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The PERMIT Teachers' training approach: *Learning from experience, experiencing to learn*

abstract

This article aims to introduce the envisioned strategy lying behind the teachers' training programme implemented within PERMIT project. The project considered, from the beginning, the teachers' education as a crucial component of an educational dispositive (in the sense of U. Margiotta's conception of dispositive as social mechanisms enacting a human group doing, thinking, acting) aimed to generate innovation regarding the project's topic (intercultural education for civil society dialogue). Intercultural competences to manage complex learning processes in the complex scenario of three diverse realities dialoguing into PERMIT project was to be a concrete goal of training. But at the same time, such a dispositive for teachers' education would support reflection about the process of formation of teachers' professional identity for the new hybrid and fluid learning space; the concept of formal training with too structured activities needed to be revisited on the light of a new strategy of in service training.
In fact, the strategy focused on supporting contact with peers in the local reality and across frontiers; the use of online learning tools; coaching to further experimentation in class and the creative process of learning design undertaken by teachers in sistematizing the many resources and ideas coming out from their work in class ("Pedagogy of learning unit"). In the end, the recognition of non-formal and informal learning would lead to the accreditation of learning by the University Ca' Foscari of Venice

Questo articolo mira ad introdurre la strategia incorporata al programma di formazione degli insegnanti implementato attraverso il progetto PERMIT. Il progetto considerava sin dall'inizio la formazione degli insegnanti come componente cruciale di un dispositivo formativo (nel senso della concezione di U. Margiotta (1997), come meccanismo che consente un gruppo umano di fare, pensare e attuare seguendo una certa direzione strategica) mirato a generare innovazione con relazione al topico del progetto (educazione interculturale per aprire al dialogo della società civile). Nel contempo, tale dispositivo per la formazione degli insegnanti ha generato un percorso riflessivo da parte dei formatori sul processo di sviluppo dell'identità professionale dell'insegnante immerso ial mechanisms enacting people doing, thinking, acting) aimed to generate innovation regarding the project's topic (intercultural education for civil society dialogue). Intercultural competences to manage complex learning processes in the complex scenario of three diverse realities dialoguing into PERMIT project was to be a concrete goal of training. But at the same time, such a dispositive for teachers' education would support reflection about the process of formation of teachers' professional identity for the new hybrid and fluid learning space; the concept of formal training with too structured activities needed to be revisited on the light of a new strategy of in service training.
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Key Words Teacher In-Service Training, Intercultural Education, Enlarged Cultural Contexts of Learning, Activity Theory.

1. Teachers Professionalism at the cutting edge: *shaping a Professional Identity for the Lifelong Learning Society:*

We are living in a defining moment, when the world in which teachers do their work is changing profoundly. The future learning agenda is fraught with uncertainty: broad societal questions determine its setting, while new knowledge paradigms emerge.

From one hand migrations to the fluid communications with the outside world introduced by technologies, the dynamics of cultural and linguistic diversity have started to question the monolithic knowledge of national curriculum, brought into the class by the teacher. Of that knowledge, considered "encapsulated" (Engrestrom, 1991a, 1991b) teachers have been traditionally considered *transmitters, technicians, operators*.

From the other hand, the need of shaping *key competences for lifelong learning society* (European Commission, 2006), is clearly emphasized by policy priorities of influent transnational bodies, that claim for new pedagogical practices in order to prepare citizens and workers for a complex new society, in a context of crisis and change.

Teaching for the Lifelong Learning Society means to prepare young people for a world of in security (Hargreaves, 2003), but also, to give them the possibility to express their cultures of learning within the negotiated action of teaching and learning in school systems. Cultures that break the wall of classroom, that ask for an enlarged vision of the school "frontiers". This in time means: teaching across frontiers, bringing together boundaries to promote the several minds and intelligences, as potential that a new society need to work.

School need a transformation process to become a caring and creative place where learning communities – both constituted by students and teachers – can work in a joint venture. The "clockwork orange" age has ended, and so forth the school that prepared people to enter that old world (Carneiro 2007): mainly because these schools have undermined creativity, innovation, and the potential of peoples to express their own – millenary – culture and knowledge, imposing standardized version and divisiveness (Freire, 1970; Bourdieu, 1970).

It seems that innovation, mobility, e-skills, the modernization of the labour market and social inclusion, all challenges which the EU has now chosen to meet not separately, but within a unified strategy (see Europe 2020 flaship Initiative), recognize the crucial role played by educational systems and professionals operating within them (European Commission, 2010).

Therefore, teachers' professionalsim is at the center of the debate on educational shifting (UNESCO, 2006; European Commission, 2007; OECD, 2005, 2009, 2010).

In fact, teachers cannot keep on teaching from an ethnocentric, static, acritic vision of pedagogical practice, having to incorporate comunicative, linguistic technological and managerial competences to become a facilitators of a fluid and par-

ticipatory learning processes. Their classrooms need to be opened to the several cultures, to the territorial dynamics, to the new technologies and social web.

Quality teachers are considered one of the most relevant elements within the ET 2020 strategy. In fact, European discourse focuses on common principles for European teachers' competences and qualifications (European Commission, 2005), as well as on improving teacher training (European Commission, 2007).

The document of 2005 sets three broad competence areas for well-qualified, mobile teachers as lifelong learners: (i) working with knowledge, technology and information; (ii) working with fellow human beings; (iii) working with and in society. This recalls the focus on general, transversal competences such as learning to learn, citizenship and digital competences in the European document on the eight key competences for lifelong learning (European Commission, op. cit).

This complex scenery create the conditions for a big impact on professional identity: is the teacher a craftman of changing, an innovator, a technician, a communicator, a projectist?

While the society claims for the intervention of teachers, at the same time it doesn't recognize their competence to intervene. (Margiotta, 1997; 2005, 2007). In fact, the teaching profession has been defined "paradoxical" (Hargreaves, op.cit) because at the center of a triangle of competing interests: to catalyze the opportunities of knowledge society; to develope and realize educational expectations,to protect against menaces of exclusion, security an public life, with the better efficacy and minor costs.

Teachers suffer the pressures of old fashioned schooling systems, hierarchies, and public bureaucracy in daily working activities, whereas they are also requested to intervene with innovation and flexibility. Teaching could be declared a "paradoxical profession" (Hargreaves, op.cit) and many teachers are in the middle of a deep professional crisis (lack of esteem about their role in society).

The EC 2007 report, highlights, in fact, the lack of consistency and coordination between different aspects of teacher education, low budgets for professional development, and few incentives to promote teacher motivation and retention. There is urgent need of provide legal recognition of professional qualifications to reinforce European teacher mobility, as well as quality standards for the attractiveness of European teaching and teacher training systems. In spite of these repeated European recommendations, the processes of reform on national levels have been slow, contradictory and with varying speeds, since the Open Method of Coordination and the principle of subsidiarity have so far tended to safeguard national agencies over ET policies.

Which kind of in-service training experiences could tackle the above mentioned paradoxes? In which extent is it possible to open time and space for reflection on practice and a critical positioning of teachers with regard to the complexities of their daily professional activities? Being aware that the specific question of teacher education is closely interconnected with social policy, innovation policy, research policy, enterprise policy as well as the strategies on multilingualism, promoted by national and supranational bodies (European Commission, op.cit), how to take advantage of policy priorities of development where teaching is supposed to play a key role?

