/or teachers to have skills and competences, which were before ignored or hidden. We can therefore assume that such events can be consciously produced if teachers implement an adequate *educational and relational direction*.

Variegated Paths

Integration follows variegated paths. There are different starting points and processes that seem to develop differently. It is pretty common for teachers to identify initial confusion among young people who have arrived shortly or who have been recently introduced in a classroom. It is revealed in attitudes of passivity and loss of motivation. It can also be denial, like an *elementary school girl who showed her discomfort and rejection by abstracting herself from the class activity and writing in Arabic on papers or even the blackboard during the recreation time*. This message communicates the importance of her own skills to the teacher. It follows, however, a positive evolution where different factors merge, as we will see later on. In some cases instead, the process starts off good, the student seems to be willing to relate and to learn, he/she seems open, easy-going and it looks like his/her process will be very positive. After a while, however, there are some lows in his/her motivation, “retreats” and critical points related to educational problems, to “poor evaluations” of education, to lack of commitment in studying at home. Consequences are bursts, aggressive behaviours or a passive state of mind. It is worth highlighting the importance of a good level in the Italian language for children and adolescents as well as positive outcomes also in other disciplines. Students who hit the floor running risk having delusions of expectations and, as a consequence, of demotivation. It is up to teachers to calculate possible crises on the way and identify the reasons. *In the first class of a high school, S. had a “block” in December, after a positive start, when he faced negative evaluations*. Teachers who used the NoI state that crises are also the consequences of an insufficient mentoring of students and of inadequate facilities to support education: these crises were overcome after a stronger commitment of the board of governors. Poor learning results of a student might be related to the lack of commitment in studying at home, but it might mean also that the student does not know how to study or that too much is expected from him/her. There are unstable trends with standstills or even recessions in some cases. Some other factors come into play, like extra-school activities, family situation and the parents’ attitude concerning their migratory project and the idea to move and to change school after the student reached a good balance. Teachers cannot discuss family matters; school shall stand aside from family issues. However, some teachers highlight that meetings with parents contributed making the situation better and making a decision in the students’

interest. *Some thoughtful parents, after being the focus of attention, felt enhanced and willing to invest on school with positive effects on the student's attitude.*

Interactions and relationships with classmates are fundamental factors to mobilise individual motivation and commitment to achieving good school outcomes. This can be frequently found in elementary school children. One of the profiles instead shows that *commitment and motivation, which lead to good school evaluations, are found in the absence of close friendships with classmates, are likely supported by the family and are surely made possible also by a helpful and boosting class environment, by the mutual confidence in the teachers.* Positive relationships do not necessarily mean friend relationships. The idea of friendship is then different, as well as the importance it is given according to different age range.

Profiles show how a multitude of factors are the basis of good school performance of newcomer children and adolescents. There are several features that come into play: personality, emotional and psychological self-confidence that a family can give, compensation given by positive relationships and interactions in classrooms that can be “resilience tutors”, supporting expectations, visibility and acknowledgement of individuals, as we will see when dealing with elements that enhanced integration.

Starts, Restarts, Integrating Events

Teachers highlighted events that enhanced the integration process rather than those that blocked it. The integration processes developed slowly in some cases without any particular obstacles; this is what we can deduct from teachers' perspective. Teachers also identify environmental contexts in the integration process that are not characterised by specific moments, like places for socialisation outside the school environment or invitations of classmates to their house to do homework and/or play, as well as the helpfulness of the classroom to welcome new classmates and the presence of a good relational mood. The quality of relationships of a group of students can be considered a result of the relational direction of teachers and of the strategies put into place, which can find different reactions among students. There are three specific event typologies:

- *Collective events.* Taking part in educational trips and travels, local festivities, public celebrations like the 150th anniversary of the Italian reunification, birthday parties at school and at classmates' houses, leisure and cultural events (the choir, recitals). There are several occasions teachers believed to be

turning points in the integration process of students because they fostered socialisation among students outside school hours and therefore their mutual “discovery”. In many cases, discovering qualities – language, sportive, recreational skills - turned out to be useful for the group of students.

M., a middle school boy, is part of the school choir and during an exchange trip in France his expertise in French was very helpful and appreciated by his classmates. Moreover, he achieved resounding personal success thanks to his skill with percussion.

A., an elementary school girl, has shown determination and perseverance during the sports day contributing in a crucial way to the victory of the team receiving recognition from the coaches, but above all from her classmates who applauded her. Now she is the one who suggests and organises team plays during the recreation time.

Being appreciated and personally acknowledged² by peers enhances motivation and self-confidence in feeling part of the group. Sometimes acknowledgement concerns the family like in D.’s case, who, *after visiting a bakery, has brought the bread made by his mother according to a traditional Moroccan recipe; it was a chance for D. to be in the spotlight and also appreciated for the kindness of his mother.*

Celebrations for the Italian Reunification allowed newcomers *to feel as an important part of a group*. They acquired a strong inclusive character similar to birthday parties in the classroom. *After having participated in his classmates’ birthday parties in the classroom J., an elementary school child from China, has asked his mother, as a present, to be able to do the same thing. The wise oversight of the teacher, who taught the students Italian and Chinese happy birthday songs, led to a strong feeling of belonging.* If collective events “happen” without particular actions by teachers and sometimes by initiative of children, a sort of guidance can make the difference like in the previous example. Trying to achieve particular objectives where the group can identify itself is certainly a good way to support integration and inclusion as well as acknowledgment but it is necessary for the objective to be fully achieved³. As a consequence, teachers’ direction is fundamental because it can predict possible obstacles and find the way to manage and overcome them.

- Educational strategies of teachers and school initiatives. Teachers highlighted facilities and educational choices that enhance processes rather than specific events. Some teachers considered preparatory language laboratories in September (elementary school and middle school students) and the Permanent Territorial Centres modules – PTC (high school students) integration

occasions, since children and adolescents rapidly gained language and communication skills that enabled them to interact with their classmates; it was also a chance to socialise. A teacher organised a periodical rotation of desk-mates of a newcomer so that everyone could get to know him and be a kind of mentor for him. In another situation *A.*, a mature elementary school girl, could not bear having to use simplified textbooks for “foreigners”; she “broke through” when the teacher gave her ordinary textbooks: from that moment the commitment and the socialisation of the schoolgirl have increased. It is as if the little girl perceived the coming out of a frustrating “minority feeling”: we would later find out that she was an excellent student in her country.

- Meetings with people and relationships. These are unplanned and mostly unpredictable specific events. I would say that the wealth of life experiences aimed at presenting themselves as a chance for future development allow children and adolescents to find answers to their psychological needs. In development processes children are active players where not everything depends on adults; on the contrary, children sometimes “drive” the actions of adults who are able to listen and understand what is going on. *X.*, a middle school girl, understood the “loving” helpfulness of an assistant teacher and spontaneously “chose” her as her own tutor, exchanged with benefits and success. Discovering children coming from “somewhere else” in the school can make people feel less out of place, especially if they talk the same language. Moreover, in many cases, the arrival of newcomers speaking the same language made sure that the student acted as some kind of mediator and guidance by answering to his/her need to feel important and useful improving also his/her Italian language skills to facilitate mediation. The presence in school of a sibling or a friend or a relative with good results sets an example that incites the student to emulate him/her, showing that coming from a different country does not necessarily mean being part of that state of “minority” we talked before.

Obstacles and pauses

According to teachers, who have analysed the events that could have facilitated the process of integration, the role played by the environment of insertion, in this case the classroom and the school, were as important as the personality traits of the observed children and adolescents. Complex dynamics interact with the two, and other kind of factors, such as the family situation, the representations in it, the personal story and the social context in which the

school is collocated, influence them. Maybe it is because of its complexity that observing teachers have difficulty with identifying specific obstacles in the course of integration. Usually these obstacles emerge in the phase of first reception and, therefore, it would be more correct to refer to them as initial obstacles. A concrete example is undisciplined classes, which sometime are not willing to welcome a student because of their particular composition or story, and the evident hostility of some classmates who refuse to sit next to a student or make fun of him/her. Pervading difficulties, which inhibit the process of integration and influence the observation period, are identified; some difficult, painful family stories and personal situations have been highlighted. *The experience of having to change schools or cities in the future creates for a student (a presence “that count” in the class) a relational regression with a feeling of anger.* A relational balance is highly important. Among the negative examples, the loss of motivated and substantial habits, called anchoring, can be found: *when a teacher, who had established some identification and valorisation modalities with a student: a diary which stimulated his commitment, had been replaced with another one, the student stopped writing and what he produced has been lost too.* Also the loss of an important person despite its distance, a grief, can become an obstacle for their interest and commitment. An example *is the case of a girl who lost her grandmother from her home country with whom she lived for many years: the difficulty in returning home, the distance and a loss create conditions for a crisis of sense.* According to some teachers, the inadequate social competence characterised by extreme shyness, confidentiality, touchiness and frequent bad humour affect the process too. Teachers underline aspects of personality and character; for example, *a high school student, frustrated by little episodes of misunderstanding (not having understood what to do) at the beginning of the year, proudly does not want to go to school anymore. He will define himself a “visitor” in Italy even if he is caring about his own physical aspect, goes to swim and to the gym, and follows fashion trends.* A reason could be that the boy is trying to hide his vulnerability caring about physical aspect and attire. In middle school, teachers can find personality traits that have to be contextualised in the students’ story, in order to avoid the risk of subjective interpretations. Not always the origin of the student’s behaviour and attitude derives from “how a person is”, but partially it is due to a plurality of personal, family and social factors.

In the observed students’ profiles there is an inevitable subjective interpretation. Their written form makes them available for the necessary

updates caused by the vitality of the process of integration and interaction, but most of all for conscious reviews and reinterpretations when they are shared with colleagues, as it should desirably be.

Note

(1) They have to deal with rules. The coherence between them and the pedagogical requests is not predictable, especially regarding newcomer students, actually there are inconsistent elements - as far as the Italian context - waiting to be revised and overcome..

(2) Students go to school with a series of needs that must receive some kind of answer by teachers to make them able to learn systematically. Authors like Tomlinson (2006) identify at least five fundamental needs that each student makes their own with more or less intensity: affirmation (acknowledgement), contribution, purpose, challenge and power (meaning “mastery”).

(3) On the contrary, conflicts deriving from the research of responsibilities of the failure can arise again or for the first time. This is what the “contact” theory supports; according to it, conflicts are reduced when people of different ethnic or cultural group live in contact. But this is not enough to avoid separations and conflicts, if some conditions, such as symmetry of relationships and social status, a commitment in activities focused on extraordinary objectives (that is to say common) that are useful and profitable for everybody, do not actualise.

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Part Two

The National Experiences

PAGINE PARI BIANCA

The Experience of POI in the Scottish Schools

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1. Introduction: The Scottish Context for Portfolio of Integration (POI)

The Portfolio of Integration Project, led by Oxfam Italia, is a Comenius Multilateral Project that seeks to improve the educational outcomes of 'new arrival' and migrant school students in 5 countries: Greece, Italy, Poland, Turkey and UK. In these countries, the Partner organisations underwent a Needs Analysis to assess current practice and embarked on a training programme with teachers to help improve their intercultural awareness, their classroom pedagogies and observational skills. Thereafter the key instrument in the POI Project, the Notebook of Integration, was adapted for the specific needs of the teacher participants in each country.

