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**Translanguaging as a pedagogical practice:
an action research in a classroom of Italian L2
for newly arrived students**

Supervisor

Ch. Prof. Graziano Serragiotto

Assistant supervisor

Ch. Prof. Monica Banzato

Graduand

Martina Pinori

874207

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*One is not born into a language,
it is a language that is born in you.*

[...]

*We the refugees and immigrants know
that a language, like us, can re-settle somewhere
far away from its native land and still feel at home.*

(Sulaiman Addonia)

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to explore the implementation of translanguaging pedagogy in a classroom of Italian as a second language for newly arrived students and observe the impact of this pedagogical practice on the students' attitude towards linguistic diversity and the perception of their plurilingual repertoires. The research data were collected over a period of two months, namely during the researcher's internship as teacher of Italian L2 in a language course for newly arrived students. Therefore, the research may be referred to as both classroom research and action research. The first chapter provides an overview about the presence of foreign students in Italian schools, as well as the educational policies which aim at promoting the foreign students' integration and valuing linguistic diversity in schools, both at Italian and European level. The second chapter presents a theoretical framework on translanguaging, in terms of both the theoretical assumptions and the educational practices centered on this theory. The third chapter illustrates the translanguaging strategies and activities which were implemented during our lessons, whereas the fourth chapter describes the methodology of our research project. Finally, the fifth chapter analyses the results of the data collection and describes the research results, identifying the limitations of the study and the potential areas for further research.

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INTRODUCTION

Translanguaging may be observed from two different perspectives, namely a sociolinguistic and a pedagogical perspective, as claimed by García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017: 20) and by Flores and Schissel (in García *et al.*, 2017: 2): the former refers to the language practices of multilingual speakers and communities, whereas the latter describes the pedagogical approach adopted by teachers who integrate these language practices in school contexts.

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the use of translanguaging practices in education, and the potential of translanguaging pedagogy has been recognised by many educators and researchers around the world, since this pedagogical approach can be implemented in different educational settings and with different kinds of students (García and Li Wei, 2014: 94, 125; Cenoz and Gorter, 2017: 313). Specifically, teachers who implement translanguaging pedagogy encourage the students to fully use their linguistic repertoires and bring their language practices into the classroom, rather than keeping them in their heads and just use the official language of instruction (García *et al.*, 2017: 1, 24). According to García *et al.* (2017: 1), a translanguaging classroom is «any classroom in which students may deploy their full linguistic repertoires».

The aim of our thesis was to explore and implement translanguaging pedagogy in a classroom of Italian L2 for newly arrived students. Namely, the research was carried out in Mestre (Venice), from July until August 2020, during the researcher's internship as Italian teaching assistant within a course of Italian as a second language for newly arrived students. Thus, the research was both a classroom-based research and an action research.

The intention to conduct this action research arose from the researcher's curiosity towards translanguaging, combined with the opportunity to explore this teaching approach during our internship in a classroom of young multilingual students with different nationalities. Thus, we decided to explore translanguaging practice into our Italian L2 classroom, since such pedagogical approach can be implemented by any language teacher, in any educational setting and with different kinds of students (García and Li Wei, 2014: 94; García and Kleyn, 2016: 203; García *et al.*, 2017: 7). Specifically, the main purpose of this research was to explore in what ways translanguaging practices could be implemented in a class of young immigrant students

learning Italian as a second language, and observe how this teaching methodology was experienced by the students, in terms of both their attitude towards language diversity in the class environment and the perception of their plurilingual repertoires.

The thesis is composed of five main chapters. In the first chapter, we will first provide some data about the presence of foreign students in Italian schools, describing the general tendency of this phenomenon, as well as the students' main characteristics and distribution in school levels and Italian regions. Moreover, we will describe the foreign students' general performances at school, as well as the early school leaving phenomenon. The chapter moves on to describe the Italian model for integration of newly arrived students in schools, including an overview of the main documents and ministerial indications about the foreign students' integration in schools and the teaching of Italian as a second language. Finally, the chapter will illustrate the European educational documents and policies about the promotion of plurilingualism and linguistic diversity in schools, presenting two important documents which were published by the Council of Europe in 2012 and 2016 (Candelier *et al.*, 2012; Beacco, 2016).

The second chapter will provide a theoretical framework on translanguaging, thus illustrating the origins and main assumptions of this theory, and describing the main differences between translanguaging and bilingualism as well as between translanguaging and code-switching theory. The chapter will thus go on presenting translanguaging as a pedagogical theory, describing the main characteristics of such theory in educational contexts and illustrating the features of translanguaging classrooms. The chapter will also present the main translanguaging-related projects in education, implemented both in the United States and in the European context, namely in Italian schools. Finally, we will outline the characteristics of the academic debate around translanguaging, thus distinguishing between strong, moderate and weak supporters of translanguaging theory.

In the third chapter, we will first introduce the context of our research and the structure of the lessons. Secondly, we will illustrate the main translanguaging strategies which were used during the lessons, as well as the translanguaging activities which were implemented over the course of the research, thus including the activities carried out through the use of either the board, posters, or simply the students' notebook.

The fourth chapter will focus on the methodology used for our research. We will first describe the research approach, which was qualitative-oriented and could be referred to as both a classroom-research and action research, since the study was carried

out by the teacher herself in a classroom of Italian L2. Moreover, the chapter will present the main objective of the research and the research questions, as well as the context of our research and the participants' characteristics. The chapter will go on describing the instruments used for the research, namely the class artefacts, the teacher diary, the language portraits and the focus group interviews. Finally, the procedures for the collection of data will be described.

In the fifth chapter, we will analyse the data collected throughout the research, thus discussing the research findings related to both the first and second research questions. We will then move on to present and discuss the conclusions of our research, identifying both the limitations of this study and the suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 1

PLURILINGUALISM AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN ITALIAN AND EUROPEAN LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICIES

In this chapter, we will first provide an overview of the presence of foreign students in the Italian school system (§ 1.1). Secondly, we will introduce the Italian model for integration of foreign students in schools, describing the national documents about the integration of foreign students and promotion of plurilingualism in schools, as well as the ministerial indications about the teaching of Italian as a second language (§ 1.2). Finally, we will illustrate the main European language policies for the promotion of plurilingualism and linguistic diversity in schools (§ 1.3).

1.1 The foreign students in the Italian school system

The presence of foreign students¹ in Italian schools has significantly increased in the past fifteen years and nowadays «diversity and multilingualism are structural elements in Italian schools» (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020b: 1). For the young migrant students who leave their country, a new school environment represents the first real contact with the country of immigration; therefore, education plays a very important role in facilitating the integration of immigrant students into the host country (Giudizi, 2013: 11). In the next paragraphs, we will illustrate the main characteristics of this phenomenon, describing the general tendency about the presence of foreign students in schools, as well as the foreign students' characteristics. Furthermore, we will present the foreign students' distribution among education levels and Italian regions, and we will introduce some data about the foreign students' performances and the early school leaving phenomenon.

¹ The expression “foreign students” is used from the juridical perspective, as proposed by CARBONARA and SCIBETTA (2020a: 98), thus referring to the students who have a foreign nationality and do not own Italian citizenship. The Italian law on citizenship (n° 91/1992) follows the *ius sanguinis* criteria (instead of *ius soli*), which implies that the foreign students are both the foreign-born students and those born in Italy from foreign-born parents. The latter represent the second generations of foreign students, who are considered foreigners, like the first generation and newly arrived students, even though they were born in Italy. They may in fact also be referred to as “CNI”, i.e. students with “Cittadinanza Non Italiana” (MIUR, 2014: 5; FAVARO, 2018: 39).

1.1.1 The general tendency

From 2005/2006 to 2018/2019, the presence of foreign students in Italian school contexts has rapidly risen: the percentage changed from 4,8% to 10%, thus passing from 431.211 to 857.729 students, as shown in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2. The trend has particularly raised in the first decade of the 2000s. In fact, from 2005/2006 to 2011/2012, the rate of foreign students raised by almost four units, passing from 4,8% to 8,4% (see Table 1.1); whereas over the last few years the presence of foreign students has increased with a slower variation: from 2012/2013 to 2018/2019 the percentage raised of only one unit, specifically passing from the 8,9% to 10 % (see Table 1.2).

During the academic year 2018/2019, the foreign students were approximately 860.000 (10%) over a total of 8.850.000 students, while in 2017/2018 the foreign students were 841.719 (9,7%). There was thus growth of 16.000 students (+1,9%) over the last two years.