There's complete agreement at the international level that professionalism can be achieved through Higher education degree (the so called *universitisation* process in teachers' training – Zgaga, 2006a –); but there's a raising concern about valorization of practices and professional identity of teachers, considering them as researchers (Darling-Hammond et. al. 2005; Altet, 2009; Caena & Margiotta, 2010) as experts whose potential could be developed through active participation to teachers' communities (Whitehead, 1989; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006); as it has been emphasized these activities could lead to professional affiliation, motivation and thus, excellence.

The point that every experience of educational innovation need to afford is, in fact, the organization of an efficient training system that, being embedded on the teachers' professional life, helps them to reflect on practice and achieve expertise and self-confidence, taking advantage of innovation to become key actors in educational shifting.

2. The specific context of PERMIT project

The PERMIT project ("*Promote Education and Reciprocal Understanding through Multicultural Integrated Teaching*") aimed at contributing to fulfilling the objective of promoting the Civil Society Dialogue between the European Union and Turkey with specific focus on ensuring a better knowledge and understanding of Turkey within the European Union.

As it is clear the project assumed from the beginning, that quality education at secondary level ...

is to be considered a key to fostering the development of a vibrant civil society. Secondary education is an extremely effective way to diffuse knowledge about different cultures and the different approaches and mentalities needed to face the challenges of integration between Turkey and EU (Original project, CIRDFA, 2007:9)

On the basis of this consideration, the project worked on the idea that teachers could be an important instrument to foster cultural understanding, reciprocal knowledge, active citizenship, awareness of issues concerning gender equality, environment protection and human rights, personal responsibility etc; and that students benefiting from an increased quality in education could become more active members of the civil society.

Research activity undertaken at the first stages of the project, done by intercultural groups of researchers, experienced teachers and NGO exponents from partner countries, explored and compared teaching methods and their underlining values (see "Cultural Values influencing Schooling System Report", CIRDFA, 2009), being some of the leading questions: *How much do educational approaches influence changes in society and how should they be coherent with existing values and cultures? How could different teaching methods encourage the valorisation of diverse skills and minds in students, thus favouring more inclusion and lower rates of early school leave at secondary school level?*

From this initial activity, that counted on both desk-research and a questionnaire with the participation of more than 500 teachers and students from Slovenia, Italy and Turkey, it emerged clearly that secondary education institutions in both Turkey and the EU often face serious challenges with few methodological tools

and little didactic support available for the teaching personnel. Innovative material and support through a community of practitioners is what teachers often asked for during previous seminars involving teachers from partner countries. At the same time, in the partner countries, there are examples of excellence in secondary education, with the presence of schools and universities which have developed theories and practices on intercultural education and have at their disposal researchers and experienced teachers whose joint work on innovative programmes and teaching methods would produce extraordinary results. However these experiences are often isolated and come from private secondary schools.

As emerged from the literature and official documentation, both Turkey and European Union partner countries are facing the challenge of a rapidly changing and increasingly heterogeneous society. For this reason the capacity to have an effective communication, aware of cultural differences, is becoming a key element for the civil society dialogue.

Teachers are often expected to adapt their teaching methods and programmes to changing needs; tensions and changes within societies often have an amplified eco in classes to which teachers are either not prepared or are unprepared to deal with. Curricula and teaching strategies in partner countries are not keeping pace with the growing need to have deep awareness of the distinctive features of ones' own culture and critical capacity to engage in understanding of different cultures and value systems.

It's worth to bring here some of the conclusions of a recent World Bank report on Turkey[1] which underlined that

> ...The significant progress in education made by Turkey in recent years, noting that such progress manifested itself with the improving quality of educational opportunities, students winning international awards, and serious support given to education by the private sector. However the proportion of EU citizens between the ages of 20 and 24 with a high school diploma was 80 percent, while the same rate was 55 percent in Ankara, and 35 percent in the province of Kars (a city near the Russian border). It noted that Turkey needs to have a higher proportion of high school graduates in order to compete with Europe and the rest of the world, noting that the EU's aim was to have 85 percent of its population age 22 and over be high school graduates by 2015.

According to the same report quality of teachers is an issue, with educators facing a serious shortage of educational materials. The same report noted that schools are not made to answer for their students' underperformance and have no autonomy. Recommendations included improving quality of teaching, giving more focus to education of teachers at national level.

Some more aspects of attention in secondary education were selected by partner universities during the preliminar research phase. These are:

1 World Bank Report No. 32450-TU, *Turkey - Education Sector Study - Sustainable Pathways to an Effective, Equitable, and Efficient Education System for Preschool through Secondary School Education*, 31/12/2005, Washington. The document was presented during a Conference with the same title that took place in Ankara in March 2006.

- hierarchy, which if too strict does not favour participation, inclusion and freedom of expression;
- assessment based only on certain skills and knowledge, thus having high rates of exclusion;
- truth and knowledge: in order to develop intercultural and respectful minds a reflection on "how do we know what we know" could be added to existing programs;
- different approaches to History, with the usage of diverse sources. Moreover, information on EU history, functioning and policies can be improved through education.

In Italy and Slovenia there is a clear need for education models able to cope with an ever more multicultural and fast-changing society. Students need intellectual tools which would enable them to know and read the cultural phenomena surrounding them. In times of dramatic changes, it is the understanding, analysing and adaptation skills (critical thinking, autonomy) which matter, rather than the mere transfer of notions. Curiosity, capacity to engage in dialogue, respectful mind have to be enhanced to favour dialogue as opposed to ignorant fear for what is different.

On the basis of this first picture, the project would intervene within education spaces, enabling teachers and consequently pupils to better understand historical and cultural interactions between Europe and Turkey and cultural values that could be considered at basis of communication.

Within this perspective, teachers needed to be supported into a process of development of teaching materials that could allow intercultural dialogue. To this regard, a teacher community set up by the project, would work on themes and methodologies, developing learning units on the European Union and on themes such as gender equality, human rights, freedom of expression and ethical behaviour thus favouring deeper understanding of EU acquis in these subjects among pupils. Moreover, the project by favouring the diffusion of new educational approaches, would tacitly favour students' empowerment and participation as active citizens in an intercultural dialogue among countries involved.

The initial exploration of these themes through research, was going to be connected to piloting in class and learning about otherness. In fact, this bottom-up approach, was supposed to support participation and empowerment at every activity stage, being teachers and NGO exponents involved in developing innovation and students directly involved in the experimentation of innovation, thus supporting the development of a vibrant and lively civil society.

In the end, the project attempted to focus on the valorisation of those human resources (the teaching body) who are responsible for the education of the youth and therefore influence the future of each territory. This elements where going to delineate an innovative in-service training approach.

3. Steps to the creation of an innovative in-service training approach

The preliminar research outputs were not only the construction of a logical framework where place the project activities —- using conceptual and theoretical elements, as well as empirical data raised through fieldwork, and confrontation among researchers. Preliminar research allowed also to think teachers' training

from inside, within a process of construction of learning activities and rethinking the matter, the concepts, the ideas leading to an intercultural experience.

Considering Margiotta's assumption, this approach was going to produce an *educational dispositive,* in the sense of a space of reflection on action that shape actors' intentions within a strategy of transformation of the own reality (Margiotta, 2006).

The idea of making teachers from several nationalities to interact in order to create the topics and choose methods of teaching within the creation and experimentation of learning units was leaded by the hypothesis that this "learning space" could open to reflections of teachers on their own cultural representations about disciplines and teaching methods, helping them to reshape practice with impact on their professional identities; an in-service teachers' training approach experimented in other international projects (Raffaghelli, 2008; 2009).