The underlying goals of the Project relate to the desire to have more just and sustainable practices in the ways that education systems meet the needs of new arrival and migrant children. In this section, the team from the University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK reflect on the context, implementation and possible future role of the Notebook of Integration and associated training for teachers and others working to support the integration of new arrival children in our schools.

Scottish Education is distinct from the rest of the United Kingdom in terms of both administration and curriculum. While Scotland remains politically and constitutionally part of the UK, Education is one of the major areas devolved to the Scottish Parliament in 1999. As a result, Scottish education should be viewed as a separate entity from policies and practices elsewhere in the UK, and the context, approach, practices adopted, and conclusions drawn in this report may not necessarily be transferable to the other jurisdictions.

Over the last ten years the landscape of Scottish Education itself has changed significantly in response to local and global change. One of the main impacts

of globalisation has been changing patterns of migration. In 2010/11 the number of new arrivals entering Scotland was around 40, 000 (net migration is +23, 000) with around half this number settling in the central belt (Glasgow and Edinburgh and surrounding urban conurbations) of Scotland. The Scottish government has responded to this external context (and its internal consequences) by embedding concepts of inclusion and equality, and values and citizenship, in the curriculum. This is intended to ensure a degree of future proofing in both the values and content of Scottish education, in order to continually respond to the impact of globalisation on the Scottish population. The latest policy that promotes diversity and equality: *'challenges schools and communities to develop children and young people as responsible citizens who show respect for others; who understand different beliefs and cultures; and who are developing informed, ethical views of complex issues'* (Education Scotland, online).

To meet these global challenges, Scottish Teacher Education has been under review and the most recent report, entitled 'Teaching Scotland's Future' calls for professional development that should be 'powerful local, collegiate, relevant and sustained' (SG, 2011:9/10). The majority of schools within our nearest municipal administration area (Glasgow City Council) already had well-established procedures for working with New Arrival children, but the surrounding towns and cities were actively seeking to examine and develop their school development plans regarding New Arrival children. There was clearly a need for something like POI.

This meant that within the Scottish context the POI project provided a well-timed opportunity and structure with which to meet the two relevant challenges set out in Scottish policy: namely to respond to the impact of globalisation and new patterns of migration through revised educational practices, and to foster approaches to teacher professional development that targeted small, localised groups of practitioners in order to maximise the systematic impact on practices, policies and procedures.

Through an earlier dissemination of the POI fliers using the Scottish online learning platform GLOW (essentially an intranet for all Scottish schools and teachers), the Headteacher of John Ogilvie School in Blantyre, South Lanarkshire (15 miles South of Glasgow) approached the POI team at the University of Glasgow because the schools were keen to raise awareness and develop a coherent plan for working with New Arrival children. The

Headteacher agreed to approach the surrounding secondary schools within the area and recruited participants from five further secondary schools. This established a network of teachers which was in keeping with the above call for professional development: it was local in that the sessions were all held in John Ogilvie Secondary School; it was collegiate in that it brought together 22 teachers from different subject backgrounds and from five secondary schools; it was relevant to the needs of the staff and it was powerful because by the final session teachers were able to begin presenting examples of imaginative examples of how they had implemented or enhanced the POI notebook.

2. Implementing the Notebook of Integration in Scotland

In negotiation with the Headteacher, it was agreed that the sessions would be held in the evenings from 3.30pm – 6.30pm in John Ogilvie Secondary School between January and May 2013. Based on the University of Glasgow (UoG) team's experience of previous similar working, it was vital that the training sessions offered should be run at a mutually convenient time in order to maximise and sustain participation by the teachers involved.

Information regarding the sessions was circulated in December 2012 along with the most relevant Scottish policy documents in order to reinforce the relevance, and indeed urgency of the training offered. Further considerations on the part of the UoG team led to the decision that it would not be possible or appropriate simply to replicate the approach taken in the original Italian Book of Integration and to follow precisely the guidelines provided. There would have to be a degree of customisation and adaptation in the light of the specific pedagogical and policy contexts in which the group of Scottish teachers were working. The overall Project leadership in Oxfam Italia were very sympathetic and encouraging in relation to this dimension of our planning, and recognised that one size would not fit all in terms of the different national partners, while at the same time ensuring that there was sufficient commonality of approach across the different countries to ensure some aspects of meaningful comparison and conclusions could be formulated in the final analysis.

It was agreed that within each session the UoG team would provide time for looking at key ideas and readings in order to provide a conceptual base for further discussion; build teachers funds of knowledge by trying out the observation tools with each other; plus share, discuss and evaluate the

application of the Portfolio of Integration. This pattern was in keeping with the five key elements suggested in the POI Guideline Handbook (page 9 - positive independence, individual accountability, face to face interaction, interpersonal and small group social skills and group processing). Using the results from the Scottish needs analysis, the Scottish training team created five sessions which incorporated the main themes from the notebook while sustaining compliance with the main themes presented in relevant Scottish policy documents for meeting the needs of New Arrival Children. The sessions were entitled as follows:

- I. 16th January 2013 - Building Relationships within the School
- II. 6th February 2013 - Language Learning and Language
- III. 27th February 2013- Language and Culture
- IV. 20th March 2013- Building Relationships with the Wider
- V. 15th May 2013 - Final Evaluation and Sharing Session

The session titles diverged slightly from the six key indicators suggested in the guideline notebook and were necessary in order to gain the support of the local authority, who needed to be able to match the purposes of the POI notebook with the key steps necessary to implement the core issues of Scottish policy for working with new arrivals.

The School of Education at the University of Glasgow offers quality professional development and teacher education courses. The trainers were members of the POI team, with each individual having been invited onto the Project team in the first place for their specific skill sets and relevant expertise. A small number of additional trainers with highly specialised areas of expertise (such as language acquisition) were invited to attend particular sessions. For each training session a minimum of two trainers attended and a rolling order was used to ensure continuity across the five sessions (i.e. there was always one trainer attendee who had been present previously). PowerPoint presentations were used to highlight key issues and during each session time was always spent looking ahead to the pages of the notebook that would be discussed at the next session. Since the sessions were re-aligned a detailed breakdown of each session has been provided showing the explicit links to the POI notebook.

Session 1 For the first session, Julie McAdam and Stephen McKinney introduced the project and aligned the POI notebook with Scottish policy. Time was spent discussing the Context (1.1), the Student Information form (1.2), the Description of the Specific Intervention (1.3) and School Integration (2.1) from the notebook and participants had time to think about existing paperwork and processes used in schools to collate similar information. During the second part of the session time was spent looking at some of the creative ways of facilitating the collection of this data such as the use of the flowers of friendship task (page 31) and the creation of photojournals (page 43/44). Additional creative material shared in the national case studies was also introduced.

Participants were also introduced to the work of Botelho and Rudman (2009) who use the metaphor of mirrors, windows and doors, so that teachers can ensure that the text and visual environment surrounding pupils should be diverse enough for every child to see images of self (mirror), others (window) and begin to empathise with other children (doors), this was also incorporated in order to ensure the identity and diversity of all pupils were considered (Guideline handbook p37/38). To conclude, participants were asked to look at the next section of the notebook on Language Competence (3).

Session 2 For the second session Julie McAdam and Hazel Crichton began the session by speaking in Arabic and German in order to simulate the experience of learning in an additional language. The participants were asked to respond to the graphic novel *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan (page 43) by being asked what they could think, see and feel in Arabic, followed by listening to a poem in German. This meant that the follow on discussion of language learning and competence (covering BICS and CALPS) could be related to the participant's previous experience of learning a language and the creation of action points for working with new arrival children would be more meaningful. The follow up discussions about using the European Common framework (page 20, 35 -38) became more meaningful as the participants were able to look at creative ways of assessing students' competence using picture books and texts with visuals. To conclude, participants were asked to think about how sections 5 and 6 in the notebook on the use of home languages and motivation related to the earlier discussions on language learning. The use of home languages has been incorporated into Scottish

policy and is an essential part of the Learning in 2+ languages: Ensuring Effective Inclusion for Bilingual Learners document.

Session 3 For the third session, Hazel Crichton, Alan Britton, Evelyn Arizpe facilitated the session. In response to questions asked by participants, Esther Daborn was invited along to provide further discussion on language across the curriculum and the ways in which knowledge about genre can benefit specific subject teachers. Evelyn Arizpe provided input about a Glasgow based project on using children's literature to enter intercultural spaces and discuss issues related to diversity and language. This work was written up as one of the national case studies of good practice and served as a means of introducing these to the participants. Alan Britton highlighted the need to evaluate the notebook and participants were invited to begin sharing examples of practices they used in schools that could be added to the notebook.

Session 4 During the fourth session the participants began to take part and share their own ideas and initiatives in terms of working with New Arrival children. Gail McKillop from the Home School Partnership presented work on the Family Learning Project, which takes referrals from schools for children aged 3-18 and their parents to attend language classes after school. The families spend time learning language together on topics decided by the group, transport is provided to allow all families regardless of their physical location to attend. Dawn Maxwell-Waddell shared the work she was doing as an English/Drama teacher using the graphic novel *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan. These short presentations paved the way for a wider discussion on building relationships with the wider community, which led to the sharing of the second national case study which discussed forming links between schools and complementary faith and language schools. The session was concluded with a discussion of Criterion 111 'Relationships in the City' and the ways in which creative tasks can be used to work with children to ask pertinent questions in a way that does seem intrusive.

Session 5 In light of the work being done by course participants to adapt and use sections of the notebook across the five schools participating we decided to invite all participants to contribute to the final evaluation session

by asking them to present examples of how they had used or adapted the notebook. Examples of shared ideas included the following:

- One EAL (English as an Additional Language) teacher reported on how the team of 4.8 EAL teachers worked across the Local Authority supporting students and teachers to meet the needs of the 963 pupils using 50 different languages. His role also included teaching staff how to speak basic Polish so that they could incorporate that into their own teaching.
- Another teacher described how she had begun to adapt her learning objectives for her lessons and made sure that she always shared these in Polish.
- A Support for Learning teacher shared information on the Scotland Reads Programme, which pairs new arrival children with volunteers to build support on reading confidence.
- One Depute Head teacher shared the idea behind a project for all children arriving in the school from primary school. She created a visual journey of her own past to show children her own family's story of immigration from Lithuania. All the new arrival primary children were invited to an evening to discuss journeys.
- Staff from Holy Cross adapted the booklet and created a three page form to kick start the integration process. They felt the notebook was too cumbersome and they wished to streamline the process of gathering information on children when they first arrived in the school ensuring that this data once collected could be quickly passed onto the relevant teaching staff. They select one member of staff to follow the child and complete the amended booklet and this information then gets passed onto the team working with the child.