Academic years	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
Foreign students	431.211 (4,8%)	501.420 (5,6%)	574.133 (6,41%)	629.360 (7,0%)	673.800 (7,5%)	710.263 (7,9%)	755.939 (8,4%)

Table 1.1. Foreign students in Italian schools from a.y. 2005/2006 to 2011/2012 (MIUR, 2020:

59)

Academic years	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Foreign students	786.630 (8,9%)	803.053 (9,0%)	814.208 (9,2%)	814.851 (9,2%)	826.091 (9,4%)	841.719 (9,7%)	857.729 (10,0%)

Table 1.2. Foreign students in Italian schools from a.y. 2012/2013 to 2018/2019 (MIUR, 2020:

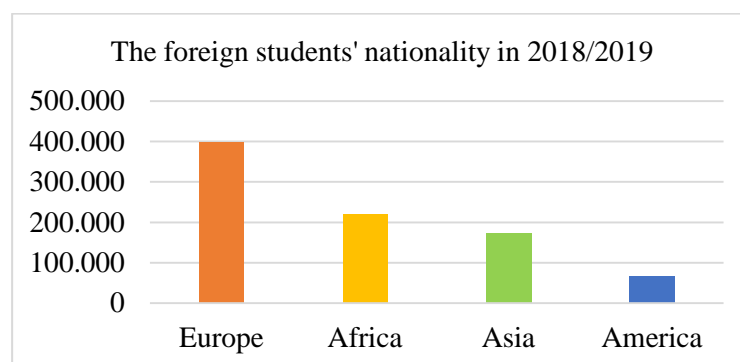
59)

Therefore, the trends have gradually become stable and the presence of foreign students in Italian schools is no more considered as an urgent nor extraordinary phenomenon; it rather became a structural feature within the school system (MIUR, 2020: 8; Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 101).

To ensure a balanced distribution of foreign students among the different schools and classrooms across the country, the Italian Ministry of Education established that the presence of foreign students in each classroom should not overcome the 30% of the total number of students enrolled². Yet, throughout the academic year 2018/2019, there was a considerable increase of schools with a presence of foreign students over the 30% percentage: namely, the 6,4% over the total of all schools in Italy. Nevertheless, in the same academic year, some schools (18,3%) still had no foreign students in their classrooms (MIUR, 2010: 5; MIUR, 2020: 36).

1.1.2 The students' characteristics

Concerning the nationality of foreign students in Italian schools, the majority comes from European countries (see Graph 1.1): in 2018/2019, 396.970 foreign students came from Europe (46,28%), followed by 220.585 students from Africa (25,72%), 172.128 from Asia (20,07%), and 67.674 from America (7,89%).



Graph 1.1. The foreign students' nationality in Italian schools in 2018/2019 (MIUR, 2020: 29)

The first ten countries are, respectively: Romania (18,4%), Albania (13,5%), Morocco (12,2%), China (6,4%), India (3,3%), Philippine (3,1%), Egypt and Moldova (3%), Pakistan (2,5%) and Ukraine (2,3%) (MIUR, 2020: 29).

² Education authorities may decide to increase or decrease the total amount of foreign students depending on the linguistic competences of foreign students. The percentage may be raised in case of high numbers of second-generation students, while it may be lowered in case of foreign students with low linguistic competences or other problematic situations. The limit of 30% as a criterion for a positive inclusion of foreign students thus operates only as a recommendation for school leaders and institutions, which can still operate changes in the actual composition of the classrooms. Nonetheless, school leaders can never reject the enrolment of foreign students due to the exceeding of the 30% limit (MIUR, 2010: 9; MIUR, 2014: 11; MIUR, 2020: 36).

Nowadays, a considerable proportion of foreign students are second generation students, i.e. born in Italy from foreign-born parents³: in 2018/2019, they constituted more than half of all the foreign students. On the contrary, the presence of foreign-born students has significantly decreased in the last years.

Therefore, second generation students currently represent the major agents of proportional growth in the entire school population (MIUR, 2020: 18-21). As can be observed in Table 1.3, their presence has visibly increased over the last few years: in 2014/2015 the second generations were 450.429 (55,3% over the total of foreign students), whereas in 2018/2019 they were 553.176 (64,5%).

Academic years	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Second generation students	450.429	478.522	502.963	531.467	553.176

Table 1.3. Second generation students in Italian schools from a.y. 2014/2015 to 2018/2019 (MIUR, 2020: 59)

Whereas, over the last few years, there has been a considerable drop in the presence of newly arrived migrant students⁴, hence the students who have newly arrived in Italy. In Italian educational regulations and policies, these students are referred to as “NAI”, i.e. “Neo Arrivati in Italia”, indicating that they have newly arrived in Italy and have been enrolled in the school system for a few time, precisely over the last two years (Favaro, 2018: 40).

As can be observed in Table 1.4, in 2014/2015 there were 33.054 newly arrived students in Italian school contexts, whereas in 2018/2019 the total amount was 22.984. The presence of newly arrived students particularly dropped in the passage from 2015/2016 to 2016/2017.

³ The Eurydice Report (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2019: 169) defines second generation migrant students as «children and young people born in their country of current residence who have at least one foreign-born parent (first generation) and who participate in the formal education system of the host country».

⁴ The EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2013: 5; 2019: 53) defines the newly arrived migrant students (NAMS) as «immigrant children and young people who have newly arrived in the host country». The Report further observes that newly arrived students face many educational and linguistic challenges when they arrive in the host country; thus, the education systems in Europe distinguish between them and other migrant students, both first and second generations, who have been living in the country and participating in the education system for some time.

Academic years	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Newly arrived students	33.054	34.048	23.654	21.554	22.984

Table 1.4. Newly arrived students in Italian schools from a.y. 2014/2015 to 2018/2019 (MIUR, 2020: 21)

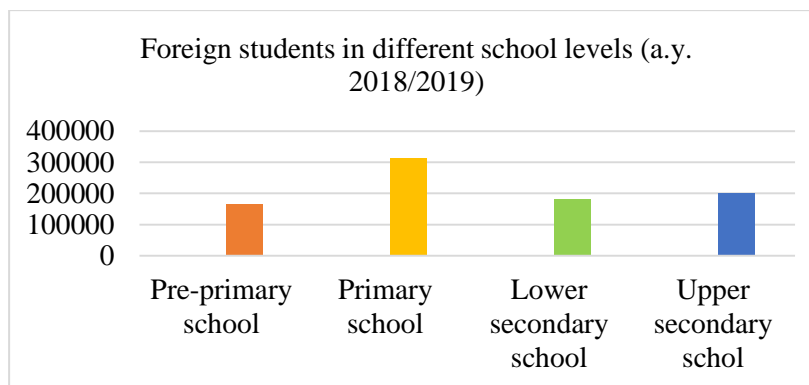
Regarding the school levels, in 2018/2019 a large majority of newly arrived students enrolled in lower secondary schools (8.773), followed by upper secondary schools (8.278) and primary schools (5.933). Whereas, as far as their distribution across Italian regions is concerned, in 2018/2019 the newly arrived students were mainly located in northern regions of Italy, specifically Lombardy, Emilia Romagna and Veneto (MIUR, 2020: 20-21).

1.1.3 The students' distribution

Among the different education levels in the Italian school system⁵, the primary school currently includes the largest number of foreign students, as can be seen in Graph 1.2.

In 2018/2019, the foreign students in primary schools were 313.204, representing 36,5% of the total number of foreign students in all education grades, followed by upper secondary schools, with 199.020 foreign students, corresponding to 23,2% of the total, then lower secondary schools, with 180.296 foreign students, thus 21% over the total, and finally, the pre-primary school, with 165.209 foreign students, hence the 19,3% over the total (MIUR, 2020: 12-13).

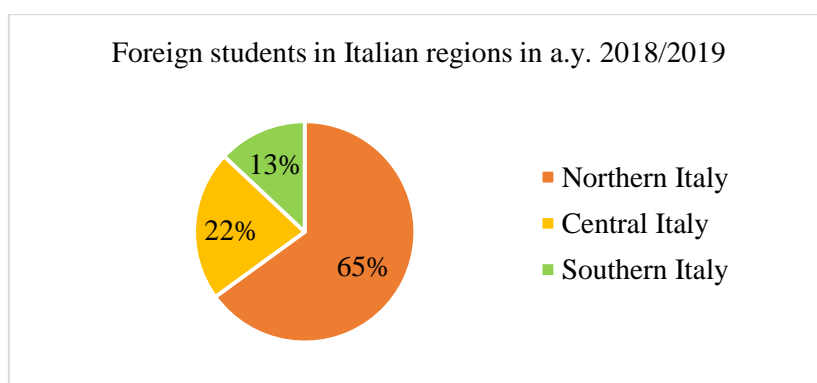
⁵ The school levels within the Italian school system are, namely: Scuola dell'infanzia (Pre-primary school); Scuola primaria (Primary school); Scuola secondaria di I grado (Lower secondary school); and Scuola secondaria di II grado (Upper secondary school).



Graph 1.2. Distribution of foreign students in school levels in a.y. 2018/2019 (MIUR, 2020: 12)

Therefore, the primary school is currently the school level with the largest numbers of foreign students; however, the presence of foreign students in lower secondary schools has significantly increased over the last years, passing from 20,3% in years 2016/2017 to 20,7% in 2017/2018, and, finally, 21% in 2018/2019. By contrast, the presence of foreign students in primary schools has remained stable over the last years: the rate was 36,6% both during 2016/2017 and 2017/2018, while it dropped to 36,5% in 2018/2019 (MIUR, 2020: 12-13).