Lastly, the training approach analysis took into account two other important theoretical inputs: that of Zone of Proximal Development developed by Lev Vygotskij (Vygotskij, 1934, in Daniels, Cole, Wertsch, 2007) and the following Activity Theory (Leont'ev, 1978, in Engestrom, 1987), considering particularly the Scandinavian approach to the AT, that studies "Learning by Expanding" (Engestrom, 1987), by reformulating Leont'ev Activity triangles towards a community perspective (Engestrom, op.cit)

> Activity theory is a psychological meta-theory, paradigm, or framework, with its roots in Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky's cultural-historical psychology. Its founders were Alexei N. Leont'ev (1903-1979), and Sergei Rubinshtein (1889-1960) who sought to understand human activities as complex, socially situated phenomena and go beyond paradigms of psychoanalysis and behaviorism. It became one of the major psychological approaches in the former USSR, being widely used in both theoretical and applied psychology, in areas such as education, training, ergonomics, and work psychology. (Bedny & Meister, 1997)Activity theory theorizes that when individuals engage and interact with their environment, production of tools results. These tools are "exteriorized" forms of mental processes, and as these mental processes are manifested in tools, they become more readily accessible and communicable to other people, thereafter becoming useful for social interaction. (Fjeld et al. 2002). The key elements of Activity Theory , according to Engestrom model, are: Individual (the people involved in an activity system) Object (the reason of creation of the whole system of activity); Tools (that mediates the relation among object of activity and individuals' psychology, and introduces the cultural variables of previous socio-cultural activity systems); Division of Labour (Roles within the activity system); Rules (Ethical norms and values regulating interactions among individuals, tools and object of activity); Community (the organized human group interacting to achieve a certain result of their activity, which is also identified with the process of creation and at the same shapes a new group and individual identity).

Using the theoretical framework proposed by Activity Theory, Raffaghelli (2010a) explored the concept of learning within international communities of learning and practice. The PERMIT learning activities, in fact, according to the scheme of Raffaghelli (op. cit), could create an "intercultural zone of proximal de-

velopment", that could promote expansive learning with regard to cultural identity, taking part in the construction of new "third" cultural spaces which "enlarge" the original cultural context of reference: *enlarged cultural contexts to learn* (Raffaghelli, op.cit).

Let's consider first the *dispositive* envisaged within PERMIT project to later conceptualize it through as Activity system that might produce expansive learning with impact in the reformulation of representations, images, concepts linked to the intercultural competence, towards the generation of new, enlarged, cultural contexts of learning.

Specifically, the educational *dispositive* of the Permit project came out from the conjunction of the following dimensions:

- the involved teachers' needs to undertake significant actions within their specific school contexts (organizational dimensions, institutional history)
- intercultural representations of teachers as person and professional within their schools;
- intercultural representations within the class, among students and their families.

In fact, once the several playing dimensions were unburdened and understood, the research team introduced to the teachers some educational goals important to reach a scenery of intercultural dialogue. The same were hence further analyzed by teachers, taking to the formulation of training hypothesis that could lead to phases of formation of the needed skills within the framework of intercultural competence.

The coherence between teachers' learning activities, and experimentation in class as part of a process of learning design, was originated by the following decisions:

- Coherently with the preliminar research within the training context, that has highlighted the expectations of project beneficiaries of changing hegemonic paradigms within the school, against a social model and an identity model of "national" citizenships. This last conceives the subjectification (according to the concept of Deleuze and Guattari, introduced by Minello[2]) of the self and culture in antinomies, linked to the language, the history and traditions. The intercultural paradigm introduced by the PERMIT project was going to propose, instead, the "re-subjectification" of the self as a process of self-analysis to deconstruct and reconstruct concep-

2 Subjectification (French: subjectivation) is a philosophical concept coined by Michel Foucault and elaborated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. It refers to the construction of the individual subject. The concept has been often used in critical theory, sometimes with Louis Althusser's concept of interpellation. In Gilbert Simondon's theory of individuation, subjectification precedes the subject in the same way as the process of individuation precedes the creation of the individual. While the classical notion of a subject considers it as a term, Foucault considered the process of subjectification to have an ontological pre-eminence on the subject as a term.

tions, ideas, beliefs of the personal and group spheres, through the direct confrontation with otherness, in a "zone of proximal development" (using the Vygotskian concept), created by the project.

- Considering this evidence, the Scientific Committee and the research team facilitated teachers' learning introducing "stimulii" (research evidence based materials about intercultural communication and pedagogy; instructional design resources; teachers' portfolio) to generate the "intercultural zone of proximal development", towards a model of intercultural training not explicitely settled, but mainly intrinsic to the learning processes enacted within the process of activity aimed to generate new "hybrid" production (the learning units and the experimentation in class). This was called a model of "form-action" (form-azione), that give shape to the action through training activities (the latin word "formazione" refers to training, but entails a deep discussion about "shaping" skills and competences, diverse from "education"). This implicit model motivated the choice of Permit team of allowing participations in the process of construction of the same practices without imposing prior instructions. The idea was link activity, problem solving and learning to the process of creation of innovation in class, as part of a teachers' education process.
- The establishment of such a framework characterized the several phases of reflection and activity, as "milestones" to reflect in groups about the activities in progress. The process would allow peer-learning (from open, international communities of practice) and self-learning of teachers. This modality was to be extended to students in class, that would take a critical positioning with regard to the process of creation / experimentation of activities in class. Thus, the "travel" throughout the inconsistencies and problems posed by the relation with otherness, or crossing the boundaries of the well-known substance of own cultural representation (travelling through the double-bind, in Engenstrom's words) would enact intercultural reflection and impact on the construction of an intercultural competence.
- This was in fact the idea of using tools of self-assessment in the end of the process of experimentation, as proposed by Primorska University.

Therefore, the attempt was to generate an international learning community, that collaborating together build effective metaphors of "*new learning places without frontiers*".

Places that become meaningful, exposing "teachers students" to an enlarged cultural environment, diverse, but comprehensive of the own original cultural context, because built by themselves.

In fact, the process of giving sense to the action of participation, would generat opportunities to reflect on ethnocentric teaching practices, with impact on motivation, teaching methodologies, and then, to the perception of their own role as social actors.

In terms of an "Activity Triangle" the educational dispositive of the Training Model could be formulated within the Scheme 1.

Scheme 1
Respresentation of the Training Model as Activty System

The Training Model, experimented through several training experiences within international projects of education cooperation from the involved universities, aims to **interwove formal learning (seminars and e-learning) to the valorization of expertise and teachers' practical knowledge (non-formal learning).**

In synthesis, the distinguishing elements were:

- Initial inputs of research evidence to understand the foundamentals of intercultural dialogue and pedagogical practices.
- Expert teachers as core of a growing Community[3]
- New incoming teachers sharing good practices across frontiers
- Piloting created materials and involving students as critical participants in a "joint venture".
- Online / FTF training model, basing on ILVP model (Four Leaves Taxonomy, Margiotta, 2006)
- Reseachers accompanying the whole process of creation, helping teachers' re-

3 The concept of "Community" is that of Engestrom (Community or externalization within a determined social context, which is to say, all actors involved in the activity system, sharing the interest for a certain object of activity and agreeing on the basic rules and division of labour). Nevertheless, the concept of Wenger "Community of Practice" would perfectly apply to the growing group of teachers participating to the activities, sharing expert knowledge. It is worth to say that Wenger's concept was build in a context of discussion of Activity Theory within the US (precisely, the activities of the *Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition* of San Diego between the late 80s and all the 90's)

flection on practices (Teachers' Trhought / Practical Knowledge / Identity Process) —> instruments as portfolio (Koc, 2004) became crucial
- Participatory Evaluation process (triangulation)
- Recognition of the learning process as certification