The trainers decided that this final sharing session was necessary as it encapsulated the main idea that any professional development work should be focussed and sustainable. These examples showed the staff had taken on board the ideas of the notebook and were able to use them within their own settings.

Although 22 teachers took part only nine returned the unit of observation grid providing information on 13 pupils. This limited return may in part be put down to the inevitable fatigue of teachers working towards the busiest period of the school year in Scottish secondary schools. Another barrier may have been concerns about some of the questions posed in the Notebook (see below

for a more detailed discussion of this). However there was very useful meaningful data produced from the observational grids that were received.

3. Reflections on the Notebook of Integration Training Experience

Overall satisfaction with the POI training course in South Lanarkshire was very high for a number of reasons. The trainees highlighted that the sessions were all interesting, well organised and well paced; the experience and input of the trainers was valued; the creation of a friendly atmosphere conducive to engagement with the process; the relevance of the specific topics; the range of methods used and the quality of the socially constructed dialogue created during the sessions.

The short lessons delivered in Arabic and German were singled out as having a high impact on the trainees: while it might seem a harsh way to introduce the discomfort of not being able to communicate or follow instructions in a second language, these lessons allowed the participants to empathise with new arrival pupils learning an additional language and to see the necessity of using clear visuals and gesture to emphasise meaning. The lessons highlighted the need to allow pupils to discuss meaning in their home languages, ‘this was a good learning experience; it allowed you to be aware of how difficult it must always be to have to listen in a language that you don’t use at home’. The participants also commented on the high degree of empathy the trainers had for children who used English as an Additional language.

Evaluation of Content and Methods in the Notebook of Integration

The majority of the trainees were satisfied that the overall course was of value to them and that the content was useful for their work. The majority of trainees were satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the materials/handouts that were distributed in the sessions (though they did comment on the Notebook – see below). A good number of trainees stated that the sessions provided helpful information and ideas about incorporating new arrival children and helped the teachers to understand the challenges and obstacles that are faced by new arrival children. The teachers feel they can now relate to these children better. One trainee said she/ he had acquired: “A greater understanding and empathy for newly arrived pupils and an enhanced respect for their resilience and determination to succeed”. All of the trainees agreed in the questionnaire that they received some interesting ideas about

interculturality, and nearly all (bar 1) are going to change some elements of their teaching as a result of this. Some trainees commented further on the very useful emphasis on interculturality and that the program helped them to develop a greater understanding and acquire greater competency in interculturality. While there were no sessions that received a low rating, Session 2 (language learning and language acquisition) and session 4 (building relationships with the wider community) were rated highest.

Evaluation of Impact

The trainees commented on a number of aspects of the impact of the training on their practice, values and attitudes. Some used certain specific strategies from the notebook in their schools to support new arrival children – these had proved to be successful and helped the children to settle in the school. Other trainees had adapted the Notebook to suit the new arrival children in their particular schools and one trainee had developed a new programme of work for new arrival children based on their experiences on the POI course.

Some trainees have found that their experience on the POI course has helped them support other staff and other children in the school. One trainee reported that she/he has increased awareness of the needs of new arrival children in the leadership team and in the teaching staff – this has led to a series of planned initiatives. Another trainee felt that she/he was now more able to provide more relevant information about the circumstances and level of ability of new arrival children to other staff to aid their integration. In one school the trainee has produced an information sheet for new arrival children, based on the Notebook. A number of the trainees stated that other teachers now approach them for advice in how to engage with new arrival children. In one school, a trainee now has a greater understanding on how to clarify instructions for the whole class so that all can be included. In other schools, a number of trainees have incorporated a greater use of visual aids in their teaching.

How might the Notebook and the associated training be adapted for the future?

There were many comments about the notebook. Many of the trainees found aspects of the Notebook very useful. In particular, they found the following sections useful: the background information regarding previous schooling and contacts in the new country; the level of language competence and the daily use of language; the relationships in the classroom and in the school; the

integration within the class, school and local community. A number of trainees suggested that while they have found aspects of the Notebook very useful, the Notebook could be improved. These suggestions are divided into two categories: overall structure, and concerns relating to some of the questions. In terms of structure, one trainee thought the Notebook was too unwieldy, but could be adapted as it does provide the good basis for an effective analytical tool; another trainee thought the Notebook could be revised more comprehensively.

There were a significant number of comments about the questions in the Notebook. Some trainees felt that the questions for the new arrival children were too intrusive or even harsh. Some felt that the phrasing of the questions was too impersonal and clinical – for example, some of the sensitive questions regarding friendships could be re-worded: ‘do you have any friends?’ These comments are very important because the teachers stated that they are trying to create a climate of trust with new arrival children and do not want to lose this trust. Others thought that some of the questions were inappropriate and there was insufficient space for children to develop lengthier responses. Some of the trainees are school leaders and advised that they would never use the phrasing in some of the questions in their schools. While there may be issues of translation here (the Notebook was translated directly from the original Italian), the underlying idiom of such questions has to be conveyed appropriately and with due sensitivity.

Two main issues emerged about possible future developments: (1) support in the creation and review of whole school policies and strategies for new arrival children and, (2) increased emphasis on practice in the classroom. The lead school, John Ogilvie, is seeking to improve its school policies and strategies for the integration of new arrival children. The POI sessions provided them with opportune professional development and an appropriate forum to discuss their future plans in a collegiate way. They will now take forward their policy and strategy, but are aware that the number of new arrival children is going to increase and policy and strategy may need to be reviewed on an ongoing basis. The second point is that many of the trainees were pleased with the examples of classroom practices and methodologies that were demonstrated by the trainers or were shared by the other trainees. They identified some very useful resources: including mobile phone apps and picture books. They would,

however, welcome more support and more examples of good classroom practices.

4. Recommendations and Conclusions

Knowledge About Language

In line with the needs analysis one of the most pressing needs for Scottish teachers is to understand how children learn additional languages. This includes understanding how to teach, assess and cultivate the additional language alongside the use of their home language. Staff who have had language learning opportunities can better empathise with pupils and comprehend the need for a shift in emphasis between the respective roles of ‘host’ language and ‘mother tongue’.

Professional Autonomy

Most Scottish teachers appear to value their professional identity and want to take opportunities to contextualise policy and national initiatives to suit their own local contexts. The key ideas within the notebook are valuable, but staff want support to adapt these to their own school systems and classroom practices while making use of the existing support structures.

Empathy

Scotland has a long history of welcoming new arrivals, many teachers can personally identify with narratives of immigration given their own family histories. Many teachers use this knowledge to find creative ways to encourage children to talk about their journeys, languages and experiences of coming to Scotland. The teachers have a professional aim to create a relationship of trust with new arrival children. At times, the trainees found the questions in the Notebook too direct and impersonal. This partly explains the reluctance of many participants to use the questionnaires directly with children.

Overall conclusions

The POI notebook and training sessions were very timely in the Scottish context. Although this intervention was small scale and localized, it provided a very useful starting point for raising awareness of the issues and processes that lie at the heart of integrating new arrival children. Some aspects of the

Notebook were deemed to be very useful and helped the schools collate valuable information about the new arrival children. The session also helped the trainees support school leaders and other teachers.

However given the autonomous nature of Scottish education coupled with a wide variety of contexts the notebook ought to be more widely promoted and disseminated as an appropriate starting point for many Scottish schools. Given their relative autonomy, a number of Scottish schools would justifiably reserve their right to make changes to suit their individual needs and the needs of the new arrival children in their schools.

Scottish Schools more generally will also be in need of further support in the creation and review of policies and strategies and further support in classroom practice. The Notebook, and the wider POI project, have provided a welcome and timely stimulus for a number of schools and teachers to take positive steps towards more effectively supporting the integration of new arrival pupils. It remains to be seen (and it is indeed a vital action point for the wider multilateral partnership) whether POI can act as a catalyst for wider improvements to systems within, between and beyond the Partner countries.

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The Seeds Growing In Foreign Fields

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1. Introduction

Immigration which is a demographical process regarding the moving of individuals and social groups over a geographical area with the aim of living in better conditions is an identical matter of fact in human history.

Immigration has been in the past and will be in the future a main feature of European societies. Today, the successful integration of migrant children in European schools and societies is both an economic necessity and a pre-condition for democratic stability and for social cohesion. The main question to be asked is the position of migrant students in the education systems.

- How can disadvantages be explained?
- What precautions can remedy the situation?
- How can schools and teachers be improved to better meet the needs of migrant students?
- What kind of support for migrant students is needed?
- POI-project aims to research the different migrant context and consequently, to improve pupil scholastic inclusion. To achieve this general aim, pilot courses are set to:
 - Find the new answers for the questions above,
 - Reach the facts of the needs analysis,
 - Collect and analyse information about migrant students and to adapt this information into the real life.

2. School Integration

The questionnaires about school, classroom and equipment were carried out successfully. The student information forms about identifying special cases and

the studies concerning school integration were applied. The attendance and the attention level of the students were high. The questionnaires were applied with the non-migrant students in the classroom atmosphere. A lot of questions about the school subjects, friendship relations, marks and feelings for school were asked to the migrant students. Some of them were anxious and confused but some were really curious and interested.

Language Competence in L2

The trainees used some materials like books, texts, CD players and DVDs. The students read short passages so that their reading proficiency could be observed. The questions about the passages were asked and they commented about the texts. They watched cartoons and documentaries, then they were asked to explain what they understood. They listened to their favourite songs and repeated them. They wrote short passages in which they told their feelings, thoughts and dreams. Finally, they took role-plays. All these activities were to evaluate their language proficiency

Although they thought that they have the ability in using the Turkish language, they realized their weaknesses. The passage the students wrote in their mother-tongue wasn't understood by the trainees because the trainees don't know anything about those languages. Therefore, the assessment of writing skills failed. The trainees have needed the support of people who speak both of the languages fluently.

Some of the students couldn't express themselves by reading and writing but they could understand what was told; in addition, they had no special effort to gain language proficiency. For this reason, the teachers had a great mission to teach them how to use writing and speaking skills. The trainees had taken a decision of using collaborative learning methods in the classroom and observed that the students began to come to school regularly, felt themselves important and relations with their teachers became stronger.

Relationships in Classroom and in the City

As an activity for communication within the city and classroom, "Friendship flowers" and "the most popular places within the city and the neighbourhood" activities were applied.

In the "Friendship flowers" activity, it was observed that most of the chosen students were out of the group and weren't accepted by the group. The "One day with photographs" activity which is about "Friendship and Family

Relations” made the other students get closer to the chosen students and the student became the centre of attention. Although the students were in a crowded classroom atmosphere, they couldn’t find the third friend to write in their flowers.

In the activity “The environment you live”, the students were asked to draw the environment he/she lives in. The activity was about the environment he/she is living now but one of the students, Kevser drew the picture of environment including her house, school, basketball court and the church from her house in the Philippines. In the district she lives in İzmit, there isn’t a church nearby as Turkey is a mostly Muslim country. This is one of the most important difficulties she came across because she can’t carry through the necessities of her religion. All of this shows that she still has strong connections with the country she came from and she couldn’t adapt herself to her new area.