The distribution of foreign students varies considerably across the Italian regions since schools in northern Italy present the highest average of foreign students (65%), followed by central Italy (22%), and, finally, southern Italy (13%), as can be observed in Graph 1.3.



Graph 1.3. Distribution of foreign students in Italian regions in 2018/2019 (MIUR, 2020: 15)

In 2018/2019, schools in Lombardy registered the highest number of foreign students, specifically 217.933, representing 25,4% over the total number of foreign students in all regions. The other northern regions with large numbers of foreign

students are, respectively, Emilia Romagna (11,9%), Veneto (11%), Lazio (9,3%) and Piedmont (9,1%) (MIUR, 2020: 15).

1.1.4 The students' performances

The results obtained from INVALSI tests⁶, as reported in the document INVALSI (2018: 27), suggest that in all school grades⁷ the foreign students tend to perform more poorly than Italian students, specifically registering lower grades in Italian, Math and English⁸. The document points out that the foreign students' performances may be influenced by different factors, such as linguistic and cultural obstacles due to their origins, as well as their disadvantaged socio-economic conditions since immigrant families tend to face more financial difficulties than Italian families.

Nevertheless, the report underlines that the gap between foreign and Italian students seem to diminish among second generations of foreign students and in the passage from primary to lower secondary grades, while the differences increase particularly in upper secondary grade. As a result, the foreign students' performances appear particularly poor in upper secondary schools, whereas the gap between foreign and Italian students is less relevant in primary and lower secondary schools (INVALSI, 2018: 28).

Furthermore, the document claims that in all school grades the foreign students, and especially the second generations, perform similarly or even better than their Italian peers in English tests, particularly in the listening part. For instance, the second generations from grade 8, thus in the third year of middle school, register 7 points more than their Italian peers. The document further observes that this tendency may be attributed to the opportunities for foreign students to learn and practice English outside the school context, hence with their families or communities, since English often

⁶ The tests were elaborated in 2018 by the Istituto Nazionale per la valutazione del sistema educativo di istruzione e di formazione. For more information, see: <https://www.invalsi.it/invalsi/index.php> and INVALSI (2018).

⁷ The sample was composed of students from four different school grades, namely: 551.108 second-year students from primary schools (grade 2), 562.635 five-year students from primary schools (grade 5), 574.506 third-year students from middle schools (grade 8), 543.296 second-year students from high schools (grade 10) (INVALSI, 2018: 6).

⁸ All the students were tested in Italian and Math, while only students from grade 5 and 8 were tested not only in Italian and Math but also in English, namely through listening and reading tests (INVALSI, 2018: 7).

represents a commonly spoken language in their home countries (INVALSI, 2018: 28). However, Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 106-108) suggest that the positive performance of foreign students in English should not be entirely attributed to the presence of foreign students with English as their mother tongue, given the low rate of English-speakers among the foreign students. Rather, this tendency could be a result of the foreign students' bilingualism and the correlated interdependence mechanisms, which could help them develop metalinguistic skills throughout the process of learning other languages such as English.

The report further observes that the differences between foreign and Italian students in English tests are influenced by the general tendency among the regional macro-areas, namely between northern and southern areas, which register a gap of 37 points in grade 8. Thus, the differences between the performances of foreign and Italian students in southern regions would not be as consistent as in central and northern regions, given the average low performances registered in southern regions. Therefore, the performances of foreign students in INVALSI tests are influenced by the efficacy of the school system in the different regions across the country and thus tend to follow the general tendencies in the macro-areas indicated by the report. This phenomenon is particularly evident in lower and upper secondary school grades, in which the results of both foreign and Italian students appear to be higher in northern regions compared to central and southern regions (INVALSI, 2018: 28, 31).

According to Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 106-108), the general poor performances of foreign students may also be attributed to the evaluation criteria of INVALSI tests, which are not differentiated among foreign and Italian students; rather, the criteria are the same for all students, regardless of their linguistic and communicative competences in the Italian language. As a result, the foreign students, especially the newly arrived students, might be strongly disadvantaged compared to their Italian peers, thus registering lower results.

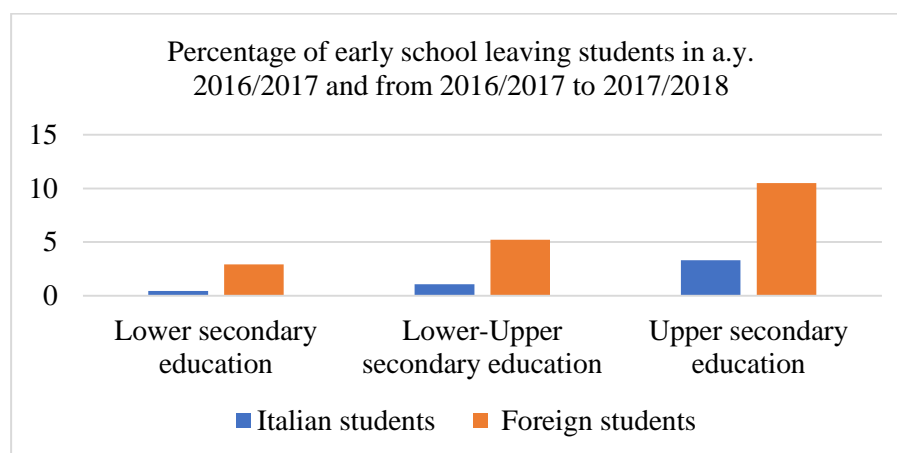
1.1.5 The students' early school leaving

The proportion of foreign students who drop out of the school system is higher than the Italian students' rate, both in lower and upper secondary schools, as well as in the passage between the two, as shown in Graph 1.4.

This trend is particularly evident in lower secondary education: during academic years 2016/2017 and from 2016/2017 to 2017/2018, the percentage of school-leaving among foreign students corresponded to 2,92%, while the Italian students' rate was equal to 0,45%. Furthermore, in lower secondary education, first generations tend to drop out of school earlier than the second generations: the foreign-born students show a rate of 4,11% over the total of foreign students, whereas the second generations' rate corresponded to 1,84% (MIUR, 2019: 11-12).

Within the passage from lower to upper secondary education, the percentage of students who drop out corresponds to 1,08% among the Italian students, whereas it raises to 5,21% for the foreign students, respectively 6,76% of students from first generations and 3,49% of second generations (MIUR, 2019: 18-19).

Finally, as far as the upper secondary education is concerned, the average of foreign students dropping out of school is around 10,5%, with 11,8% foreign-born students, and 7,2% second generations; whereas the rate decreases to 3,3% for the Italian students (MIUR, 2019: 28-29).



Graph 1.4. Distribution of early school leavers among Italian and foreign students in 2016/2017 and from 2016/2017 to 2017/2018 (MIUR, 2019: 12, 20, 29)

1.2 The integration of foreign students in the Italian school system

As explained earlier, over the past years the presence of foreign students has become a structural element within the Italian educational context; yet, the development of educational action plans and strategies for the integration of students with migrant backgrounds in schools still constitutes a major challenge for the education system. In the following paragraphs, we will provide an overview of the Italian model for the

reception and integration of migrant students, as well as the main regulations and recommendations published in the past years.

1.2.1 The Italian model for integration of newly arrived migrant students⁹

The Italian system for reception and integration of foreign students could be referred to as *integrated*¹⁰, which indicates that the newly arrived migrant students do not attend any preparatory classes, but are placed directly in mainstream classes with Italian students, in a school year appropriate to their age and previous schooling experience¹¹ (European Commission, 2017a: 134; Favaro, 2018: 17).

The *Study on educational support for newly arrived migrant children* (European Commission, 2013: 73) further suggests that the Italian educational support model for newly arrived migrant students is *non-systematic*¹², meaning that the procedures for inclusion of foreign students are characterised by randomness and arbitrariness of the support provided to newly arrived students. As pointed out by the European Commission (2013: 8):

Countries that are attributed to this group have no clearly articulated policy on the national level to support the integration of newly arrived migrant children or such policy exists but is not effectively resourced and implemented. The support provided at the regional, local and/or school level is highly fragmented as teachers, parents and local communities are largely left to their own devices.

⁹ The structure and content of this paragraph are taken from CARBONARA and SCIBETTA (2020a: 112-117).

¹⁰ The integrated model is common in most European countries, especially in southern Europe, as well as in Greece, Cyprus, and Malta. Whereas the preparatory classes are available in less than half the European countries, and mostly in central and northern Europe, which adopt a separated system of reception and integration for newly arrived students, who thus attend separated classes with intensive training in the language of schooling and an adapted curriculum for approximately two years, before entering the mainstream classes. The preparatory classes may also be called ‘reception’, ‘transition’, or ‘introductory’ classes (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2017a: 16, 134; FAVARO, 2018: 17).

¹¹ The guidelines for integration of foreign students (MIUR, 2014: 15) observe that, even though it is strongly discouraged by policies and regulations, foreign students may be enrolled in classes with younger students, due to their poor competence in the Italian language.

¹² The study provides a comparative analysis of the education systems and support measures for newly arrived students in 15 European countries with a large presence of migrant students. For more information, see Chapter 3 of the study (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2013).