Competences that the model aimed to promote (Teachers' Learning Profile), to implement teaching for intercultural dialogue:

- Understand the emergence of LLL, multicultural and hyperconnected society and its incorporation into trans-national policies for education and teachers professional development
- Analyze the theoretical, policy implication of *interculturalism* in various learning contexts
- Identify the concepts of learning and development that inform current thinking about *interculturalism* in a range of areas of education and pedagogy
- Consider questions about *interculturalism* in relation to the needs of their own societal environment, as country, community, school and class
- Identify good and best practices in intercultural education both in national/local and international environment, becoming able of communicate or interact to learn about and in time replicate them.
- Design innovative teaching units where significant and contextualized intercultural issues are tackled: a) from the point of view of discipline; b) from the point of view of teaching methods; c) from the point of view of assessment of diverse learning styles; d) from the point of view of school organization and community networking
- Undertake action research in an area of intercultural education, which will be of value in developing teaching practices in their own community, country and trans nationally
- Undertake professional reflection on intercultural teaching and learning in order to develop new areas of the own professional identity
- Promote peer collaboration across frontiers and within school, in order to support cooperative development and assessment of intercultural education initiatives within school system and teaching/learning processes

3.1. *From theory about learning design to the model of reseach and "form-action"*

At this point, the assumptions of intercultural training adopted in order to obtain the expected educational impact, were integrated by an instructional design model. This last helped the conceptualisation of the several learning phases, in terms of trainers' activities, but also as the kernel of the educational dispositive.

The model chosen to address instructional design was the *Four Leaves (Quadrifoglio)*: **ILEP framework** (*information, laboratory, evaluation, personalization*)[4]. The

4 This model is developed in Italian language in the book of Margiotta *Pensare la formazione. Strutture esplicative, trame concettuali, modelli di organizzazione*. Translation of the concept is yet difficult, considering that "*formazione*" cannot be translated directly as training (the activities that promote adult learning in working organizations), education (activities

CIRDFA group has been testing this model in several adult training activities (particularly teachers' training) with successful results on the trainers' organization of learning environments and activities, and with impact on trainees understandings about learning process (deuterolearning, Bateson, 1972). Considering this achievements, CIRDFA introduced the model, which was hence adopted by the international research group and by Scientific Committee.

ILEP is an instrumental framework that defines a teaching progressively oriented to promote different steps in the dynamic, cognitive and metacognitive growth of students. This framework's references are psychological and educational research of constructivist perspective. Moreover ILEP framework aims to discover and raise emotional dimensions of learning and it moves to qualify step by step the learning environments.

The ILEP framework contains and formalizes the following hypothetical steps of teaching action:

- INFORMATION: This process communicates the knowledge, focusing on the activation and the organisation on epistemic and experience schemes. In this step, the teacher promotes the student to the induction of new information and of new patterns of reasoning and analogical understanding.

- LABORATORY: It is the whole of the activities with which students learn to prove, falsify, corroborate what they learn; laboratory is the experimental environment in which students apply what they learnt to problematic situations of human experience.

- EVALUATION: It includes recursive steps of analysis, interpretation and justification of learning results with a particular focus on their generalization. This step is regarded as a continuous participate analysis of learning process by the students.

- PERSONALIZATION: It is a recursive action that promotes students' ability to explore and identify rules, experiences and patterns. This is an inventive step: students learn to mastery knowledge and experiences, in order to gain and balance attitudes, to understand world-wide differences, to speak different alphabets, to practice a well founded citizenship.

ILEP is not al locked sequence of steps but a recursive reticular process that accompanies learning in different situations. ILEP framework has been useful to teachers allowing them to explicit the formative potential of educational action.

within specific institutions that promote formal learning, and also non-formal learning guided by adults to younger people to be socialized), or, in general, "learning" (considering that the word "formazione" encloses a process of guidance, of construction of a space for learning while acting). The book attempts to undertstand educational practices in society, and their value in constituting socio-cultural spaces, being the concept of "*formazione*" (as translation emerging from the german concept of "*bildung*") a definition of intelligent and purposeful human activities of learning (and at the same time facilitating learning) that shape new socio-cultural spaces.

In fact, a learning process was envisaged as result of ILEP framework implementation, considering the levels of interaction with content and with other users in the several phases of activity within the project.

Therefore, we hypothesized learning to be enacted as phases of one general process, that reaches it highest point with content construction ——-the production of learning units by the teacher. Indeed, in the first stages, learning outcomes are only knowledge about content and metalearning about strategies to direct searching of contents; whereas in the phases that require interaction with peers and the creation of content as part of learners' activity, learning outcomes could be described rather as competence, which is to say, not only *knowing,* but mainly *knowing to do and knowing to be*.

The learning process can be described as follows:

- UNDERSTANDING. The user jumps into the learning experience, starting by understand their own learning goals, setting activities for better learning, achieving crucial information about contents, considering and ordering contents as base of a learning path; eventually -according to the level of interaction/deepening on contents, the student will use this phase to get to know the trainer and other peers of learning experience (a potential community)

- EXPLORING/DIALOGUING. The user explore the content and reflect about the topic; he/she might follow some reading keys (low levels of interaction) discuss, analyze, criticize, jointly within a growing learning community (high levels of interaction), in order to reinforce the learning space as a space of dialogue with diversity that in times reinforces identity.

- GET FEED-BACK/METALEARN. The user enter this phase when it's time to evaluate together with the trainer knowledge, skills, feelings, as achievements of learning experience. At low levels of interaction he/she will complete questionnaires and quiz; whereas at high level, the user will reflect through narrative and discussion with peers. In every case, the attempt will be to get to understand own learning strategies, participate in a general evaluation learning experience's quality in order to address new activities in a lifelong learning strategy.

- ACHIEVE/TRANSFER/CREATE. The user consider experiences he/she can generate with learned lessons from content and interactions, thinking about him/herself as creator of knowledge within the field of studies.

3.2. *The process of recognition*

Methdologies of assessment and recognition of informal learning (not only knowledge about a topic, but mainly skills and competences) take various forms, but, in every case, there's a spread use of sommative evaluation approach, with triangulation of tools and sources of information about learning outcomes. (Margiotta, 2007b). Methods currently used to recognition vary from a) Gathering evidences through classical tests with regard to professional/social activities; b) candidates'

narrative reports about the own skills and competences, obtained through formal education/professional as far as informal/non-formal learning; b) Evaluators' observations about candidates' training/working activities, both through simulation and through real everyday working situations. In any case, combining methods is crucial in order to ensure a complete assessment of performances; documentation of activities and practices are the kernel of recognition, a procedure that might envolve not only trainers' descriptions and learning outputs through the use ofg specific tools; but also, the self documentation and narrative about the learning experience, enclosed in learning outcomes -products. (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004)

Let's consider the case of PERMIT project: the recognition framework to be applied, lies on trainees activities in flexible contexts aimed to create learning units emerging from teachers' dialogue, exploration of content, and experimentation (resources). In fact, every level of interaction with resources (and with a learning community) were supposed to produce several evidences of learning that were collected in order to recognize learning. We introduce this concept through Table 2 as follows:

Evaluation Grid for ECTS recognition
Project PERMIT

STUDENT WORKLOAD / ACTIVITIES (*)	Assisted Training	Workload Factor: Fieldwork	Workload Factor: Personal Study	Total in Hs	TOTAL ECTS
Specif ic Themes of Training Course	**24**	**0**	**51**	**75 HS**	**3 ECTS**
1 Seminars	8		24		
2 Readings and Material Organization			15		
3 Group Activities	8				
4 Key Note Speakers	8		12		
Experimentation Topic (Action Research)	**20**	**32**	**48**	**100 HS**	**4 ECTS**
1 Development/ experimentation of Unit	8	24	8		
2 Uploading Project and online coaching	4	4	16		
3 Re-elaboration of ideas and final exposition of project	8	4	24		
Critical / Comparative Analysis of Practices	**9**	**4**	**12**	**25 HS**	**1 ECTS**
1 International Forum	4		2		
2 Cooperative Working online	3		6		
3 ICT on Didactics	2	4	4		
Assessment / Evaluation	15		35	**50 HS**	**2 ECTS**
1 Reflexive Analysis through questionnaires	5		25		
2 Participatory evaluation with students/social actors	10		10		
TOTAL	**68**	**36**	**146**	**250**	**10**

(*) Results of Activities go to Portfolio, where several documents were collected

Table 2 – Scheme of Recognition Process

3.3. *Specific training activities within the plan of "research/form-action"*

Let's now represent the specific plan of activities of teachers' training within the project an the regarding activities, goals, main perspectives and actions undertaken; but also, the resources mobilited, and the regarding process of recognition and accrediting of learning results (formal and non-formal).

Through the analysis of the process development, it was possible to see how the see how the above depicted activity was to shape the project's outcomes.

Training Strategy

- To build a network of teachers of secondary school that create and experiment learning units with impact on competences related to intercultural dialogue.
- Involving Teachers in "inventing" innovative education material and piloting it in classes,
- Promoting reflection on teaching strategies and approaches and their consequences on students' development as active citizens,
- creating an on-line community for teachers' reciprocal exchange and support.

Training Specific Activities

- Participation to Residential Seminars for teachers of partner countries on the project's thematic areas and related teaching strategies
- Participation to the on-line platform to support communities of researchers, teachers, and students.
- Development of education material on the project thematic areas and of concrete examples of teaching strategies that can be applied to reach the expected objectives
- Pilot experimentation in secondary schools of the exemplar teaching material produced by teacher trainees together with experienced ones;
- Review of the material to participate in a publication
- Participation to dissemination through events involving teachers, students and civil society exponents;
- Participation to Final event and launch of further cooperation through joint programmes and ongoing on-line communities.

Resources to create innovative teaching materials

It was decided, as explained before, to consolidate skills to develop autnomously the own teaching materials, enacting a process of self-learning. Teachers would become protagonist through:

- Improving quality teaching within curriculum and the own discipline, achieving an interdisciplinary perspective.
- Becoming aware of specific topics like story of interactions among Turkey and Europe, the freedom of expression, human rights, gender equity, ethical and ecological citizenship, as part of current educational programmes.
- On the basis of best practices, every teacher should elaborate an hypothesis of a learning unit that address changes in perspectives of intercultural values influencing learning and teaching towards an intercultural competence.

The units created, with the support of Permit research team, were implemented within class by the same teachers that created them. Coaching in residential seminars, as well as tutorship in online learning spaces form researchers and also from expert teachers was implemented as part of a supportive environment where activity of exploration and communication with peers was directed to generate innovation

Across the process of implementation, it was given value to the online learning environment, to which teachers' , researchers and students participated as part of a) training management -researchers' activities- b) creation of materials -teachers' training- c) piloting in class -students' activities-., building *new cultural spaces* (as Raffaghelli explains further in another chapter in this book).

Coherently with this constructivist approach, where teachers' activity was central, assessment was formative; to this purpose, an specific tool was used, that encouraged reflection and self-assessment. The tool was the Portfolio, elaborated by the research group of Primorska (Slovenia). Connected to this last work, it was studied an assessment-grid to assess the impact on the development of an intercultural competence (that encompassed intercultural sensitivity and the change on cultural representations). This grid was used both in teachers and in students, at the beginning and the end of the training (teachers) and experimentation of learning units (students). Later on, this results were traingulated with a) an "after training questionnaire" implemented by the end of training activities -developed by the CIRDFA group-; b) focus group with students about the activitiers undertaken in class; c) other activities and documents developed within the portfolio. From these activities and its results, a "teachers' dossier" was elaborated in order to accomplish the procedures of validating and acreditating learning. Nevertheless, given the legislation in Turkey, certificates had to be distributed separately, since Turkish university couldn't produce certifications in terms of ECTS.

The residential Seminars: landmarks of a process

The First Residential Seminar (12-15 February), held at Istanbul (Turkey), focused on themes that would help sparkling ideas about the learning units to be designed ahead. Some of the topics introduced and discussed were:

a) Intercultural Communication into Teaching Methods
b) Teachers' Portfolio: promoting intercultural teachers' professional identity
c) Teachers' reflection on cultural values affecting the own practices
d) Teachers innovative units' planning: introducing intercultural vision into teaching practices

The training approach was based on teachers' cooperative work, presentations, and reflection on practices. Key speakers, guest by participant University, were also included in this phase.

All produced material was uploaded on platform, in order to promote visibility and a working process that doesn't end with the Seminar in itself.

The Second Residential Seminar (9-12 April) held at Koper (Slovenia), focused on designing process and quality of learning units. This seminar was completely

dedicated to reflect on teaching units' pilot process. All materials in action were analysed and shared among colleagues from several schools.

New keynote speakers entered the Seminars to show research and best practices in order to reflect about connections between teachers' practices and outside world in integrating intercultural education.

At this point, the online platform was opened to make the students enjoy an opportunity of exchange with students from whole PERMIT network. Teachers received support within this seminar to implement this activity, from CIRDFA..

The Third Residential Seminar (4-7 June) held at Treviso (Italy) , focused on the reflection and evaluation of pilots, and to the accomplishment of teaching units for online publication. In this Seminar teachers showed learning outcomes in class through "My best Lesson" (considering a critical moment of the learning process about intercultural dimensions within the implemented learning unit).

This last seminar was also an important milestone with regard to the "reification" of achievements, in order to proceed to a publication of teachers' works. In the following months after this seminar, teachers worked in an article and in structuring their learning units. The former was to be published and distributed in the Dissemination Event; whereas the second element was placed into an online database, to be available to other interested teachers and researchers.

The final presentation and Dissemination Event had place at Istanbul, 21-23 October of the same year, while the project end was programmed by December.

Every residential seminar was concluded with time for feed-back, both important for purposes of self-assessment as well as general training evaluation. This evaluation allowed improving *in itinere* the several activities of training, both FTF and online. As we will see next, the residential seminars opened new phases of activity, attempting to solve contradictions and stucking momenta at the creative process.

Online spaces and the networked learning process : supporting the learning design process

We introduce in the table 3 the plan for networked learning activities within online spaces. Italian and Turkish groups followed this plan, whereas Slovenian group worked more intensely in FTF activities in the local contexts.

At the end of every unit, transversal, international activities where proposed, to socialize reflections at the linternational level.