Relation to the Native Language and Culture

The most important results which came out at the end of the activity “Me Today, Me as a Child, Me as an Adult” were that the students weren’t attentive enough while writing about their childhood and today, but their aims and dreams were very clear about their future. One of the trainees called the chosen student’s family to fill the questionnaire about the native language to the school but the parents didn’t come so she sent it to the home of the child. A few days later, the parents came to school full of anger and said that Turkish was already their native language. The teacher was shocked by their reaction. This shows that although they always use their native language in their daily life and they never give up their own culture’s traditions, they admit “Turkish” language as their mother-tongue.

Motivation

The questionnaire was carried out in the subject of motivation. Also, “The Tower” activity was executed to strengthen group relations in the classroom. To increase the motivation among the students in the same class, the “Motivation cards” activity was applied.

In the motivation cards activity, the cards written “I am a princess-I am a king-I am a prince-etc.” on them were prepared and the students in the classroom were divided into groups. Then, the theme was determined as classroom rules and the students who behave according to these rules were given these cards

to reinforce that behaviour. At the end of a week, the group in which the students collect the most cards was chosen as the best group of the week.

Another motivation activity, namely “The Tower,” was applied to strengthen group relations and students’ motivation. The students were again divided into groups according to the results of the “Friendship Flowers” activity. Then, colourful cartons, scissors and glue were handed out. The groups were asked to do a creative tower. All the groups worked successfully, but one had done a complete tower. That group was granted an award.

In the “Motivator sayings” activity, the most famous sayings were put into a box in small pieces. The student presenting positive behaviours chose the best saying he/she liked. The chosen sentences were hung on the corkboard by writing the students’ name under the sayings with a highlighter.

As another activity, the colourful stones were put into a box. It was said that each stones would bring luck to them. These colourful stones were given to the students presenting positive improvement in their lessons and behaviours. The students collecting the most colourful stones were chosen as “the student of the month”. The motivation questionnaire results showed that the families of the migrant students had never come to the parents’ meetings and never got in touch with the teachers, but they were sensitive about the absenteeism of their children. Despite the fact that the chosen students were very ineffective in their academic success, they were very willing to attend the social activities arranged by the school such as movies, theatres and book fair.

It was observed that the participation in the group works was very high and it created a competitive environment.

Integration Dynamics: Inconveniences

“Integration variants (Incompatibility)” were dealt and a general evaluation was executed. The impact of the subjects over integration was discussed by the participants. We put emphasis on the obstacles we met. By executing a general evaluation, the positive and negative aspects of the integration studies were discussed and new offers were presented.

When photos of their own countries were shared with the students, making comments on them made the students happy. The “Hands of Friends” activity attracted their attention, too.

We wanted students to comment on the photos reflecting their own culture. As they identified the people in the photos with themselves and their own life, they showed great interest. The students selected for “The Flowers of

Friendship” couldn’t find close friends to write. After one-month of study, they could select five friends. This showed that the students were integrated in the classroom. However, the chosen student didn’t gain acceptance by her/his classmates again.

With the original study namely “Cartoon friends”, we wanted the students to give their friends’ names to the 10 given pictures. Then we asked them what they felt when they saw these friends for the first time and when the study finished. After the study, the positive and negative results of the integration process were discussed. Finally, the teachers commented on its weakness and strength by making a general evaluation.

3. Conclusion

It is concluded that being a teacher in a multi-cultural classroom contributes to them a lot. It provides a stream of tolerance among society. The benefits experienced are the management of the multi-cultural classes and diversities, improvement of observation diagnosis capacity and expansion of horizon as a result of learning about different cultures in a more conscious way.

To sum up, the Portfolio of Integration Project has achieved its aim with all its sections, activities and documents.

Immigrant Students - Hope for Polish Demography and a Challenge for National Education From the Perspective of “Portfolio of Integration” (POI) Project Experience

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1. Immigrants in Poland: the basis for building the experience in POI

Poland is culturally and ethnically a homogeneous country. For the last several years the scale of immigration in Poland has been increasing slightly, though compared with other countries of Europe it is still at the marginal level. In 2012 immigrants constituted 0,13% of the whole population in Poland, a few more citizens emigrated from the country and chose permanent residence abroad. At the same time the birth rate in Poland reached zero [1], which indicates that Poland is becoming a demographically endangered country. According to demographers, Polish migration policy, in the first place, should be laid on re-migration of the Poles and the citizens of the Polish origin, and later on provide favourable conditions for immigration of the non-EU citizens coming from culturally close countries- Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Georgia, Moldavia and Armenia. Moreover, the necessity of setting up an institutional system of integration responsible for actions aiming at immigrant inclusion within Polish society in the fields of education, health care, employment and public life has been called for. The researchers point out the need for extreme changes concerning public attitudes towards the necessity of becoming an immigrant country (Iglicka, 2013).

2. Immigrants in schools

Characteristic features of immigrants in Poland refer to good education (around 40% have higher education) and domination of an economically productive age group (around 80%). We deal with immigration of

professionally active people (mainly males), instead of whole families. This state translates into the number of immigrant students in Polish schools. In 2011, 0,03% of population in Poland was immigrants under 18 (being subject to school) and only 0,0028% of all students in Poland at the age of 7-19 [3]. It should be pointed out that this proportion has different distribution in the area of Poland, forming dense immigrant populations in the regions of Mazovia (over 30% of all immigrants) or Silesia. In 2010, 0-4 year-old children (3474) were the largest group among immigrants, the most numerous groups as for school age were those of 5-9 year-olds (458) and 15-19 year-olds (423) [3]. These facts mean that Poland is expected to prepare diligently for providing pre-school education for immigrant children, where education is to develop their language competences and make a good start for 5-6 year-olds into the system of education. Now, it is a challenge for Poland to include in mass education the 8-14-year-old students who are coming back with their families from 'unsuccessful' emigration. These students' competence level of L1 is low. Also, they find problems in dealing with education in the country of residence. What is more, their problems are deepened by the differences existing between formal education systems in the countries of Europe.

Formal and Legal Basis for Inclusion of Immigrant Students to the System of Mass Education in Poland

The Head of the Office for Foreigners hereinafter called UDSC (from pol. Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców- UDSC) shall be the central authority of governmental administration competent with respect to entry of foreigners in the territory of the Republic of Poland, the transit of foreigners through that territory, the residence in and leaving it, granting foreigners refugee status, asylum, tolerated stay and temporary protection with reservation for the competencies of other authorities as provided for in the laws.

The legal instrument which regulates free education for immigrants' children in Poland is: 1/ article 70 section 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland ('everyone has the right to learn' – by 'everyone' we understand not only the citizen of Poland but also any person who does not possess Polish citizenship and is staying in the territory of our country); 2/ Education System Act, dated 7th September 1991, (art. 94a sec. 1 'foreign citizens who are subjects to school (under the age of 18), exercise the right to be taken care of and study in public primary schools, gymnasiums, public art schools and educational institutions, including art institutions-on the conditions as established for Polish citizens'). The above Act was amended in

January 2010 and, what is crucial, it rejects the rule of paying fees for secondary school education. Fee-free secondary education became the open doors for education of citizens especially from non- EU countries. However, institutions such as colleges are still the type of education to be paid for; 3/ The Ministry of Education directive on 31st March 2010 *to enroll foreign citizens to public kindergartens, public schools, teacher training centres and institutions or to provide them with an opportunity to learn Polish, to take part in extra compensatory classes and to learn their native/home language and culture.* In force of the directive extra, fee-free Polish language courses concern all the students-immigrants, who are subjects to school and the level of their language competences is not good enough in order to obtain education. Such courses are supposed to be planned and run adequate to the level of requirements which allow their postgraduates/foreign citizens to become an active recipient of the education process later on. The minimum involves a double period of Polish a week – should the need arise and possessed financial sources- the number of language course hours may increase.

Integration Strategies for Immigrant Students in Poland in the Opinion of Researchers

As far as immigrants' access to education in Poland is concerned, we can observe the application of an integration model (Todorovska-Sokolovska, 2009), in which immigrant children attend compulsory classes together with native schoolmates, and individual language support is provided during extra language classes. There are, however, very few researches and publications which focus on the problems of an access to education, educational policy and practices in the field of integration. Instead of suggested methods/techniques we can read about: 1/ difficulties which Vietnamese children face while adapting to a new cultural environment as part of the educational system (Halik, Nowicka, 2002); 2/ the lack of understanding the importance of education for immigrants themselves, which, most of all, concerns the groups of those who are applying for the status of a refugee or a tolerated stay; an insufficient commitment and cooperation of local authorities, school principles or social workers, which contributes to the lack of effective immigrants' children integration with the system of education and an insufficient number of teachers who are trained to work properly with such a group of students (Szelewa, 2010).

Various social groups call for mutual communication of cultural and educational contents in order to allow immigrant's integration in the field of

education. Such an openness to group-to-group communication, also in educational institutions, is a milestone on the way to the full process of integration. What can be particularly useful is building a supporting team which helps an immigrant child and is based on the model of supporting teams for children with special educational needs in integrated schools. The team could include: a form teacher (as the coordinator of team's actions), another teacher, school counselor, psychologist, assistant teacher (cultural assistant). It is necessary to provide trainings and educational courses for school workers – managers and teachers- in order to apply the aspects of multiculturalism in school institutions. It is important to develop (published in native languages of the biggest immigrant groups in Poland) information materials for parents-immigrants so that they can comprehend the functioning of educational system in Poland. These materials should include basic information concerning school rules, school enrolment procedures, school functioning at different levels, scholarship, rights and duties for school children, teachers, parents (Todorovska-Sokolovska, 2010).

Teachers' Readiness to Immigrant Students' Integration in Polish School

The opinions presented below are the results of focus research carried out in the first phase of Portfolio of Integration (POI) project, an objective of which was to determine training needs of Polish teachers. It is worth pointing out that setting up the focus group was not a simple task mainly because of a low level of interest in this issue. A scanty number of immigrant students in schools (mentioned in paragraph 1.1.) makes teachers treat the problem of social inclusion of immigrant students as hypothetical, not a real one. Such an attitude limited the number of participants taking part in focus research, concentrating their opinions on suggested actions for students' school integration.

In teacher's and experts' opinion the methods and tools for integration of all students (with no particular reference to immigrants) come down to simple actions, typical for school conditions. The experts point out integration picnics, sport and music events of all school community. It is worth noting that in Polish school we do not measure the way and to what extent a group is integrated, yet we look for the person who stands out from others in order to take any, possible, repair actions. The source material for preparing such an assessment is the opinions and answers of the research experts, who with one voice emphasize the fact that an average Polish teacher has competences to

carry out an objective diagnosis of student's educational needs (also immigrant student). In general, teachers lack the competence of educational needs concise and description. They need to increase the level of competences concerning educational needs identification and to obtain necessary tools to do it. After a stormy discussion during focus group research teachers claimed that training programmes which are to prepare them for 'management' of immigrant students' school integration on a general level should include: knowledge and understanding of factors' consequences in internal and external dimensions of human diversity, knowledge of factor consequences in organizational dimensions. On a particular level, this means: knowledge and training in behavioral theories, which allow to understand the beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of others (students and families), training in communication styles and training of diagnostic competences.