In other words, Italian schools have a large degree of autonomy in the design and implementation of support services for migrant students (European Commission, 2013: 66), and the Italian model for integration of foreign students is either fragmented or not financially sustained, as was claimed by the European Commission (2013: 113), regarding the non-systematic model:

There is no clearly articulated policy at the national level to support the integration of migrant children, and the support provided is very fragmented. Alternatively, declared national policies are not supported with adequate financing or implementation policies and therefore they are not fully implemented at the local level.

Moreover, Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 113-114) observe that the Eurydice Report (European Commission, 2019: 28) underlines the whole-child dimension of the Italian education policies targeted at the integration of newly arrived migrant students, as can be observed in Figure 1.1. The two authors further report that a whole-child approach to education is a holistic approach which aims at «creating learning environments that not only promote academic knowledge and skills but also the social and emotional competences and well-being of individual students». Thus, the whole-child approach creates an environment where the learners are «healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged» (European Commission, 2019: 170).

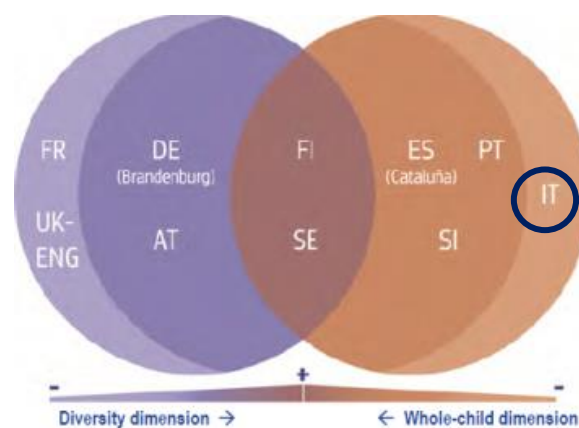


Figure 1.1. Collocation of European school policies targeted at diversity, in a continuum from diversity to whole-child dimension (European Commission, 2019: 28)

Therefore, the Italian education approach to immigrant students' needs is mainly focused on their well-being and social-emotional development, but less on the value of diversity and plurilingualism (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 113). However, the

Eurydice Report (European Commission, 2019: 28) points out that a balanced approach to the integration of students with migration backgrounds should be comprehensive of both dimensions, hence consider both the students' diversity and their social-emotional needs, as happens in Finnish and Swedish education systems, which place a strong emphasis on both diversity and whole-child dimensions (see Figure 1).

Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 114-117) further observe that the Eurydice Report (European Commission, 2019: 57) includes Italy among the European countries which adopt specific strategies and action plans addressing the integration of students with migration backgrounds into the education system¹³. Moreover, the overall picture that emerges from the report data (European Commission, 2019: 58) is that the Italian top-level recommendations cover the entire range of interventions which are indicated as priority areas by the European Commission¹⁴, as can be observed in Figure 1.2. Namely, the Italian key measures for the integration of migrant students into the school system include the following actions: facilitating access to mainstream education; ensuring support for school and teachers, as well as an inclusive school climate; coordinating several policy areas; training for teachers; addressing school segregation; conducting policy-related research.

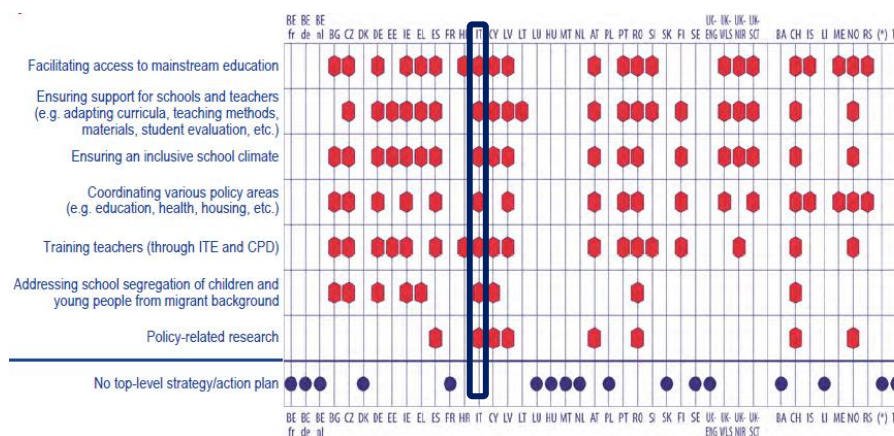


Figure 1.2. Priority areas addressed by official documents related to the integration of students from migrant backgrounds (European Commission, 2019: 58)

¹³ The report findings are based on the Italian education strategies indicated in the document *Indicazioni nazionali per il curricolo verticale della scuola dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo d'istruzione* (see References).

¹⁴ The report provides a comparative analysis of the key policies and recommendations promoted by top-level education authorities in 41 European countries, which aim at developing strategies for the integration of foreign students into schools. For more information, see Part II of the Report (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2019).

Therefore, Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 115) point out that according to the Eurydice Report the Italian official documents endorse the development of strategies and action plans for the integration of migrant students in schools, addressing all the seven key policy areas indicated by the European Commission. However, the Italian school system reveals a low level of efficacy in terms of actual realisations, effective strategies and concrete investments for the integration of foreign students in schools. The Eurydice Report (European Commission, 2019: 55) notes that the Italian education authorities find several challenges in implementing strategies targeted at the integration of students with migrant backgrounds.

Moreover, Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 115) note that the implementation of plans and strategies for integration turns out to be challenging for Italian schools. As can be seen in Figure 1.3, the Italian education authorities seem to succeed only in providing adequate language and learning support to students students with migrant background while failing in accomplishing the other challenges indicated by the report, such as: combating poor educational outcomes, retention and school segregation; ensuring access to schooling; providing appropriate funding, guidance and information for families; and coordinating responsible bodies.

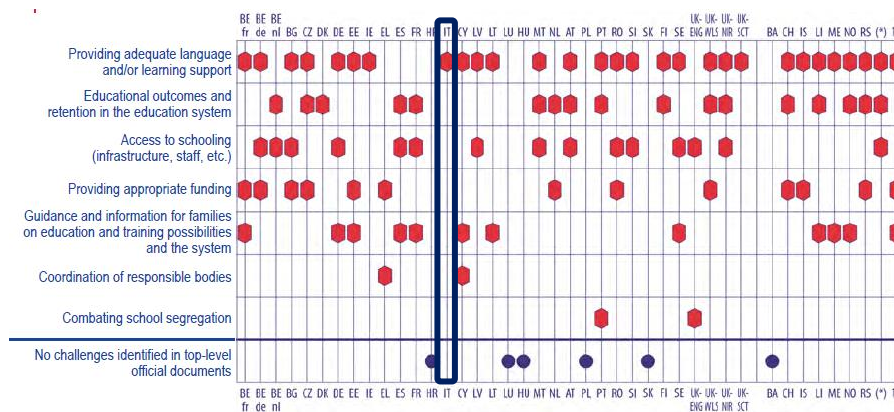


Figure 1.3. Main challenges faced by education authorities in the integration of students from migrant backgrounds (European Commission, 2019: 55)

1.2.2 The documents for integration of foreign students and promotion of plurilingualism¹⁵

As discussed above, the presence of students with different nationalities in Italian school contexts has visibly increased over the past fifteen years. As a result, the national regulations and policies have shown a rising interest towards both the integration of students with migrant backgrounds and the promotion of plurilingualism, as well as the legitimisation and enhancement of the students' home languages (Favaro, 2018: Carbonara and Scibetta, 2019: 494; Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 132; Scibetta and Carbonara, 2019: 116).

Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 129) observe that the first Italian document to highlight the importance of enhancing and valuing the students' linguistic repertoires is *La via Italiana per la scuola interculturale e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri* (The Italian way for an intercultural school and for integration of foreign students), published in 2007 by the National Observatory for the Integration of Foreign Students and Intercultural Education¹⁶. The document underlines that plurilingualism constitutes an enriching opportunity for all students; for this reason, it should be valued and promoted, both from a scholastic and an individual perspective. The guidelines particularly distinguish between "plurilingualism in school", i.e. the systematic plurilingualism, and "individual plurilingualism": the former suggests that the students' home languages could be included in the curriculum, together with the other foreign languages already taught in school; while the latter implies that «the maintenance of home languages is a human right and a fundamental tool for cognitive growth, which leads to positive implications for Italian as a second language and the other foreign languages learnt in school»¹⁷ (Osservatorio nazionale per l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri e per l'educazione interculturale, 2007: 13-14).

¹⁵ The structure and content of this paragraph are taken from CARBONARA and SCIBETTA (2020a: 129, 132-134)

¹⁶ The *Osservatorio nazionale per l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri e per l'educazione interculturale* is an agency instituted by the Italian Ministry of Education and composed of several research institutions and associations, which aim at finding and promoting education policies for the integration of foreign students in schools (FAVARO, 2018: 19-20).