Sequences	Learning goals	Resources/Activities
1st Week (February – After 1st Residential Seminar)	***Information*** Intercultural education in the complex society: pedagogical assumptions, teaching methods and the management of difference at school. ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Read and re-elaborate on an examplar Learning Unit for a brainstorming about the personal process of creation	***Information*** 01_From didactics to socio-didactics ***Laboratory*** Examples of Intercultural Learning Units
2nd Week (March)	***Information*** Implementing Intercultural Learning Design ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Read and re-elaborate on an examplar Learning Unit for a brainstorming about the personal process of creation	***Information*** 02_Intercultural Learning Design ***Laboratory*** Discussion Forum on Examples of Intercultural Learning Units
3rd Week (March)	***Information*** The teacher reflective professional ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Rethinking the own story as learner and traveller (as foreigner) in order to think about management of diversity in class.	***Information*** 03_Intercultural competence within teachers' professional identity ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Discussion forum about the own story as learner and foreigner
4th Week (March)	***Information*** Multi-identities, communication and the construction of the socio-cultural spaces ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Understand how communication operates within teaching and learning. Explore and implement teaching methods to be adopted in order to enact effective communication within the own discipline	***Information*** 04_Communication as instrument of construction of the socio-culturali spaces ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Starting the Design of the learning unit. Exchanging critical aspects of planification and asking for support in the organization of materials.
5th Week March	***Information*** Reflecting about intercultural impact of social representations and the construction of the self. Questions of Cultural Identity in class. ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Continuity to the process of planification. How to construct positive representations of otherness within the own taught subject.	***Information*** 05_Social representations and the intercultural awareness, expression and dialogue ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Continuity to te Learning Design process
6th Week April	***Information*** Reflecting on the potential of diverse minds acting together ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Continuity to the process of planification. How to put into play several intellenges in educational projects,	***Information*** 06_Diversity as resource: the theory of several intellegences (Gardner, 1993) ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** End of the process of Learning Design
7th Week April (after 2nd Residential Seminar)	***Information*** Evaluation, Assessment and self-assessment of intercultural competence: the teacher and the students as active participants ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Analysis of grids of self-assessment. Study of other tools of evaluation in class according to the units created.	***Information*** Grid of Self-Assessment elaborated by Primorska University ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Introducing the grid of Self-Assessment as part of the Learning Unit
8th Week April	***Information*** Learning in Enlarged Cultural Contexts: the virtual learning environment as space of meaning making ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Understanding and using technological tools to construct the virtual learning environment, Considering the plan established within the Learning Unit	***Information*** Presentation and tutorials (Virtual Learning Environment and Web 2.0 towards an intercultural communication) ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Planning interactions among students with the use of the Virtual Learning Environment. Activities across frontiers among Turkey, Slovenia and Italy with the use of the VLE.

From 9th to 13th h Week April/June	***Information*** Launching of experimentation in class. ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Implementing the experimental units in class. Giving feed-back to colleagues about the work in progress. Establishing joint moments of reflection with the students on activities and achievements: exploring the dimensions of intercultural competence about the discipline taught	***Information*** Information available on demand ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Coaching in activities of implementation in class: selection and analysis of critical incidents; understanding the dimensions interplaying in the "Best lesson".
From 15th to 22th h Week June/July (After third Residential Seminar)	***Information*** Sistematizing the experience undertaken in class ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Achieving/deepening on issues of academic writing to produce an article tha narrates the process of creation and impact of the PERMIT experience Achieving basics of metadata and generation of open educational resources in order to share materials created.	***Information*** Tutorial: uploading the Learning Unit to the Virtual Learning Space Guidelines: Teachers' Article ***Laboratory-Evaluation-Personalization*** Coaching in activities of sistematization of activities in class. Academic writing guidelines to produce the article, structuring the Learning Unit using basic shared dimensions to allow sharing it as open educational resource

Table 3: Networked Learning Process within PERMIT training approach

As we can see, there were three important phases of the process of teachers' training that led to the implementation of PERMIT learning units, being this last activity part of teachers' learning through their reflection on action.

If the first weeks of working attempted to guide teachers to dig into the problem of intercultural dialogue in the contemporary educational scenery, the second and mainly third phase were characterized by the focus on coaching and support to the process of creation.

With regard to the experimentation, coaching was aimed to a) assist teachers in managing the introduction of the "new" point of view of the own subject taught; b) help teachers to analyze methods enacting processes of intercultural learning; c) offer feed-back about professional performance and skills -impact on the same professional identity of teacher.

With regard to the assessment and evaluation of experimentation in class, coaching was aimed to a) obtain committement of teacher-experimenter in determining the progress of students learning considering intercultural competence framework; together with this scope, it was important to understand in which extent the own professional intervention was respondent to the goals envisaged by the original project's proposal. b) stimulate the teacher-experimenter to critically think about their own performance; c) ask the teacher to provide diagnosis of their own classes about diversity in them, monitoring progress of activities, and implementing tools of final evalutaion.

The implementation of the PERMIT learning unit: coaching and strategies in class defined through the collaborative activities among teachers.

The activities of *Learning Units Development,* started from the very first moment at Istanbul (First Residential Seminar) but teachers were induced progressively to the real elaboration of their plan and materials. The main elements of this process of creation and further implementation increased, from just group-discussion ac-

tivities, to online forums, to final coaching to use research inputs, create, remix other teachers' ideas, and lastly share the own refinished materials. Those elements, in synthesis, were:

- Subject-based "Innovation groups" initially met during international residential workshops and then continued their work locally. Contacts with groups in partner countries were kept by teachers' community through a virtual learning space (VLS: Moodle).
- Teachers were guided by experienced teachers and researchers involved in the project.
- On the basis of the analysis, some themes were selected as focus to intercultural units.
- All the produced material were presented on the VLS, inducing teachers to think their materials under certain "quality" standards and features to be shared.
- All the produced material was shared with the international community of teachers involved in the seminars.

Common criteria for Units Development were shared with other similar experiences of educational cooperation for teachers' training (from PACE Experience[5]). The suggested criteria for formative units' planning were the following:

- Promotion of knowledge about the history of interactions among Turkey and Europe.
- Promotion of knowledge and understanding of other cultural values.
- Introduction - within existing curricula – of discussions, readings, activities on human rights, gender equality, ethical behaviour and environmental protection.
- Introduction - within existing curricula – of reflection about ways of learning, different sources of knowledge and epistemology.

Furthermore, PACE class-oriented strategies were discussed and adapted to the PERMIT experience; in fact, as experimented in that previous project, action's focus should link teaching methods with the whole educational dispositive. Therefore, teachers worked on adopting shared strategies as part of the activities in local systems, as follows:

- Empirical learning: practical experiences together with theory;
- Opportunities for learning inside and outside the classroom.
- Subject material with "real life applications" and connections to the world outside the classroom.
- Diversity of teaching methods, resources and aids;
- A participatory approach to class, with students taking responsibility for contributing;
- Students challenged to develop their intercultural self, well-founded ideas and to express them in their work;
- Collaborative work amongst students and between students and teacher;
- Valorization of different mindsets and diverse skills.

5 The PACE projec "Projec Agency Cooperation Education" , INTERREG-III-2006-08. For more information visit the site www.educooperation.eu

Getting students involved

Within Learining units, teachers were supposed to implement their learning units through a similar process of coaching of their own students in participating to the virtual learning environment to meet peers from the other partner countries.

The teacher's activity leads the student to *travel the zone of proximal development* towards an *otherness* that, as it becomes more and more familiar to the same teacher, it is represented and introduced in class to the student. In this sense, the teacher operates through *fading* , appearing and disappearing to leave the student progressively autonomous in the contact with otherness. This requires progressive responsability of the student, that, through several tasks becomes aware of the other's presence. The teacher also enacts small actions of individual support to give support to students in deconstructing and reconstructing representations of otherness. Furthermore, discussions and joint work in class lead students from thinking and saying about "far" to "closer "otherness, which is to say, diversity in the same classes and communities within the territory and the school.

Operatively this phase can be concluded with the presentation of students' products of learning, collected all along the process of experimentation.