Context of Building up POI Participants' Experience-Summary

Cultural homogeneity of Poland and the low proportion of immigrant students in schools cause the need for a discussion on their social inclusion, which is generally passed over by the majority of teachers. Although the opinions of demographers clearly point out the necessity of effective actions for immigration policy, we can see no real moves towards the revival of the problem. Though it is a desired phenomenon, it is essential for education to face remigration of children with Polish origin, who were born and started their school careers in different countries in Europe. An uneven distribution of immigration in Poland on the scale causes that we are dealing with schools 'full' of immigrant students i.e. in towns where refuge centres are located. Next in other regions of Poland the problem is not at all observed. It is important to say that preparing teachers to welcome immigrant students in every school in Poland is creating a chance for social inclusion of immigrants and a 'demographic rescue' for Poland. In this context the participation of teachers in POI project is thoroughly justified.

3. POI Pilot Course

Planning and Events of the Pilot Course

Setting up a group for the pilot course caused a number of difficulties, as was the case of the focus group. Lodz – the seat of Polish project partner – is a city not very economically-attractive for immigrants (unemployment rate in the 1st

quarter of 2013 is 17,6%). As we can find in the analysis carried out by Department of Education in Lodz City Council, immigrant students are present in only 18 schools of Lodz (to the total of 1500), majority of them in age 7-9. There are no statistic records for students with an immigrant past. The recruitment process was carried out several times. In the end, the last days of January 2013 brought of 10 school teachers from different types of schools, representing 6 schools in Poland. All the represented schools are public type. Four of them are situated in Lodz, one in Zgierz (10 km away from Lodz). One of the schools is in Raszyn (very near to Warsaw) – it happens that immigrants' children are sent there directly from the airport. The attendance record at the seminars reached almost 100%, which, among others, enabled us to apply the model of action learning. The pilot course started on February and finished in May 2013. We carried out 20-hour participant-direct-contact training. During 7 seminars the participants get familiar with theoretical basis for school and environmental integration of students, where its areas were analyzed and recommendations were made.

Areas of Immigrant Students' Integration – New Challenges for Polish Teachers

In and out-of school issues concerning interpersonal relationships of students are well known to Polish teachers. However, the analysis of this area required some reference to participants' skills and knowledge about an immigrant student, which generated the need for deeper thought on the aspect of language competences. Many emotions were provoked by the topic of 'students' motivation' and school resources, which built (or not) a desired context for social inclusion of students. We can hazard a guess that the problem of multiculturalism, multilingualism and making up (cultural) identity of a student became a new and important (in their opinions) challenge to the course participants. We will refer to these issues in the next paragraphs.

Development of Immigrant Students' Language Competences in the Discourse of POI Course Participants

As it has been mentioned in the first part of the article, it is quite frequent in Poland to deal with remigration of families and a 'complicated' course of school career in children, especially at the age 14. It happens that these children are bilingual, however, they have not gained enough language competence in any of the two languages (neither Polish nor a foreign one) in order to learn easily. In this situation it is also difficult to say which of the

languages is the primary (L1) or secondary (L2) in the context of educational needs and completing school duties. The participants suggested that monitoring of language competences in immigrant students should be carried out with no reference to a code (L1/L2) and focused on the development of the competences in Polish. Students remigrating from German or English speaking countries can carry on learning the previously mentioned languages in schools, developing the skills they have already acquired. Also, the participants claim that in the case of foreigner students at the first stage of their contact with the Polish language, it is extremely accurate to apply audiovisual methods such as picture dictionaries into daily communication with their schoolmates, teachers and people from their neighbourhood, or photo-illustrated 'diaries'. It is important to note that so far the participants have not come across with critical situations connected with disruption of communication in Polish among migrant students. The teachers unanimously agree that they have not encountered any signs of discrimination based on 'language barriers'. 'More problems', in their opinions, are caused by difficulties in communication with immigrant students' parents. The participants realize the fact that the situation in Poland is different than in the countries where the immigration rate is high.

Interpersonal Relationships of Migrant Students in the Opinion of the Course Participants

Early discussions about interpersonal relationships of migrant students proved that this issue is well-known and clear to all the teachers. Further debates, inspired by trainers' questions, revealed the need for 'a new look at the problem'. The analysis of the stories of migrant students, told by teachers, raised our awareness of the circumstances 'building' this student's position in the school class structure. The teachers claim that it is easy to detect the level of the student's 'attractiveness' to his peers while monitoring his/her relationships. With no bigger effort, by sociometric tests, we can identify the roles ascribed to the student. It is important, however, to identify their mental state and perception of group norms compared to his/her culture. We need to bear in mind language difficulties the student faces. The participants have not experienced neither rejection nor the lack of schoolmates' acceptance towards the migrant student. After all, they admitted that although they know the methods of sociometric research, they had not used them in classes until the course started. This discussion, started by the POI course,

drew teachers' attention to the importance of objective measure methods of students' interpersonal relationships.

Migrant Students' Identity and Motivation as the Areas of their Social Inclusion

Early conclusions in this section referred to superficial knowledge of the issue of building identity in students deriving from different religious and ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, the teachers underlined the fact that 'questioning' a migrant student about political and social contexts of his/her family is not allowed, 'they know as much as their parents want to tell them'. Difficulty in identifying student's character is conditioned by poor communication and teachers fear for overinterpretation of 'what they can see'. Migrant students' participation in educational projects (suggested in POI) which show their own cultural heritage and allow to broaden their knowledge about the culture of other nations is approved by the participants. 'Motivation' of migrant students and its two dimensions were the issues broadly discussed by the teachers. The first one is the student's motivation to social inclusion – the process of education and integration, in teachers' opinion, must be carried out in a way the migrant student 'wants to get to know the culture of the country he arrived in'. In this dimension it is significant to arouse the student's interests in his/her peers' life, and not the respect for the group his/her cultural background creates. This is extremely important, especially in Poland, where there is often only one immigrant student in the class. The other dimension is created by student's motivation to make efforts in learning, independent of culture or religion. Based on such motivation we can carry on the process of education and integration through group work. Teachers' work on this dimension will meet the expectations of immigrant students' needs for social approval. At the same time integration will be the fact, not the demand.

Bringing out Students' Creativity

The participants of the course believe that building up students' creativity has been a priority in Polish schools for several years, and this let them 'train' the skills of an educator. The discussions and analysis carried out during the course were based on coming up with well-known methods which will meet migrant students' needs and be used in particular periods of their stay in Poland. The teachers are convinced that the praise migrant students receive concerning their achievements and efforts is the start of 'assimilation' with the student's social background in the class. We need to appreciate anything

produced by them as a way of ‘coping with’ a school problem. Gradually, we can apply their ideas into group work, by examining interpersonal relationships in the class. A talent revealed during the school festival, an interesting solution in the case of algebra, may be the reason for teachers’ and classmates’ praises. Praise and reward are an excellent tool for bringing out students’ creativity and increasing their motivation to efforts and changes.

The Pilot Course Assessment

All the participants of the course praised highly its usefulness in building their own skills connected with education of immigrant students. An element that received the most approval from all the course participants was an opportunity to discuss matters, and share opinions about applied solutions and experience. The participants asked about future course improvement, suggest using more visuals, which would refer to a documentary (interview recordings) on the daily life of the migrants in various destination countries. As far as ‘Identity’ is concerned these materials would be a perfect didactic material to support understanding. The biggest benefit the participants receive after the course is a ‘higher level of self-reflection’, ‘higher level of preparation to work with immigrants’, ‘experiencing another perspective for perceiving the phenomenon of immigration and immigrant students’, ‘appreciating the value of cooperative learning’.

In light of the assessment in the above sections we can agree that the structure of the course and its completion is ready to be used for further purposes. Applying *action learning* as an approach to sharing knowledge and teaching skills based it seems an extremely useful method.

4. Notebook of Integration – the results of tool test

Among the group of students we were testing POI tools with, there are six children of refugees, five students of Poles re-migrating from different parts of the world. Fig.1 presents detailed information about migrant students.

Fig.1. Students “under observation”

<i>Student Nationality</i>	<i>M/F</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Age</i>
Belarusian nationality	F	1st grade of primary school	7
Polish nationality, born and lived in USA, parents are Poles	M	5th grade of primary school	12
Polish nationality, born and lived in Australia, parents are Poles	M	5th grade of primary school	12
Polish nationality, born and lived in Australia, parents are Poles	F	4th grade of primary school	11
Polish nationality, born in Poland but lived and educated in Germany	M	5th grade of primary school	12
Polish nationality (but child born and lived in Greece)	M	2nd grade of gimnasium	15
Armenian	M	3rd grade of gimnasium	16
Korean	M	2nd grade of secondary school	17
Vietnamese	M	1st grade of secondary school	16
Vietnamese	M	2nd grade of elementary school	8
Vietnamese	M	2nd grade of elementary school	8

A tool for all

All the teachers testing the Notebook of Integration point out a benefit of its use to monitor integration of all the students in a class, not only the migrant ones. The tools used for observations (and measuring) of interpersonal relationships and students’ motivation to learning are considered to be highly practical. Most of the people testing the tools suggested the Notebook to be extended by emotional side analysis and the tool used to search other factors conditioning students’ school integration (family, economic issues, developmental disorders, distractors, etc.). Also it is important to bear in mind ethical aspects which are connected with the search for knowledge about immigrants and his/her family. A great number of elements in The Notebook needs, according to the teachers, adaptations to ‘Polish reality’. Above all, it

necessary to adapt the part which refers to Module 1, (in particular to facilitators and the tools), due to requirements accepted in Poland.

Notebook of Integration Virtues in Opinions of Those who Tested

All the ones who tested the Notebook agree that the biggest advantage of the Notebook is that by using one tool they can identify all the areas of migrant students' integration. It allows the ability to detect the connections between factors that build these areas. Moreover, such an attitude guarantees a holistic perception of students' situation within a class and school. This, in turn, makes a real opportunity to support their social inclusion. The tools, included in the Notebook, used to diagnose students' situation are at the same time the 'methods' of working with the class community. It is an excellent tool to build critical thinking and allow teacher's reflection. The fact that the tools can have multiple usages is another virtue and generates automatically the process of active, broad diagnosis of student's progress in the field of integration. The testing group members pointed out that the Notebook 'requires team work from teachers', and this work integrates the environment of educators.

5. Characters': selected Profiles of the Students Observed with the Notebook of Integration

Case Study 1. Tomas, 12 Years Old.

Tomas's situation is exceptional. A boy with double citizenship, born in Poland but lived and educated in Germany since he was 10. For the last two years half of the school year he spends in Germany the other one in Poland. When in Germany, his mother looks after him, when in Poland his grandfather does. His mother lives in Germany and is not present when her son stays in Poland. Observers do not have any information about the structure of the boy's family, they do not know whether or not he is present in the family life and the role his father plays in it. They assume that 'sharing' the boy's life is conditioned economically (receiving financial support from the government). Tomas is able to communicate in Polish and learn at school but makes a number of mistakes. In problem situations he always uses German. He is provided with extra classes of Polish but his competences do increase as he regularly has a six-month break.