¹⁷ Translation of the author. Original version: «il mantenimento della lingua d'origine è un diritto dell'uomo ed è uno strumento fondamentale per la crescita cognitiva, con risvolti positivi anche sull'Ital2 e sulle LS studiate nella scuola»

Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 132-134) further illustrate the main top-down documents published both by both the Italian Ministry of Education and the National Observatory for the Integration of Foreign Students and Intercultural Education. The former released three main documents, namely in 2012, 2014, and 2018, while the latter published another important document in 2015, thus eight years after the guidelines illustrated above.

In 2012, the Italian Ministry of Education released the document *Indicazioni nazionali per il curricolo verticale della scuola dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo d'istruzione* (National indications for the vertical curriculum in pre-primary and primary school). The document (MIUR, 2012: 20) invites education authorities to implement inclusive practices towards students with non-Italian citizenships, including both the first and second generations, thus valuing diversity and promoting their integration in schools. Besides, the ministerial indications invite teachers of all subjects to cooperate for the implementation of differentiated and specific strategies towards the students with migrant backgrounds (MIUR, 2012: 34). Moreover, to promote a plurilingual and intercultural learning environment, all teachers should legitimise and value the linguistic repertoires of the foreign students, so that the schools may become a place where they not only learn but also enhance and explore their plurilingual repertoires (MIUR, 2012: 46).

In 2014, the Italian Ministry of Education issued the guidelines for welcoming and integrating foreign students, namely the document *Linee guida per l'accoglienza e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri* (Guidelines for welcoming and integrating foreign students), calling for an equal distribution of foreign students into classrooms, to promote heterogeneity and diversity within the schools. Furthermore, the guidelines urge the schools to involve the students' families in the integration process, through the support of professional figures such as language and cross-cultural mediators, to meet the specific needs and abilities of the students and help them better integrate into the school system (MIUR, 2014: 9, 12).

In 2015, the Osservatorio nazionale per l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri e per l'educazione interculturale published a list of recommendations regarding the positive integration of foreign students in schools, namely *Diversi da chi? Raccomandazioni per l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri e l'interculturalità* (Different from whom? Recommendations for integrating foreign students and interculturality). Firstly, the document claims that students with migrant backgrounds are a structural component of

the school population and the school, therefore, plays a very important role in the integration process. The foreign students represent an enriching opportunity for the entire school, since their presence transforms the classrooms into multicultural realities, in which all students can learn to appreciate the value of language and cultural diversity if properly guided by the teachers. Moreover, the document invites schools to value the linguistic diversity in the classrooms and abandon the compensative perspective towards immigrant students, thus considering them not for their lack of competences, but rather for their resources and abilities. Therefore, schools are encouraged to adopt strategies for valuing the students' linguistic repertoires, as well as training teachers about plurilingualism and linguistic diversity. Furthermore, the recommendations highlight the importance of involving the students' families in the process of integration, especially through plurilingual messages and the support of language and cross-cultural mediators, as was already pointed out in the ministerial guidelines released in 2014.

Finally, in 2018 the Italian Ministry of Education issued the document *Indicazioni nazionali e nuovi scenari* (National indications and new scenarios), which underlines the key role of all teachers in the integration process of foreign students in the school context (MIUR, 2018: 10).

Therefore, the Italian school system is currently involved in a rising process of legitimisation, valuing and enhancement of the students' plurilingual repertoires, thus embracing a more inclusive and democratic education system (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 135; Scibetta and Carbonara, 2019: 117). Nevertheless, as observed by Firpo and Sanfelici (in Scibetta and Carbonara, 2019: 117), multilingual practices in Italian schools are still occasional or practiced only in extra-curricular activities. According to Gentile and Chiappelli (2016: 21), despite the numerous and reasonable indications for integration of foreign students presented in national documents, Italian schools have always acted differently, thus resulting in an unstructured and heterogeneous system. Likewise, Favaro (2018: 36) claims that the schools' interest in the linguistic repertoires of students with migrant backgrounds is a recent phenomenon, which is still practiced only in a few school contexts, thus resulting in a variety of situations and contexts.

To conclude, as pointed out by Scibetta and Carbonara (2019: 117), nowadays «the main challenge for Italian multilingual schools is trying to make those inclusive practices continuous, well-structured and embedded in the ordinary teaching praxis».

1.2.3 The ministerial indications about teaching Italian L2 to foreign students

The Italian educational documents and policies underline the importance of teaching Italian as a second language to students with migrant backgrounds, thus including first and second generations, as well as newly arrived students. However, as observed in the *Study on educational support for newly arrived migrant children* (European Commission, 2013: 66), there is no central nor articulated policy on the linguistic support for migrant students in the Italian school system. Furthermore, the provision of Italian as second language courses depends on the schools, which have a large degree of autonomy in organising the additional services for migrant students, such as linguistic support. Therefore, the courses of Italian as a second language in Italian schools are carried out on a need basis and in different modalities.

In other words, the Italian guidelines about linguistic support for migrant students in schools «do not foresee a structured and well-pronounced linguistic and academic support for migrant children»; moreover, «the provision of support and assistance to migrants in Italy is solely based on a good will of teachers, parents and local communities» (European Commission, 2013: 73). Namely, the Italian language activities are usually funded through initiatives such as FAMI projects¹⁸, as well as financial supports offered by local authorities and educational funds. As far as the teachers are concerned, they may be either teachers who already work within the school or language facilitators who work for external organisations and local institutions (Favaro, 2018: 32).

Nevertheless, despite the arbitrariness of the language support for foreign students in Italian schools, the national documents issued in the past fifteen years have always provided indications for schools about the importance of teaching Italian to foreign students, as we will now illustrate.

The document released in 2007 by the Osservatorio nazionale per l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri e per l'educazione interculturale (2007: 12-13) argues that learning Italian constitutes a key part of the integration process of foreign students, who need to become an active part of the school community and society. Moreover, the document

¹⁸ FAMI stands for 'Fondo asilo migrazione e integrazione' (in English AMIF, hence Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund), which is a European fund addressed to EU countries for positive management of migration flows. For more information, see: <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/temi/immigrazione-e-asilo/fondi-europei/fondo-asilo-migrazione-e-integrazione-fami>.

distinguishes between the planning phase and the educational phase. In the first phase, the main goal is to design and create the language laboratories, thus planning the length, time, and content of the courses, as well as hiring the teachers and developing the didactic tools, resources, and materials for the implementation of the language courses. The second phase concerns the language teaching indications, namely: the designing of a common reference model for teachers about the different linguistic aspects of Italian both as a language for ordinary communication (*ItalBase*) and a language for studying (*ItalStudio*). Plus, this phase includes the elaboration and dissemination of resources and materials both for the ordinary lessons and the courses of Italian L2. Finally, this phase regards the training for teachers about the importance of helping foreign students learn Italian as a second language.

The guidelines issued in 2012 by the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR, 2012: 18) state that all teachers, not just the Italian language teacher, are responsible for teaching Italian to foreign students, thus helping them improve both their oral and written linguistic competences. Besides, a strong emphasis is placed on the importance of learning Italian for a positive integration: «students with non-Italian citizenships need to develop a proper level of Italian, both for communicating and learning. Furthermore, they need to acquire an increasing linguistic fluency and cultural knowledge, which could help them proceed within the learning path» (MIUR, 2012: 34).¹⁹

The guidelines for welcoming and integrating foreign students released in 2014 by the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR, 2014: 16-20) constitute the most articulate document in terms of indications about the language support for students with migrant backgrounds, as well as the importance of valuing linguistic diversity in schools. Firstly, the document (MIUR, 2014: 5) highlights the key role of linguistic support for students who are newly arrived in a new country and school system. In fact, as highlighted by Gentile and Chiappelli (2016: 104), the newly arrived students usually do not know the language, nor the teachers or the school rules and teaching methodologies, which may differ significantly from their home country. The ministerial guidelines thus underline the importance of learning Italian for a positive integration in schools (MIUR, 2014:

¹⁹ Translation of the author. Original version: «Particolare attenzione va rivolta agli alunni con cittadinanza non italiana i quali, ai fini di una piena integrazione, devono acquisire sia un adeguato livello di uso e controllo della lingua italiana per comunicare e avviare i processi di apprendimento, sia una sempre più sicura padronanza linguistica e culturale per proseguire nel proprio itinerario di istruzione.

16)²⁰. Likewise, the document points out that all teachers are responsible for teaching Italian to foreign students and valuing their home languages (MIUR, 2014: 34). Besides, the guidelines (MIUR, 2014: 16) argue that the main goal should be to implement advanced interventions in terms of linguistic support for foreign students since the interventions of the previous years were focused only on the first level and most urgent needs of the foreign students. Whereas, nowadays the schools should accompany and support the linguistic development of foreign students who are learning Italian as a second language, which plays a key role over the whole integration process. The document (MIUR, 2014: 16-17) points out that the teaching and learning process regarding Italian as a second language presents some specific characteristics, namely:

- It represents a *specific* teaching field as it needs specific time, methods, needs and grading systems; but it is also a *transitional* subject since it is only functional until the students learn the language and can therefore take part in curricular activities like their native peers.
- The amount of time needed for learning Italian as a language for communication (*ItalBase*) usually requires some months, while learning Italian as a language for studying (*ItalStudio*) requires a larger amount of time and the participation of all teachers.
- Each teacher should work as a language facilitator in their subject, in order to enable the foreign students to learn the Italian language through the different disciplines.
- The Italian language learning process is facilitated by the mixed and heterogeneous learning situation, since the foreign students learn both inside and outside the class, both during lessons and in recreational moments. Thus, the native peers represent the real linguistic models for the newly arrived students.