The online space, as said before, was envisaged not only as a support, but also was considered a "new" space were meaning making could take place (enacting the creation of "third cultural spaces".

With regard to the online experimentation, the coaching was implemented by the teacher according to the following strategies:

- Addressing the structuration of activities that could lead to intercultural dialogue through understanding of otherness and also through expression of the own cultural characteristics.
- Establishing "windows" of communication (asynchronous and synchronous) among students from different countries, beyond local curriculum and subject specific activities and contents.
- Supporting students in a critical use of technologies in order to communicate and learn about othernes on virtual learning spaces: understanding the dimensions of cultural enlarged contexts of learning.

Activities that all teachers decided to implement as transversal dimensions of learning units, by using virtual learning environments were:

- Geolocalization: Building a map of cultural identities through the use of "placemarks" on "googlemaps" , embedding students presentations and activities to be seen by other students
- Opening three specific forum regarding interdisciplinary themes (sustainable development for sciences group; visible and invisible cities, for the humanities group; a travel through culture and languages, for the group of literature and languages)
- Presentation of videos and learning results within the virtual learning environment

Other interesting activities were discussed, but the lack of time prevented the teachers to implement the same. One of them was videorecording of discourses in English language that was going to be uploaded to Youtube, visualized and commented by students from other countries. This project couldn't be accomplished (even when the first phase was undertaken).

Teachers' satisfaction with the training experience

Training activities where closed with "customer care" questionnaires evaluating teachers' satisfaction with the learning experience at every phase.

Nevertheless, other dimensions of learning (and hence impact of the experience) where explored so far.

In fact, three **After Training Questionnaire** were implemented, by the end of every training phase (including both residential and online activities). Every questionnaire evaluated the impact of training program immediately following its delivery; impact was gauged by assessing participants' reactions to the program. The questionnaire aimed to understand in wich extent the training process provided crucial contents about the kernel of PERMIT, Multicultural Integrated Teaching to promote intercultural dialogue.

The questionnaire gathered the following information:

a) **Learning perceived achievements**
b) **Transferring Learning:** Training Activities Efficacy, Motivation to transfer
c) **Seminar's perceived Quality**
d) **General Considerations about the PERMIT teachers' training programme**

In general, results were very satisfactory, but it's still worth to consider some specific situations that delineates areas where improvement of the educational dispositive is required.

A syntesis of results (24 respondents) shows the following:

a) Learning

a.1. Have you acquired new knowledge important to improving your strategies of Multicultural Integrated Teaching?

Not at all Teachers' responses: N24 (100%)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Yes, definitively
0	0	0	0	1	0	4	14	4	1
0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	4,17%	0,00%	16,67%	**58,33%**	16,67%	4,17%

Table 4 – Teachers' achievements to implement PERMIT strategies in class

The good percentage of responses going from 7 to 10 (95,83%) allows to consider that teachers' perceptions about the own learning were significant, helping them to construct a new representation of teaching towards intercultural strategies (denominated, within the project Multicultural Integrated Teaching)

a.2. Which new knowledge and skills did you acquire?

Table 5 – Defining Intercultural Issues

With regard to the item a.2, the data showed always a central tendency. It's important to point out here, that the several working groups (sciences, humanities, and literature and languages) had very different experiences within groups. In fact, Humanities group was very heterogeneus (two teachers of History, one teacher of Religion, one of Phylosophy, one History of Arts, one of graphic Design and one of Economy) , and the decision taking process towards a common framework -mainly devoted to allow contacts among students- was difficult and plenty of uncertainty. It's possible that this group showed very different kind of responses than for example, the group of Languages, which worked through a smooth process of agreement and sharing of resources (English teachers).
Another important factor, in this specific area (Intercultural Issues definitions), was the nature of information and activities, mostly theorical, with some research presentations rather technical and specific.
The data shows hence a central tendency with a bigger group suggesting that the new knowledge and skills acquired with regard to intercultural issues was "quite" achieved.
The item c) "*Better understanding of how beliefs and values can be culturally induced*", was in fact based on Key notes speakers' presentations and some texts discussed through online modules. The lower perception of knowledge/skills achievement with regard to this topic, can be basically linked to the fact that some teachers couldn't properly understand technical issues (coming from pedagogy, sociology, anthorpology). In any case, this migh e considered in future interventions, providing teachers with more concrete examples in order to understand concepts.
Instead of that, the item f) *Improving my ability of decentre and view my own attitudes in terms of cultural relativity, suspending beliefs to promote smooth intercul-*

tural communication shows how teachers' discussions about the topics introduced by researchers and key note speakers were satisfactorily worked out, improving teachers' positive representations of changing the own cultural representation. It's highly possible that this last result was deeply rooted on direct contact with peers with diverse cultural backgrounds (different countries and communities).

Table 6 – Intercultural Issues in Education

The data showed in this table emphasizes the dimension of intercultural issues within education. The same conclusions emerged in the previous, more general dimension (table 5), can be done for this dimension: data is concentrated among fields "more or less" and "quite", but in this case, there's slight inclination towards more positive impact of learning . Teachers affirm, more than everything, that they obtained "*better knowledge and understanding of other teaching practices",* which is surely the result of internatinoal working groups. Even when a 46% of teachers' answered that they "quite" agree with the impact of training on "*deepen on valies that influence teaching practice in other cultural realities"* it is interesting to see that grouping answers "quite" and "completely" regarding the item c) "*deepen on other teaching practices that introduce intercultural issues in education process,* it emerges a good 67% of teachers considering that they achieved knowledge and skills connected to that issue. The same applies to the item d) where we reach a 75% of teachers considering that achieved "*better understanding of intercultural teaching strategies".*

The better results regarding to this dimension is related probably to the nature of knowledge introduced through this dimension, tightly connected to the teachers' expert knowledge and technical skills.

b) Trasferring Learning

b.1. Efficacy of Training Activities: Do you consider that activities carried out within PERMIT Training Programme will help you implementing and help other teachers to implement intercultural teaching ?

Not at all Teachers' responses: N22 (91,67%)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Yes, definitively
0	0	0	0	0	1	4	10	6	1
0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	4,17%	16,67%	**41,67%**	25,00%	4,17%

Table 7– Efficacy of Training activities (I): usefulness

b.2. Motivation to Apply Learning: After PERMIT Training Programme, are you motivated to continue experimenting intercultural teaching, and further supporting other teachers do so ?

Not at all Teachers' responses: N22 (91,67%)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Yes, definitively
0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	9	5
0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	12,50%	20,.83%	**37,50**%	20,83%

Table 8– Efficacy of Training activities (II): motivation to transfer

Item b.1. shows the usefulness of training activities and resources, as perceived by the teacher, to support him/her in activity in class with regard to the topics treated within the project. The data points out eloquently the good level of attainment in this field: teachers found activities and resources effective in helping them imagining a new scenery of practice.