Staying in Poland, Tomas has average school results. Information, which is usually general ('attended the school and passed to a higher form') about his school career in Germany reaches Poland with a delay. On the basis of these documents it is difficult to identify differences in curriculum and orient him to gaining knowledge and skills. No one knows which of the countries will be his destination in the future.

Examining the dynamics of interactions in the class we can say that Tomas does not 'exist' in its structure. He draws his mates attention only when he is present. Quite frequently he provokes peer conflicts, and shows hyperactivity. Tomas denies having friends in Polish class and school. He talks about his pals in German school. We can assume that he is isolated from Polish peers by his grandfather. His behaviour irritates his Polish schoolmates, and the class forgets about his existence soon after he leaves for Germany. Teachers try to help the boy during his stay in Poland and apply a number of varied supporting actions. Unfortunately, most of these actions need more time in order to reach positive results.

In the case of Tomas the use of the Notebook did not result in getting any knowledge about the boy's attitude to Polish language and culture. We can say that the boy has a 'double' identity. We do not know which of the languages he considers his home one as the contacts with his Polish-speaking friends and German-speaking peers are equally important. The observers suppose that the quality of peer contacts in Germany is glorified by him as an opposition to conflict he provokes in a Polish school.

It is hard to draw objective conclusions on Tomas's motivation to learning after using the tools provided in the Notebook of Integration. Behaviors in school describing the boy would prove his negative attitude to adults and peers in school. However, the observers suppose that this situation 'has a double bottom'. They underline the 'difficult though frequent contacts between teachers and the grandfather', who seems to feel embarrassed by the boy's situation. The grandfather signaled his helplessness in this situation.

Summing up, the exceptional situation of Tomas revealed the 'lacking' in content of the Notebook of Integration. We need to add, however, that they arise due to the boy's profile and particular contexts of the situation he is in. For the situation of Tomas is quite typical for Poland, it is necessary for the next publications of the Notebook of Integration to be enriched by the tools adequate to the situation described above.

Case Study 2. Adrian 16 Years Old

Adrian is Armenian, a refugee staying with his family in Poland for two years. His parents are educated, both doctors. The family has never been to a refugee centre and lived in a rented flat. The father took up a job of a doctor, and the mother is trying to notify her diploma. Both of them have a good job in Poland, and treat the country as their destination. The family had been preparing to stay in Poland, all of them had been learning Polish.

In Poland Adrian continues his education in junior secondary school, which refers to his former education level in Armenia. He makes slight mistakes in Polish and gets good results in school. The development of his language competences has been supported by extra classes of Polish. In the first year of the boy's stay in Poland teachers organised extra subject classes of math, biology etc..

In the case of Adrian building up interpersonal relationships in the class can be divided into two periods. In the first year in school the relationships were full of reserve and the search for allies. The class accepted him with the same sort of reserve. Adrian's individual meetings with teachers, carried out after school, played a significant role in his school career. They made him 'attractive' to his schoolmates, not necessarily positive. The second year in school was dominated by the boy's contacts with non-formal groups, which had a negative influence on his behaviour. He was considered an outsider. Efforts made by teachers to include the boy in the class dynamics did not bring good results. Accidentally, they enhanced the factors which had caused his unacceptance in the group before. It is important to add that there were no factors among the enhanced ones which refer to his national 'individuality'.

Adrian seems not expect any support to his relations with his origin, culture and language. The parents were unfairly treated in their home country and expect to build 'their new life in a better world'. The boy has graduated from the school receiving average results and will start another stage of education in secondary school. Still, the parents are trying to change the boy's bad behaviour.

In the case of Adrian, using the Notebook of Integration turned out to be exceptionally helpful. Based on the notes the teachers-observers build the profile of the student's educational needs, which will be handed in to teachers in secondary school.

6. Summary

The two cases were completely different and the Notebook of Integration, as a tool of students' integration, was used in different ways. It is true that using the Notebook initiated team work among teachers, resulting in development of teachers' perception of migrant students and their educational needs.

The value the participants received by having taken part in the course and tested the Notebook of Integration is the awareness of problems immigrants face and feeling the need for broadening their knowledge about the areas of integration. Quoting after the course participants, we will claim at the end that 'only after the course they realized the global problems of (im)migrants and how important it is to prepare for work with them providing their inclusion in Polish society'. The teachers are also fully aware of the fact that the presence of immigrants is a crucial factor for the improvements in demography of Poland and the standards of living in the country.

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The Experience Realized in the Schools of Arezzo

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1. The “Observing” Teachers

Confirmations and new ways to explore have long been the goal of the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion: depending on the territories (of “observing” teachers, of different visions and contexts...), it seems to find new life and vitality. Each observation process with the Notebook is never the same as the previous one, it always shows originality and something new is highlighted, proposed and discovered. This is what happened in the new experience in Arezzo that took place during a whole school year following the POI project.

Let’s start with some data relating to the protagonists of the process: the “observing” teachers, the classrooms and the girls and boys who were “observed”. Twelve teachers from middle and high schools carried out the observation work. Eight of them carried out an individual observation and four of them in couples. A couple of high school teachers followed three migrant students and another couple followed two of them filling in the relating Notebooks. There was a total of 13 Notebooks.

Boys and girls observed arrived in Italy in the last school year or in the last 2-3 years; in one case we observed a boy who was born in Italy. Many of them have migration stories and school processes that are characterized by a strong fragmentariness by which students continuously went back and forth to their home country. Observed boys and girls come from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Senegal, the Philippines, Dominican Rep., India, Brazil: these countries represent only few of the nationalities that can be found today in the schools of Arezzo. In fact, classes of teachers involved in the research-action process are very multicultural – teachers themselves confirmed this in the first part of the Notebook – both considering the presence of a high number of migrant students and students born in Italy by foreign parents; these classes are, as a consequence, heterogeneous and stratified and also variegated under all profiles.

Schools of “observing” teachers are generally described as “inclusive”. Fragmentary teaching processes and low cooperation and community among teachers are some of the critical aspects involving inclusion of foreign students and these aspects were highlighted by high school and middle school teachers. Among the proposals, some teachers think it’s important “to set up a permanent laboratory for L2 and improve reception through specific strategies” and to identify adequate strategies to support a greater involvement of families in school activities. Languages and relationships with families turn out to be important topics to work on.

2. Observations About Some Indicators

I will rapidly go through some observations collected by teachers highlighting the most important results that emerged with the activities. At the end of this article I included two “profiles” of “observed” students during the POI experience that show the work carried out by teachers better than words would do.

Boys and girls under observation are generally quite isolated inside the classroom and with few relationships outside school hours. Social diagrams defined by teachers highlight much exclusion and they seem to confirm a non-inclusive mood in the classroom. Relationships with classmates are mostly related to the school activity. Observed students generally prefer the company of students of their own country with whom they go out, they meet outside and go to the association of their community. Questions like “what do you usually do after school?” or “...what do you do on Saturdays and Sundays?” are generally answered by a high and middle school student with “I go out or to the store my father owns, when it rains I stay home with my mother, my sister or my uncle”; whereas Saturdays and Sundays “I stay home or take a walk”. Considering this quite negative relational mood that emerged and was confirmed by the relational activities of the Notebook, some teachers of the 4th grade in a vocational art high school thought it would be useful to experiment with the so called “Tree/Diary of Talents” activity, developing a new version that went under the name “Play of Talents” (it had the following instructions: “every student fills out a short questionnaire where they are asked to pinpoint three positive features of another student of the classroom. Each questionnaire is anonymous and the names are chosen at random”). It seems the proposal received positive feedback from the classroom and it lowered divisions and

contrasts. The observed girl was given (according to teachers, “she was the only one”) a non-intellectual or psychological quality: whoever received her name wrote, “She is beautiful”.

The POI project also experimented a new questionnaire, which aimed at defining the language biography of students. The socio-linguistic framework of students and families that comes from these observations is very diverse and variegated. In order to better involve the whole classroom dialect languages were included; Italy, for instance, has plenty of dialects. There are foreign classmates who speak their native language with their parents but also Italian students who speak their regional dialect when they are with their family. Language “biographies” of classrooms (and of students and families) were very heterogeneous, such as the one carried out by a middle school teacher:

	<i>Native country</i>	<i>Student's native language</i>	<i>Father's native language</i>	<i>Mother's native language</i>	<i>Language spoken at home...</i>	<i>Parents speak...</i>	<i>Language spoken in school ...</i>
F	Cote d'Ivoire	French	French + Agni	French, Baoulè	French, Italian	French	Italian (poor)
F	India	Punjabi	Punjabi	Punjabi	Italian, Punjabi	Punjabi	Italian
M	Belarus	Russian	Ukrainian	Byelorussian	Russian, Italian	Russian	Italian (poor)
M	Ukraine	Ukrainian	Ukrainian	Ukrainian	Russian, Ukrainian, Italian	Russian, Ukrainian, Italian	Italian
M	Italy	Italian	Albanian	Albanian	Albanian, Italian	Albanian	Italian
F	Kosovo	Kosovar	Kosovar	Kosovar	Kosovar Italian	Kosovar	Italian
F	Rumania	Rumanian	Rumanian	Rumanian	Rumanian Italian	Rumanian Italian	Italian
M	Greece	Greek	Albanian	Albanian	Albanian Italian	Albanian Italian	Italian
M	Italy	Italian	Italian	Croatian	Croatian Italian	Croatian Italian	Italian
F	Rumania	Rumanian	Rumanian	Rumanian	Rumanian Italian	Rumanian	Italian

M	Italy	Italian	Albanian	Albanian	Albanian Italian	Albanian	Italian
M	Italy	Italian	Tunisian	Italian	Italian	Italian	Italian
F	Italy (Florence)	Tuscan dialect	Sardinian	Tuscan dialect	Tuscan dialect	Tuscan dialect	Tuscan dialect
F	Italy (Monteverc hi)	Tuscan dialect	Neapolita n	Sicilian	Tuscan dialect	Neapolita n Tuscan dialect	Tuscan dialect
M	Italy (Campania)	Calabria's accent	Calabrian	Neapolitan	Calabrian accent	Neapolita n	Neapolitan accent
F	Italy (Monteverc hi)	Puglia dialect Italian	Puglia dialect	Benevento dialect	Puglia dialect	Italian Puglia dialect	Puglia accent
M	Italy (Florence)	Italian	Tuscan	Sicilian	Italian Sicilian	Italian	Italian
M	Italy (Monteverc hi)	Italian	Calabria dialect	Tuscan dialect	Italian	Italian	Italian
Other 3 students are "autochthonous" since more generations							

A Senegalese girl says she speaks mostly French with her father, her mother and siblings and sometimes in Wolof; her parents only speak Wolof between them. There are five places where she does *not* speak Italian: "in Senegal, at home, with my relatives, with my Senegalese friends and during religious events".