Furthermore, the document (MIUR, 2014: 17-18) argues that to learn Italian quickly, the newly arrived students should join the appropriate classrooms, according to

²⁰ The document distinguishes between Italiano per la comunicazione and Italiano veicolare di studio, observing that learning the former may require just a few months, whereas the latter may need a longer period and therefore requires the involvement of all teachers, who represent the learning facilitators of their subjects (MIUR, 2014: 17).

their age and previous schooling; plus, they should attend the language courses in additional hours, since learning Italian as a second language constitutes the main element in the whole integration system. The guidelines particularly point out that the language courses should involve small groups of foreign students from different classrooms and last approximately 8-10 hours per week, for a total of 3-4 months. The guidelines (MIUR, 2014: 18) also provide an overview of the three different phases of learning Italian as a second language: 1) the initial phase of learning Italian for communication, in which the students learn the basic vocabulary and develop listening, reading, writing and grammatical skills; 2) the linking phase of access to Italian for studying, in which the foreign students learn how to use the Italian language for studying and through the studying of other disciplines; 3) the common learning phase, in which the foreign students have already acquired a good level of Italian as a second language, thus the teachers adopt collective strategies while valuing the cultural and linguistic diversity of the foreign students for enriching the lessons.

Finally, the document (MIUR, 2014: 18-19) highlights the importance of promoting and enhancing the students' linguistic repertoires in the school environment, thus releasing plurilingual communications and messages. Besides, the school system should value linguistic diversity by creating plurilingual spaces and moments, through collective readings and writing activities, as well as plurilingual dictionaries and books. The document (MIUR, 2014: 19-20) further provides a detailed list of some activities and actions which schools could carry out for promoting and valuing the students' home languages, namely:

- Welcoming signals: schools may promote the students' linguistic diversity by releasing and displaying plurilingual posters, booklets and official documents, thus fostering a more welcoming and inclusive school environment.
- Bilingual questionnaires: schools may explore the foreign students' linguistic situation by asking them to complete bilingual questionnaires for observing their skills and level.
- Plurilingual stories: teachers may propose plurilingual novels and stories to their classrooms, to include the foreign students and help them approach the Italian texts while enhancing their home languages at the same time.

- Plurilingual list of keywords: teachers may ask the students to create a plurilingual list or glossary with key words and encourage the students to use their whole linguistic repertoires while exploring a new topic.
- Attention to loanwords: teachers may explore linguistic loans with the students and observe new words through the translation in their home languages, thus noticing the similarities and differences among languages.
- Teaching the students' home languages: schools may organise courses of the students' home languages, inviting both the foreign and native students to take part.

The Osservatorio nazionale per l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri e per l'educazione interculturale (2015: 3-4) released another document in 2015, highlighting the importance of implementing courses of Italian as a second language both for the migrant students and their parents. The document particularly invites schools to implement permanent language laboratories, which should be differentiated according to the students' level and held by teachers specialised in teaching Italian as a second language, especially in schools with a high number of foreign students.

Finally, the document published in 2018 by the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR, 2018: 10) places a strong emphasis on the need for all teachers to teach Italian as a second language and explore new approaches to teaching, to truly embrace the plurilingual nature of their classes.

1.3 The promotion of plurilingualism and linguistic diversity at European level

As described in the previous paragraphs, the Italian school system has shown an increasing interest in plurilingualism and the legitimisation of the students' linguistic repertoires, thus considering diversity as a key resource for all students (MIUR, 2014: 18). The publication of documents at European level has certainly contributed to legitimatising and strengthening the elaboration of top-down policies within the Italian education context (Scibetta and Carbonara, 2019: 117). As observed by Coppola and Moretti (2018: 399), the European documents on education have always designated language and cultural diversity as a distinctive trait of the European Union, as well as a resource and enriching opportunity. Likewise, the Eurydice Report (European Commission, 2019: 31) claims that European policies and documents have always

emphasised the importance of promoting the integration of students with migrant backgrounds in schools. Moreover, Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 87) suggest that over the past years the European educational policies about linguistic diversity have shown an increasing interest towards a type of plurilingualism that comprehends not only the languages of the EU but also the home languages of students with migrant backgrounds, thus encouraging schools to embrace a more welcoming approach towards the students' repertoires. In the next paragraphs, we will illustrate the main European documents which have been developed for promoting plurilingualism and the integration of migrant students in schools.

In 2018, the European Commission (2018: 19-20) published the document *Una sfida salutare, come la molteplicità delle lingue potrebbe rafforzare l'Europa* (A healthy challenge, how linguistic multitude may strengthen Europe), as reported in Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 74-75), placing a strong emphasis on the importance of integrating migrant citizens through the legitimisation of their language and cultural diversity. The report states that European countries should not only help migrant citizens learn the language of the host country but also value and enhance their home languages, thus preserving their linguistic and cultural roots, hence their whole identity. In other words, the document argues that to foster a more welcoming and inclusive society, the European countries should value and protect linguistic diversity, enabling immigrant citizens to fully integrate and thus preventing marginalisation or sentiments of hostility towards the country of immigration.

According to Cummins (2015: 4), though European policies and documents endorse a positive orientation to diversity, especially in education, many countries still perceive the linguistic and cultural diversity of immigrant students as a problem rather than as a potential educational resource. Furthermore, he claims that many educational systems continue to ignore the benefits of including the migrant students' home languages within the school (Cummins, 2015: 14):

Despite increasing evidence of the benefits of bilingualism for students' cognitive and academic growth, schools in many contexts continue to prohibit students from using their L1 within the school, thereby communicating to students the inferior status of their home languages and devaluing the identities of speakers of these languages.

Similarly, Hélot and Cavalli (as reported in Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 87) argue that the home languages of students with migrant backgrounds are too often considered only in terms of language policies, whereas the actual didactic practices tend to marginalise these languages.

Nevertheless, Cummins (2015: 13) reckons that despite the general negative orientation towards the students' home languages, there has been an increasing number of educational innovative projects carried out in European schools by educators and university researchers, focusing on the integration of students' home languages into language awareness activities.

In the following paragraphs, we will describe two documents published in 2012 and 2016 by the Council of Europe and the European Centre for Modern Languages, which focus on plurilingualism and promotion of linguistic diversity in schools; namely, the document *FREPA. A framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures* (Candelier *et al.*, 2012) and the *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education* (Beacco *et al.*, 2016).

1.3.1 A framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures

The FREPA document developed in 2012 by the European Centre for Modern Languages aims at providing teachers, teacher trainers and educational leaders²¹ with a set of tools for the implementation of pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures in education (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 5). Specifically, the pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures refer to «didactic approaches that use teaching/learning activities involving several (i.e. more than one) varieties of languages or cultures» (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 6).

In particular, the FREPA framework proposes a table of general competences about language and cultures, and a structured grouping of resources that contribute to the activation of such competences, about respectively knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

²¹ The document (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 10) states that the FREPA project is particularly addressed to four different stakeholders in the education field: 1) persons involved in curriculum development or school programmes in ministries, agencies and other institutions; 2) persons responsible for the development of teaching materials; 3) teachers of languages and other subjects; 4) teacher trainers. Most importantly, though, the learners themselves are the ultimate beneficiaries of the FREPA project.

These resources concern linguistic and cultural facts and enable learners to access a specific language or culture through the aptitudes and competences already acquired in another language or culture. Therefore, the resources can only be developed in a classroom space where languages and cultures, as well as the relationships among them, are explored and correlated, thus in a context where the approaches to languages and cultures are pluralistic (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 8-9, 13-14).

Firstly, the FREPA document presents a list of competences (see Figure 1.4) which learners could develop through the implementation of pluralistic approaches, thus activating resources related to knowledge, attitudes, and skills through reflection and action (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 13-14, 19-20). The competences are divided into two main parts: one related to the management of communication (C1 - Competence in managing linguistic and cultural communication in a context of “otherness”) and the other to personal development (C2 – Competence in the construction and broadening of a plural linguistic and cultural repertoire), under which there are other five levels of competences (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 14, 20).