Item b.2. shows the motivation to transfer, which is to say, the willingness of teacher of not only achieving knowledge and participating to an interesting activity, but instead, to put into practice real activities in class. This is probably connected to teachers' representations about the changing scenery and the problem of managing diversity in class in order to keep being quality teachers. This emerged mainly from the preliminar research, and it is confirmed at this level; nevertheless, motivation is one of the dimensions that the project did not influenced directly. In fact, teachers participating to this kind of international projects are well motivated to learn to become better professionals in their own field; they are eager to keep in contact with an international community of teachers as experts and best performers on their field. Therefore, there's self selection of better teachers.. The project's approach to training could maintain this interest and stimulated it, as it's possible to see from data.

c) Residential Seminar's perceived Quality

This part of questionnaire simply highlights the satisfaction of teachers with regard to the organization and coherence of educational dispositive.
It is worth to note that teachers considered trainers almost "completely" available (79%), showing the importance given to the dispositive of "coaching" as part of the exploration of the "intercultural zone of proximal development".
Assessment criteria were well understood and seen coherently with the general dispositive. This important, because demonstrates that the community achieved the rules to enact processes of activity.
The lower percentages obtained with regard to the organizational dimensions, could be connected with the several working styles of every university (being organization mostly appreciated at Slovenian residential seminar; whereas for the cases of Italy and Turkey, whereas availability of trainers and resources scored higher), as well as the cultural, disciplines, and experiences diversity within teachers' working groups. Languages was another critical point, since some teachers were not fluent in English (without distinctions of country, there were Italian, Slovenian and also Turkish teachers fluent in foreign languages other than English, namely, Italian and French). All these elements created the conditions of loosing time, misunderstandings and somehow conflictive decisions taking processes.
In any case, and taking into account our theoretical model of the Activity Theory, these difficulties were part of a "multivoiced" system of activity, and the necessity of solving contradictions to "travel through the zone of proximal development" as part of an expansive learning process.

Table 9– Quality of Seminars

General Considerations about PERMIT Teachers Training Programme

Table 10– General Impact of Permit Teachers' Training Programme

The table 10 shows how the teachers' perceived the general impact of the training programme. These results mainly sketch the tools and resources' outline effectively appreciated by teachers in order to learn and achieve necessary instruments to become skilled professionals. It's worth to take into account these data as part of a new training approach. It is interesting to see how the international community of teachers discussing and creating learning units was entirely appreciated (100% of respondents); followed by online activities, as continuity to the first dimension. The virtual learning environments was important in the opinion of teachers, but they considered it (taking a look to justifications given by teachers) somehow "difficult", requiring a process of preliminar achievement of digital competence in order to use this kind of tool; in few words, this communicational channel was not immediate for some teachers.

The use of more personalized tools and teacher's reflection was the less appreciated tool within the training approach. This is due (considering teachers' expressions) to the problem of time: portfolio is time consuming and in PERMIT experience teachers found difficult to make direct connections between some activities of reflection and the process of development of the learning unit (the result of activity).

Nevertheless, teachers referred, frequently in their activities in seminars and online discussions, their annotations within their diaries and portfolios. Probably, the very complex nature of the instrument provided by the Slovenian research group wasn't properly implemented by other researchers and trainers, and teachers couldn't hence connect efficiently their achievements within the other "social" learning activities.

Apart from this, the PERMIT project was implemented within an academic year, which perhaps was not enough as time to understand in depth the several tools offered and their connections among them and with practice.

4. Conclusions: Achievements of the experimental in-service teachers' training approach within and beyond the PERMIT project

We have tended in this article to treat the training approach as a case study about in-service teacher education.. The analysis of the several phases of development that we have conducted both as trainers and as researchers, has led the group to deepen on a specific context of practice, mixing qualitative and quantitative data in order to understand the significant dimensions of practice that could help to bring new light to the focus of the case, namely, in service teachers' training.

The PERMIT case would also contribute with the problem of intercultural education, considering an educational dispositive of training of educators that have to deal with diversity in their respective contexts of practice.

The effort of conceptualisation of the training approach in its dimensions and activities, helped the PERMIT research/training team to understand some crucial dimensions of teachers' education in the specific context of project development. Therefore, this pilot experience is still open in terms of necessary adjustments for a new in-service teachers' education model. We have envisioned this pilot as a first step of future teachers' training strategy that is rooted on internationalisation, use of technologies, multilingualism, and interdiscipline; a good metaphore to define this new approach is that of "traveller teacher" that crosses the boundaries of his/her practice, not only in terms of geographical mobility, but also in terms of discipline, culture, and teaching methods, making the inexpected enter to the own activity. Is in this sense that the teacher could be said to teach in the "enlarged cultural context of learning". But, to reach this profile, as we showed through this case study, the teacher need to be exposed to cultural diversity, deconstructing the own representations of cultural values influencing teaching and learning.

The model of training as teachers' *coaching of innovation* enacted processes of action-research in class. This perspective was enriched by the engagement within an international community of teachers, that were put together to work, solve problems and innovate. This perspective tended not only to shape new competences of teachers involved, but also, in a spiral of learning by expansion through activity, intercultural representations of students were also embedded into the activity system, dialoguing with the teacher's ones. Therefore, methodological transposition from expert knowledge, to teachers' practical and constructed new knowledge, ended in a final transposition to pedagogical practices with an intercultural perspective. Teachers' identity constellations interplaying within training activities (creation of learning units in international groups) were supposed to be the key element of deconstruction and reconstruction of cultural perspectives in class. This last statement will be corroborated in further works within this book, showing the efficacy of the whole educational dispositive, that we could represent through the following scheme:

Scheme 11– PERMIT educational dispositive according to the Activity Theory (3rd Generation)

5. Final Reflexions

A definition of Activity Theory of Third Generation (Scandinavian Activity Theory) helps us to understand how expansive learning aims to cross the borders of current system of activity through the deconstruction of the own representations of culture and history:

> *An activity system is by definition a multi-voiced formation. An expansive cycle is a re-orchestration of those voices, of the different viewpoints and approaches of the various participants. Historicity in this perspective means identifying the past cycles of the activity system. The re-orchestration of the multiple voices is dramatically facilitated when the different voices are seen against their historical background, as layers in a pool of complementary competencies within the activity system." (Engeström, 1991a, p. 14-15)*

This conception, based on an extensive groundwork that put the basis of a paradigm revolution within the Educational research and pedagogy, have pointed to

the need of developing conceptual instruments to support rethinking pedagogical practices in enlarged contexts of learning.

From the foundations provided by Vygotskij, the Cultural-Historical constructivism was initially applied to the individual development of higher psychological functions. Luria's and Leont'ev's research "cross-cultural" following Vigotskij's early works, put the bases of Activity Theory (Engestrom, op.cit; Daniels et al, op.cit), but remained isolated, till Western psychologists as Bruner (1985) and Cole (1988) commented extensely the concepts. Nevertheless, Y. Engestrom, coming from the Scandinavian educational research, helped enormously this dialogue among Russian and Western research, creating what he called the "third generation" of Activity Theory. Even when the efforts of Bruner, and mainly Cole, were aimed to criticize the assumptions of "universalism" of human psychology and learning processes; and that Engestrom emphasized the importance of "multi-voices" within Activity Systems, as far as the recognition of memory and history as elements that create contradictions, this theory was never applied to the theoretical discussions about intercultural education. The attempt here, is to put the bases of a new discussion of "intercultural" pedagogy, considering Cultural-Historical constructivism and Activity Theory as a powerful theoretical approach to discuss the generation of new "third-cultures" of learning where diversity is discovered, explored and negotiated.

Contexts where diversity enters, where borders need continuously to be renegotiated through meaning making processes. This way, we anticipate a dialogic perspective, where there's a tension among cultural differences into a process of creation of new meaning that solves the contradictions into which diversity compels.

The only way to understand this new perspective of pedagogical practices and in general, of education, is, in our view, to experience it. Further initial and in-service teachers' training dispositive should be featured following this conception, through practical experience of otherness that helps the teacher to reshape the own conceptions about cultural values influencing teaching and learning; taking hence to an authentic implementation of intercultural strategies within the own pedagogical practices.

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