The open questionnaire for students highlights that there are many boys and girls who face difficulties related to language, especially when it comes to Italian: they say they feel there is nobody helping them; a girl writes that "nobody can help her at home". They also say they are not satisfied with their school performance and that they were doing better in their native country; a girl writes, "I was the top of the class").

To the future-oriented question, "what would you advise to a friend who has just arrived in school?") migrant students would advise to stay strong, courageous and keep learning Italian even if it's difficult and that they will eventually succeed"; or "to talk more with Italian friends because it will be easier to learn it that way". Another girl suggests "they go to centres where people help with homework".

As far as future projects are concerned the observed students are still a bit confused, they feel uncertain, they still don't know or do not express themselves. A middle school girl wants to study accounting and then go to university but she thinks she "doesn't have the funds". A Dominican boy at a vocational school says that he would like to work after school as an electronic technician but he would also like to be a good father. His parents want him to "be a professional worker and a good student". An Indian girl of the same school wants to keep studying to go to the "fashion Institute" because her dream is to become a hair-dresser or fashion designer. This is a common desire among girls – like "building" a family, especially for boys – as it emerged in other experimentations of the Notebook.

During the observation process, teachers managed also to record some integration events. The integration chance for a Bengalese girl was the presence of two students of her own country that made her inclusion easier by immediately speaking their native language. For two newly arrived Philippine, brother and sister, the chance to integrate in the classroom was given by the theatre activities and badminton sessions where they improved their relationships with their schoolmates. Other interesting episodes are described at the end of this article.

3. Strengths and Weaknesses

The experience carried out in Arezzo confirms the validity of this educational proposal. The answers of teachers to the final question "What have you learned?" from the observation highlighted that the Notebook allowed refinement of considerations and enabled the observation, enhancing a better awareness about the role of teachers in promoting the inclusion of foreign students; it also gave teachers the chance to compare and mediate different points of view by overcoming their subjectivity. The Notebook might become a sort of "Identity Card" that supports students in their educational process and changes. A middle school teacher writes "the proposed activities were important because they allowed to deepen our knowledge about students and to discover aspects in the dynamic relationships that were overlooked before". Another teacher describes difficulties and discoveries as follows:

The Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion is a tool I learned "in the making". My initial scepticism "disappeared" little by little by using the activities. I encountered several limitations in what I wanted to do and what I actually accomplished. In

middle school timing is very precise and pressing. I teach English and had to “steal” moments in my free time or ask “leaves” to my colleagues to present a chart or make a poll. What I missed the most was the cooperation of my colleagues. Despite the fact I presented the project to the Class Council and people seemed interested, when we came to the action I was alone carrying out the work. However, it was a positive experience that allowed me to better understand my “chosen” student with whom I created a good relationship that also improved her integration in the class (...). At the end of the project I shared my work with C. with my colleague who teaches Italian and she was enthusiastic about it. She “promised” me that next year she will try to use my Notebook and introduce it to a new classroom so that it can actually be a “Notebook of inte(g)ra(c)tion” for everyone and not only for “forerunners” as happened this year.

A very important tool from a diagnostic and prognostic point of view was the “Notebook on the language biography and the pattern of communication in families” that was experimented for the first time inside the POI project; it collected information about languages and dialects used at home by students and then it improved the general mood of the classroom thanks to an activity where everyone had something to say.

Many teachers had to do the observation on their own and many of them felt isolation inside the school: they had to carry out the observation by themselves, were the only ones taking part in the POI project in the school and the school did not “acknowledge” their commitment. Only in a few cases teachers were able to present the project during assemblies. Idea exchanges were made especially during meetings related to the POI project.

We can therefore assume that such a process may have educational relapses depending on the participation of teachers but the school must endorse the project and the proposed tools. A suggestion for the future would be to make sure some schools are strongly involved, including the managing department, teachers and instrumental functions.

There is room for improvement to enrich and adjust the Notebook to the different educational needs. Arezzo’s experience highlights how flexible the tool is because it can be adjusted to different situations and contexts. A new version of the Notebook shall consider the new evidence that was highlighted by the teachers in Arezzo.

This refers to specific aspects of every territorial context in the first place. In the last few years in Italy newly arrived students have constantly decreased,

but “second generations” have increased year by year. The Notebook was originally created to observe some newly arrived students; in the last few years, considering this evolution, the tool tried to distinguish its features (indicators and relating activities, items...): each one aims at observing newly arrived students as well as foreign students who have a medium-long school history in Italy and those who have a complete Italian school process (they were generally born in Italy). This articulation was considered another weakness of the project; first of all, it created “confusion” among teachers and it was considered too complex and graphically intricate and not functional. Distinctions between different types of observed students (as said before) as well as going back and forth from a part of the Notebook to the other (from items to activities, from individual to collective observation) will have to be reconsidered. We would therefore propose:

- to carry out two different Notebooks: a) one of them should focus on the observation of one or more newly arrived students (that follows the indicators of the current version of the Notebook); b) a second one that focuses on the observation of the whole classroom that presents items and activities that involve all classmates (in the current versions there are several of these);
- to combine in both cases items and activities, carrying out a more functional graphic and style to be used more easily.

Secondly, tools must be adjusted to the school level they will be used in. Experience tells us that the Notebook works properly in elementary and middle schools. All its weaknesses were highlighted in high schools. This depends on different matters: individuality of teaches and subjects in high schools don't support a project that requires time, sharing and commitment to carry out an effective observation activity. Moreover, this tool may be affected by the lack of context: during recent years we have tried to “adjust” high schools to this proposal; maybe it is necessary to adjust the proposal to different school settings.

The Notebook should be refined and balanced to make its use easier and more immediate. We shall not forget that the biggest obstacle teachers find is not the tool itself but how it is used and put into practice – in the observation and research-action fields - outside its educational background.

Another idea for future editions of the Notebook is to better investigate how the concept of inte(g)ra(c)tion changed for teachers after completing this process. What is our idea of integration when we start such an observation activity? How has it changed at the end of the process? These are very important questions for an indicator and dimension-based Portfolio of “Integration”. It should not therefore give a definition of the term but exhort teachers to explain their ideas and what they mean by integrated students. We should later reconsider these thoughts at the end of the process. We might then develop a new way of thinking about the integration and inclusion processes that are more detailed and evidence-based.

I will describe two “portraits” of students carried out at the end of the experience by two middle school teachers. The first one is the profile of a student from the Ivory Coast, the second one of a Senegalese girl.

It was natural and spontaneous choosing C. to use the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion. From the very beginning she appeared to be a sensitive, polite, motivated and honest student. The first difficulty for integration was language. C. comes from the Ivory Coast and so she speaks French as her family does; the French teacher and I were her first points of reference. She arrived at M. Institute at the end of September; classes had already started at the beginning of the month, but it was not her first time in Italy. Her family had come here when she was very young, she did not go to Kindergarten and she started elementary school in ... at P. school. After the first year they all moved back to the Ivory Coast where C. finished elementary school.

The impact with the first grade in middle school was pretty strong for several reasons:

- Classmates were not very welcoming because 8 students out of 21 have foreign origins, so she was not the only one drawing attention. There were 7 more students who had to integrate and could not really “care about her”.
- Italian classmates were experiencing discoveries and created groups with former elementary school classmates.
- Language was a big obstacle. Her biggest complaint was she could not “understand”, even if she was the top of the class in her country! Despite commitment and efforts in trying to do what others did, her past skills were not showing just yet. She was the best student in French, at least!

L2 language courses were started and a language broker was involved for 5 hours (funds are always limited) and she had the chance to introduce a lesson about the Ivory Coast during which C. told stories about Ivorian children, their toys and

cuisine. She told us about recipes and meals in French making a few classmates jealous of her strong language skills.

Since that moment she was able to establish a strong relationship with a classmate, a good and kind girl with little mental problems who shared moments of exclusion with her.

Activities put into place during these months show that C. doesn't see classmates outside school hours and that she actually doesn't have friends. She doesn't go to the gym or to church so Italian language is improved and learned mostly at school. Places she goes such as relatives' homes or prayer centres are chances to speak French. Her mother highlights the importance of not forgetting her native language even if she is more than happy for the lessons the school organized to teach Italian. After a few months, in February, I introduced the E activity to C. and it was useful to understand her mood and feelings, which she could already express in Italian. Her school difficulties emerged. She is not happy with herself because she was very good at school in her country but now she "cannot keep up". She complains nobody in her family or friends (because she doesn't have friends!) can help her and she is always thankful to teachers because they play a very important role on an emotional level.

She likes Italian even if she says it's a difficult language; her favourite words are: TORTA (cake), FORMAGGIO (cheese), MANGIARE (eat) and BALLARE (dance). I am surprised when she makes a list of very complex words (these words are complex for any peer!): TELECOMUNICAZIONI (telecommunication), COMPIACERE (appease), LUCENTEZZA (brightness), and STRINGHE (strings). At this point we burst out laughing for different reasons but we feel united and close. The activity made us play together. The following step is the activity that asks student to describe "what you were - what you are now" both in the native country and in Italy.

The fact that C. had reached a good knowledge of the Italian language was important for her to understand the simile. I tried not to speak French and we made it. It's clear how much this girl is able to learn and how much effort she puts in everything.

The results were pretty moving; she constantly compared herself to natural elements with clear and incisive symbols. At home C. is a *flower among trees*. In school she is a *bird alone in her nest*. In her country she is a *tree with water, flowers and wind*. In Italy she is a *small plant with few leaves*.

There is no need to be a professional psychologist in order to understand how sure C. feels in her old environment and how fragile she is in the "new" one.

The last part I would like to talk about is the question "what would you like to do when you grow up?"; C.'s dream is to become a "secretary". A smile appeared on my face. She adds she doesn't know if she will manage to do it because "we don't

always have money”. Eventually I understood that this path was important for me, too. It made me realize once again that the greatness of a dream is our commitment to achieve it and not its originality.

The student I observed is Senegalese and attends second grade in middle school. More than 10% of all students are non-Italian native speakers; nationalities are for the most part Albanian and Rumanian but also Indian (from Punjab), Moroccan and Senegalese.

This student was born in Arezzo in 1999 and she is a year older than her schoolmates. She went to Italian kindergartens and elementary school. When she was in 2nd grade she went back to Senegal with her family and stayed there for two years and then she moved back to Italy. When she came back here, she started the 4th grade.

At the beginning of middle school teachers said that the girl was a rebel and had relational problems with classmates but not with teachers. In the previous year these assumptions were confirmed by previous teachers because relationships with peers, despite the girl meeting new students, were oftentimes difficult.

This girl carries out many home duties for the family. Her family is made up of her mother and two younger brothers of whom she cares everyday, day and night. Her father shows up rarely (he lives in Senegal). Her family is Muslim and celebrate religious events with other Senegalese people.

She was able to have good school outcomes: she speaks French and Italian correctly as well as a local Senegalese language and she is pretty skilled even if her commitment is not always constant. During the previous school year there were problems that involved the family's welfare worker since the girl had stolen classmates' breakfasts and hidden objects to draw attention on her. Little fights and impolite manners characterized relationships with peers.