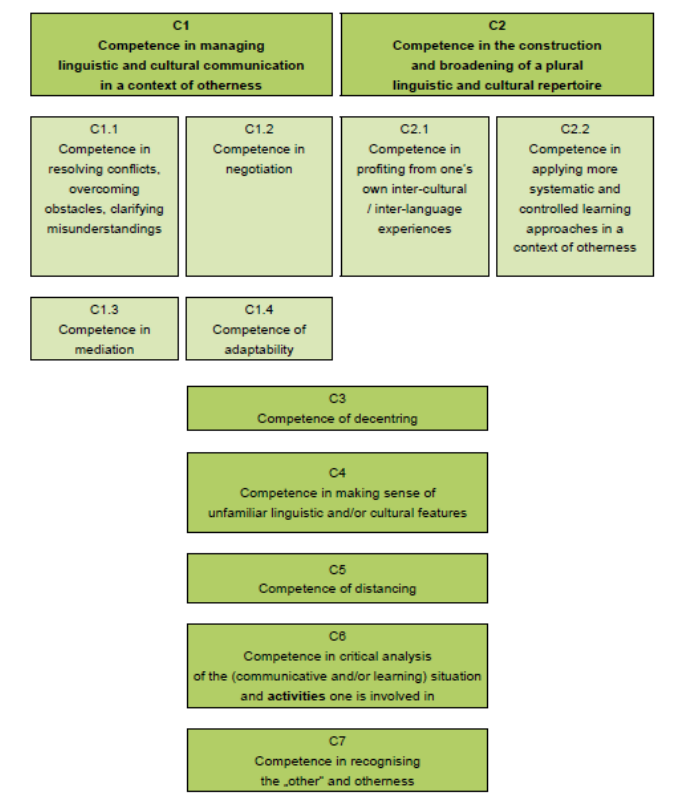


Figure 1.4. Table of global competences presented in FREPA (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 20)

Moreover, the FREPA framework (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 13-14, 17) proposes a hierarchised list of descriptors for each of the three domains, thus knowledge, attitudes, and skills, which learners could develop through the implementation of pluralistic approaches. For each list of descriptors, there is a three-point scale rating, represented by the symbols of a key with different colours, which indicate whether the contribution to the pluralistic approaches is essential (green and orange key symbol), important (orange and white key), or simply useful (white key).

The list of knowledge (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 24-37) is divided into two thematic subgroups (Language and Culture), which comprehend respectively seven and eight sections per each. For instance, the Language subgroup includes the following sections:

- I. Language as a semiological system;
- II. Language and society;
- III. Verbal and non-verbal communication;
- IV. The evolution of languages;
- V. Plurality, diversity, multilingualism and plurilingualism;
- VI. Similarities and differences between languages;
- VII. Language and acquisition/learning (see Figure 1.5).













K 7	Knows how one "acquires / learns" a language	
K 7.1	Knows some of the basic principles which underlie the process of learning a language	
K 7.1.1	Knows that learning a language is a long and arduous process	
K 7.1.2	Knows that it is normal to commit errors when one has not yet mastered a language	
K 7.1.3	Knows that certain types of behaviour can help the learner, but that incessant correction or ridicule can in the same way "block" the process	
K 7.1.4	Knows "that one never completely knows a language / that there are always things one does not know / that there is always room for improvement"	
K 7.2	Knows that one can build on the (/ structural / discursive / pragmatic /) similarities between languages in order to learn languages	
K 7.3	Knows that one can learn better if one has a positive attitude towards linguistic differences	
K 7.4	Knows that the perception one has of a language influences the learning of that language	
K 7.5	Knows that there are different strategies for learning languages and that their relevance varies according to the learner's objectives	
K 7.5.1	Is familiar with various learning strategies and how they can be applied (listening and repeating, copying several times, translation, trying to produce utterances independently by oneself)	
K 7.6	Knows that it is useful to know about learning strategies one uses in order to be able to adapt them to one's specific objectives	

Figure 1.5. Extract from section VII in the list of Knowledge (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 30)

The list of attitudes (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 38-49) includes six different sections linked to the learners' personal factors, such as their attitudes, motivations, values, and identities. Thus, the different sections comprehend predicates concerning the learners' attention, sensitivity, interest, disposition, openness, motivation, and curiosity concerning the diversity of languages and cultures. Namely, the list includes the following sections:

- I. Attention/Sensitivity/Curiosity/Positive acceptance/Openness/Respect/Valorisation with respect to languages, cultures and the diversity of languages and cultures (see Figure 1.6);
- II. Disposition/Motivation/Will/Desire to engage in activity related to languages/cultures and to the diversity of languages and cultures;
- III. Attitudes/stances of: questioning – distancing – decentring – relativizing;
- IV. Readiness to adapt/Self-confidence/Sense of familiarity;
- V. Identity;
- VI. Attitudes to learning.













A 1	Attention to "foreign" "languages / cultures / persons" to "linguistic / cultural / human" diversity in the environment to language in general to "linguistic / cultural / human" diversity in general [as such]	
A 1.1	Attention "to language (to semiotic manifestations) / to cultures / to persons" in general	
A 1.1.1	Attention to verbal and non-verbal signs of communication	
A 1.1.2	"Considering / apprehending" "linguistic / cultural" phenomena as an object of "observation / reflection"	
A 1.1.3	Attention to [paying attention to] the formal aspects of "language in general / particular languages / cultures"	
A 2	Sensitivity "to the existence of other "languages / cultures / persons" // to the existence of "linguistic / cultural / human" diversity"	
A 2.1	Sensitivity towards one's own "language / culture" and other "languages / cultures"	
A 2.2	Sensitivity to "linguistic / cultural" differences	
A 2.2.1	Being aware of different aspects of "language / culture" which may vary "from language to language / from culture to culture"	
A 2.2.1.1	Being aware of the diversity of "linguistic universes (sounds, graphics, syntactic organisations, etc.) / cultural universes (table manners, traffic laws, etc.)"	
A 2.2.2	Being aware of the (local / regional / social / generational) variants of a same "language (dialects ...) / culture"	
A 2.2.3	Being aware of traces of otherness in "a language (for example of loan words) / a culture"	

Figure 1.6. Extract from section I in the list of Attitudes (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 38)

Finally, the list of skills comprehends seven sections that correspond to the learners' abilities related to languages and cultures, such as metalinguistic observation, analysis, reflection, comparison, identification, as well as communication and interactional skills (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 50-59). Namely, the sections included in the list are:

- I. Can observe/can analyse;
- II. Can recognise/identify;
- III. Can compare;
- IV. Can talk about languages and cultures;
- V. Can use what one knows of a language in order to understand another language or to produce in another language;
- VI. Can interact (see Figure 1.7);
- VII. Knows how to learn.














S 6	Can interact in situations of contact between "languages / cultures"	
S 6.1	Can communicate in bi/plurilingual groups taking into account the repertoire of one's interlocutors	
S 6.1.1	Can reformulate (/ by simplifying the structure of the utterance / by varying the vocabulary / by making an effort to pronounce more clearly/)	
S 6.1.2	Can discuss strategies for interaction	
S 6.2	Can ask for help when communicating in bi/plurilingual groups	
S 6.2.1	Can ask an interlocutor to reformulate what has been said	
S 6.2.2	Can ask an interlocutor to repeat what has been said in a simpler way	
S 6.2.3	Can ask an interlocutor to switch to another language	
S 6.3	Can communicate while taking "sociolinguistic / sociocultural" differences into account	
S 6.3.1	Can use formulae of politeness appropriately	
S 6.3.2	Can use forms of address appropriately	
S 6.3.3	Can resort to different speech registers according to the situation	
S 6.3.4	Can use "metaphoric / idiomatic" "expressions / formulae" in accordance with the cultural background of one's interlocutors	

Figure 1.7. Extract from section VI in the list of Skills (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 57)

1.3.2 The guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education

The main goal of the guide released by the Council of Europe in 2016 is to facilitate teachers of all languages²² in the implementation of the values and principles of plurilingual and intercultural education. Plurilingual and intercultural education is focused on the establishment of interconnections between the language(s) of schooling and languages as subjects, as well as other subjects (Beacco *et al.*, 2016: 9-10). Specifically, the guide (Beacco *et al.*, 2016: 15) argues that plurilingual and intercultural education has two aims:

First, it facilitates the acquisition of linguistic and intercultural abilities: this involves adding to the linguistic and cultural resources which make up individual repertoires, using the available means efficiently. Secondly, it promotes personal development, so that individuals can realize their full potential: this involves encouraging them to respect and accept diversity of languages and cultures in a multilingual and multicultural society, and helping to make them aware of the extent of their competences and development potential.

As far as the curricular activities are concerned, the guide (Beacco *et al.*, 2016: 23) suggests that teachers could implement plurilingual and intercultural education on various levels. Specifically, they could:

- Promote coordination of lessons, emphasising the linguistic dimension of all subjects, as well as the coherence and synergy between the learning of foreign, regional, minority and classical languages and the language(s) of schooling;
- Identify and promote awareness about the intercultural competences of any course of study, and work to integrate them within the learning process;
- Encourage learners to think more about the components of their plurilingual repertoires, their intercultural competences, how languages and cultures work, and the best ways of profiting from their personal or collective experience of using and learning languages.

²² The languages intended by the document are, namely: foreign, regional and minority languages, as well as classical languages and language(s) of schooling.