This year the situation has improved a lot and she hasn't tried to draw attention on herself so far even if she sometimes stated that she wasn't feeling fully accepted by her classmates.

The girl says she has friendly relationships with only 3-4 classmates out of a total of 24. She rarely meets with these classmates outside school hours (they are all Italian) because she lives outside of town and so her mother needs to drive her downtown where her classmates usually meet up. Chances to meet schoolmates outside school are only related to research and team works organised by teachers.

The girl meets up with other peers of her own country under suggestion of her mother. In the afternoon, starting in elementary school, she started attending a Centre run by the Municipality where some educators help students with her homework. When she doesn't attend this centre she does homework by herself or stays with her brothers and plays with them. She says that it is not always easy to

follow her brothers because they often do not want to put clothes on and start running around.

In the last two school years her attendance has always been regular and her mother was always there and interested in the meetings with the welfare worker in December and April. When filling in the Notebook of Inte(g)ra(c)tion the girl talked spontaneously about her story and her native country involving traditions and important events referring to her native language. When dealing with this topic, she never showed refusal and she always showed trust in adults. Her motivation to learn got stronger and she showed greater interest in the subject I teach: Italian literature.

Changes in Greece Regarding Immigration

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1. Background of Immigration in Greece and changes in the last years

Immigration (including illegal immigrants) is nowadays among the hottest and most topical subjects of political debate in Greece. Immigration trends in Greece have been around for more than 30 years, however mass immigration was witnessed after 1991, i.e. when the Albanian communist regime collapsed. Since that era, Greece has been receiving massive unauthorized and uncontrolled flows of immigrants, which limits the availability and reliability of relevant data and statistics. Nowadays, Greek authorities and researchers agree unanimously that the immigrant population comprises much more than 1 million third country nationals (i.e. more than 10% of the total population and more than 12% of the labour force). Prevalent countries of origin for immigrants include Eastern and South-Eastern countries (notably Albania (contributing the majority of the immigrants), Bulgaria, Georgia and Romania), as well as Asian immigrants (notably from Pakistan and India). In view of the above situation the Greek immigration policy has (over the last 15 years) strived to restrict immigration (legal and illegal) given that immigration is acknowledged to have adverse effects in social, economic, and cultural aspects of the Greek society. Following the massive flow of immigrants in the 1990s, the Greek government introduced the Immigration Law 1975/1991 under the “Entrance-exit, sojourn, employment, expulsion of aliens, determination of refugee status and other provisions”. This law provided a framework for the regulation of entrance, exit and sojourn of foreigners non EU-nationals. The law reinforced state controls towards third country nationals at the state borders and in the country interior. The effectiveness of Law 1975/1991 is questioned since it failed to essentially achieve containment of irregular migration. Hence, in April 2001, a new

Immigration Law was adopted in Greece under the title “Entry and residence of aliens on Greek territory acquisition of Greek citizenship by naturalisation and other provisions”. This law attempted to establish framework conditions for an extensive long-term migration policy in line with Greece’s requirements while at the same time harmonising with migration policies pursued by other EU-member states. However, the goal was not achieved as proven by the evolution of migration in Greece.

In addition to the above laws, Greece has signed a number of bilateral agreements with other countries targeting the field of immigration policy. Such agreements have been concluded with Eastern and South-Eastern European countries (i.e. Croatia (1995), Slovenia (1995), Romania (1995), Bulgaria (1996), Poland (1996) and Turkey (2000; 2001)). Bilateral agreements serve the purpose of police cooperation against organized crime, as well as the more effective control of joint borders.

Overall, national immigration policies in Greece can be hardly characterized as being successful. Furthermore, systematic research on the process of policy-making in this area is very much underdeveloped and characterized by a lack of credible data. Greece is therefore in need of effective immigration policies that could control legal immigration, while also ensuring the graceful integration of the foreigners of the country. Such policies must seriously take into account the labour needs of the Greek market. Past legal frameworks, even though not efficient, outline the main needs of the country in terms of immigration policy development. These needs include the requirement for consistent data collection, the requirement for developing policies in collaboration with neighbouring countries as well as the requirement for transnational and EU-wide policy harmonization.

Lack of developing an immigration policy in Greece has led to a number of negative results, starting from change of behaviour of Greeks towards migrants to the rise of neonazi party in the Greek parliament.

Traditionally, Greeks are considered to be generous and show a great hospitality to strangers and those who are away from home. *Xenia* (Greek: ξενία, *xenía*, trans. "guest-friendship) is the ancient Greek concept of hospitality, the generosity and courtesy shown to those who are far from home and/or associates of the person bestowing guest-friendship. The rituals of hospitality created and expressed a reciprocal relationship between guest and host expressed in both material benefits (such as the giving of gifts to each

party) as well as non-material ones (such as protection, shelter, favors, or certain normative rights). Hospitality is an important point of pride for Greeks. In villages, it is not uncommon for villagers to show up at the door of a resident foreigner (or even a temporary visitor renting a room) with a sack full of fresh tomatoes, or even a bottle of local olive oil.

Unfortunately, the massive flows of immigrants in Greece accompanied with higher rates of criminality and lack of a successful integration policy, have brought Greece to a strange situation. Famous Greek hospitality no longer exists (especially in big cities), most Greeks have become racists blaming immigrants for the rise of criminality and at last, but no least, the concept of hospitality (*xenios Zeus*) is now ironically used to describe police's activities to arrest and jail illegal immigrants. Not to mention, the rise of a neonazi party (Golden Dawn) in the Greek parliament, a party which seems to have an effective impact to a significant percentage of Greek population.

2. National experience: focus group in Greece and results

Throughout the POI researches, for improvement of Notebook of Integration, one of the methodologies used was the Focus Group Research. The main goal of the Focus Group Research (FGR) is to gain general and detailed information about the *teacher's perception of migrant student's integration* in an educational process. The next of FGR aims is to diagnose teacher's training needs and teacher's expectations towards training offers in the area of school integration process.

In the project POI we also used Expert Focus Group (as one of techniques of Focus Group methods), which means, that the members of the research group are *experts* of teaching in secondary schools.

Following the guidelines of the project, members of the group:

- had 5 years or more of work experience
- were employed in different schools.

The project focus group were minimum 6 and maximum 10 respondents. The researchers were one moderator and 1- 2 assistants.

Focus groups in Greece took place with teachers of schools with high percentage of immigrant students and interview with two experts. The atmosphere in the teachers' focus groups might be considered positive since they were very willing to answer all questions although there was great

difficulty in taking pictures or personal data. However, in general, they were suspicious about being assessed and losing their job.

Group members were asked about their perception of “migrant’s diversity” in secondary schools, their perception of “integration” (the meaning of the term and process, the state of MS integration) their perception of methods and tools useful for school MS integration, their self-perception of the current state of key, teacher’s skills/ competences and their training expectations.

Concerning migrants diversity and integration, all group members focused on absolute need of “integration (or reception) classes”, that means special classes for 1-2 years so that migrant students could catch up with other students especially in language skills. What was highlighted from literature teachers was the fact that migrant students have problems in language; on the other hand mathematicians were quite satisfied with math skills of migrant students. For some group members, their first association with migrant student integration was when they were students and were taught some basics for students migration. For other group members, first association was when they started working as teachers, a fact that was quite difficult as they admitted they had no special training. One member of the focus group had lived and taught in Germany for a few years and pointed out that the school system there had fully integrated migrants. Other focus group members didn’t have any experience from abroad but had heard that the integration process is advanced, especially in France and Finland, according to their opinion.

In Greece, migrant students represent almost one third of students in secondary education. A great percentage of them come from Albania, are second and third generation immigrants and have been integrated very well into the Greek school system, speak and behave in a way that is difficult to separate them from Greek students. There are also Bulgarian, Indian and Pakistan migrant students, who are considered to have more difficulties, especially in language. Indian and Pakistan students were also regarded as “isolated”, since teachers mentioned that they usually sit alone, don’t mix up with other students and are very quiet. They are however, very good at English language, an English literature teacher mentioned.

Concerning process of migrant students integration, all focus group teachers pointed out that there is no such “formal” process run by the Ministry of Education and that they are based on their individual skills, competences and efforts to integrate students in their classroom. They constantly mentioned

they need training in order to coordinate this process as well as “formal” instructions for methods and tools they can use at school.

Their suggestions for a book of integration were the following: the book should be easy to read without too many pages, should contain the social dimension of integration, short info about every migrants culture, specific tools, methods and techniques from a psychosocial point of view, and at last, should not be theoretical but practical.

3. The Absolute Need for a Notebook of Integration

The presence of significant numbers of migrant pupils in Greece has important implications for education systems. Schools must adjust to their presence and build their particular needs into the traditional focus on providing high quality and equitable education. Education is a key for ensuring that these pupils are equipped to become integrated, successful and active citizens of the host country, in other words migration can be positive both for migrants and for the host country. Schools must play a leading role in creating an inclusive society, as integration at class level is a trial of integration in society. Migration can be enriching for the educational experience of all: linguistic and cultural diversity may bring an invaluable resource to schools. It can help to deepen and strengthen pedagogies, skills, and knowledge itself.

Unfortunately, as pointed out by the Focus Group teachers, there is no formal process run by the Ministry of Education which will provide the teachers with important skills, techniques and tools to deal with everyday life in their classroom. The usage of a simple and easy-to-use tool will be of a great importance, especially for teachers who have no previous experience or training with immigrant students. Intercultural skills of students –as well of teachers- and the capacity to enter into a tolerant and respectful dialogue with people from a different cultural background are competences that need to be, and can be, built. In this perspective the project POI offers the adaptation at European context of a student’s observation instrument – the Book of Integration, designed by Oxfam Italia and previously tested in Italy by many Educational and Local Authorities, also with aim of updating it to Multilingualism and Talents skills valorization thanks to collaboration with qualified European partners.

The Book of Integration invites to observe the dynamics of integration into a variety of contexts and from different point of views (the teachers who

observe, professionals as cultural mediators, linguistic facilitators etc.). The Book of Integration then invites to collect migrant pupil achievements, fears, motivations and the learning strategies implemented in the classroom.

The groups of teachers that in past years have experienced the training course and the Notebook found the path extremely useful for several reasons:

- 1) it forces you to reflect on what's happening in the classroom, around and over learning;
- 2) it allows children biographies to emerge and be accepted;
- 3) it allows the observation of the different steps of integration and to consider simultaneously all the dimensions: L2 learning, the class context, interaction with adults, daily behaviours, motivations and attitudes.

The Book is a flexible tool. It can be used as a whole or just in some sessions, for the whole scholastic year or just for a semester. It can be used by one teacher but it deploys its best effects when it is used by more teachers working in the same class. It is also a way to monitor the efficacy of internal instruments and activities towards migrants students (L2 courses, linguistic and cultural mediators employment, creativity expression courses). In this respect, it is a tool exactly as described and expected by the Greek Focus Group Teachers.

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