As we can observe from the final point of the list, the guide places a strong emphasis on the plurilingual repertoires of students with migrant backgrounds, further stating that the student' home languages should be valued since they represent «a resource which schools can turn to good account in educating all pupils, and not simply a barrier to success for children who speak them» (Beacco *et al.*, 2016: 13); thus, these languages «must not simply be ignored by schools or even considered a barrier to success for children who speak them but, quite the contrary, something schools can use to good effect in educating all pupils» (Beacco *et al.*, 2016: 98). Moreover, the document argues that plurilingual and intercultural education should develop the learners' awareness about the value of their linguistic repertoires (Beacco *et al.*, 2016: 125).

Furthermore, the document (Beacco *et al.*, 2016: 98) lists some special measures that schools should include in their curriculum to facilitate the integration of students from migrant backgrounds, namely:

- Indicate the technical features of subjects, such as the various competences, textual genres, communication formats and linguistic norms required, at specific stages in the course and in specific contexts;
- Emphasise the cross-linking factors between these subjects to facilitate the students' familiarisation with the “functional” aspect of education;
- Explore the language dimensions of any subject studied – regarding speaking and writing correctly, managing communication in the class, knowledge building and competence acquisition;
- Enable learners to develop themselves as social agents, by extending and refining their language repertoire and competences;
- Help young people from migrant background to learn (introduction, maintenance, development) their home language.

The guide (Beacco *et al.*, 2016: 98-99) further points out that there are numerous educational approaches implemented in European schools, which aim at leveraging the students' language repertoires to acquire skills in other languages, thus involving methodologies such as contrastive analysis, inter-comprehension, reflection on language and cultural diversity, as well as activities involving the formulation of statements in the home language and then reformulated in the language of schooling, through the help of

peers or mediators. The latter is referred to as *translanguaging*²³, which we will illustrate in more detail in the following chapter. The document also underlines that these approaches could be implemented either systematically or on a scheduled basis, both during school time or in extra-curricular classes, and the initiatives require the support and motivation of the students' parents, both immigrants or not.

1.3.3 Plurilingualism and translanguaging in European documents

Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 83) report that the concept of translanguaging appears in two documents published by the European Commission in 2017, namely *Rethinking language education and linguistic diversity in schools*, and *Migrants in European schools: learning and maintaining languages*. The documents (European Commission, 2017b: 12; European Commission, 2017c: 13) refer to translanguaging as the use of different languages by teachers and students for communication and learning, thus proposing a general version of the pedagogical theory.

In 2018, as reported in Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 83), the Council of Europe published the *Companion Volume with new descriptors*, introducing the translanguaging concept, which is described as «an action undertaken by plurilingual persons, where more than one language may be involved» (Council of Europe, 2018: 28). However, the document states that translanguaging could be involved in the definition of plurilingualism, which comprehends numerous perspectives across Europe: «plurilingualism can, in fact, be considered from various perspectives: as a sociological or historical fact, as a personal characteristic or ambition, as an educational philosophy or approach, or – fundamentally – as the sociopolitical aim of preserving linguistic diversity» (Council of Europe, 2018: 28). According to Coppola and Moretti (2018: 401), plurilingualism may be defined as a linguistic competence that embraces all the interrelated abilities, strategies, and skills used by speakers when learning other languages (Coppola and Moretti, 2018: 401).

²³ CARBONARA and SCIBETTA (2020a: 77) observe that the mentioning of translanguaging inside the guide represents an important starting point for recognition of this methodological practice at European level, though the interpretation proposed by the guide is monodirectional and oriented to a polarisation between the home languages and the language of schooling. Thus, the guide suggests a weak version of translanguaging (GARCÍA and LIN, 2016). For more details see § 2.4 in chapter 2.

Therefore, the vision of translanguaging proposed by the Council of Europe is included in a wider framework which could be referred to as plurilingualism. Nonetheless, as observed by García and Otheguy (in Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 87), translanguaging and plurilingualism are two different theories, since the former embraces the concept of national languages or named languages, thus reflecting the European structure of numerous nations with corresponding languages; whereas the latter is a bottom-up concept, which was not elaborated by institutional organisations, but rather in a context of minority languages, namely within the bilingual education system of Wales, in the 1980s²⁴. The fundamental goal of translanguaging is essentially to transcend the reality of national languages and embrace a different and more unitary vision, as we will further illustrate in the following chapter.

²⁴ For more information about the origins and main assumptions of translanguaging, see § 2.1 in chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, we will firstly introduce the origins and foundations of translanguaging (§ 2.1). Secondly, we will illustrate the translanguaging approach to education (§ 2.2). Moreover, we will present some educational projects which aim at exploring and implementing translanguaging in classrooms, both in the United States and in Italy (§ 2.3). Finally, we will describe the academic debate on translanguaging (§ 2.4).

2.1 Translanguaging: origins and assumptions

Translanguaging may be observed from two different perspectives, namely a sociolinguistic and a pedagogical perspective, as claimed by García *et al.* (2017: 20) and by Flores and Schissel (in García *et al.*, 2017: 2): the former refers to the language practices of multilingual speakers and communities; the latter describes the pedagogical approach adopted by teachers who bridge these practices with the language practices desired in formal school settings. In this chapter, we will focus on the pedagogical aspect of translanguaging, since the translanguaging pedagogy was the main object of our research, as we will illustrate in chapter 3 and chapter 4. Thus, in the following paragraphs, we will illustrate the origins of translanguaging and the main principles of the translanguaging pedagogical theory.

2.1.1 The origins of translanguaging

The translanguaging concept emerged during the 1980s in Wales, within the context of bilingual education (Lewis *et al.*, in Cenoz and Gorter, 2017: 311). The term was first used in 1994 by the pedagogist Cen Williams (as reported in Vogel and García, 2017: 3), who coined the Welsh word *trawsieithu* to refer to pedagogical practices adopted in bilingual classrooms, in which both English and Welsh could be used alternatively for different purposes and activities. The main goal was thus to deepen and extend the students' bilingualism, by asking them to alternate the two languages for receptive or productive uses. For instance, English could be used for the

input (e.g. reading and listening activities), whereas Welsh could be used for the output (e.g. speaking and writing activities), and vice versa (García and Li Wei, 2014: 20; Baker in Cenoz and Gorter, 2015: 178; García *et al.*, 2017: 2).

The term was then translated into English in 2001 by Colin Baker, who described the term as «the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages», as reported by García and Li Wei (2014: 20). In 2009, García (in García and Li Wei, 2014: 22) extended the definition of translanguaging, referring to «multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage to make sense of their bilingual worlds», as reported; whereas in 2011, Canagarajah (in García and Li Wei, 2014: 21) referred to translanguaging as «the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system».

García and Li Wei (2014: 2-3) explain that the first part of the term, *trans-*, refers to the ‘trans’ approach to language and education, which transcends the traditional structures, by considering three innovative aspects: 1) the *trans-systems* and *trans-spaces*, hence the language practices that go beyond the socially constructed practices to enhance and value the students’ linguistic repertoires and subjectivities; 2) the *transformative nature* of translanguaging, which challenges traditional cognitive and social structures, transforming both language practices and education; 3) the *trans-disciplinary* consequences of a translanguaging approach, which provides insights not only about education and language but also human sociality, cognition and learning.

The second part of the term, *linguaging*, refers to the idea that language is not just a system of syntactic, semantic and phonetic rules, but rather the ‘thinking and writing between languages’ (Mignolo in García and Li Wei, 2014: 8). García and Li Wei (2014: 18) argue that language depends on our actions and being with others; thus, the term *linguaging* perfectly describes the dynamic development of our identities and language practices, as we interact with others and make meaning in the world.

2.1.2 Bilingualism and translanguaging

Bilingualism has been traditionally described from an external and monolingual perspective, as *additive* bilingualism, hence the simple addition of two languages. Therefore, bilingualism has been traditionally interpreted as double monolingualism, thus considering bilinguals as two monolinguals in one, as was observed by Grosjean in

1982 (as cited in García *et al.*, 2017: 23). The traditional theory of bilingualism considered languages as two separate and autonomous linguistic systems; thus, bilinguals would simply add their first language (L_1) to a second language (L_2), each with their specific features (F_1 and F_2), as shown in Figure 2.1 (García and Li Wei, 2014: 14).

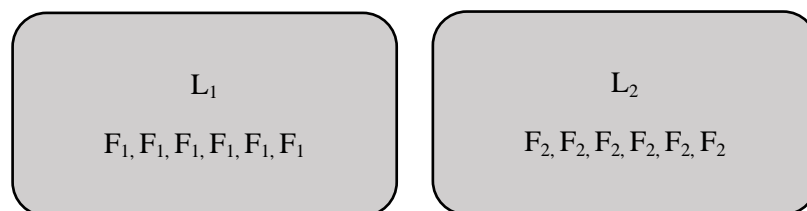


Figure 2.1. Traditional view of bilingualism (García and Li Wei, 2014: 14)

In 1979, the Canadian scholar Jim Cummins (as cited in García and Li Wei, 2014: 13) argued that the two languages of bilinguals are not stored separately in the brain and that both languages are rather interdependent. Specifically, he used the metaphor of a dual iceberg to explain his new theory of Linguistic Interdependence: though at the surface of the iceberg there seem to be two separate languages, below the surface there is a Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP), which allows the transfer between the two languages, as shown in Figure 2.2.

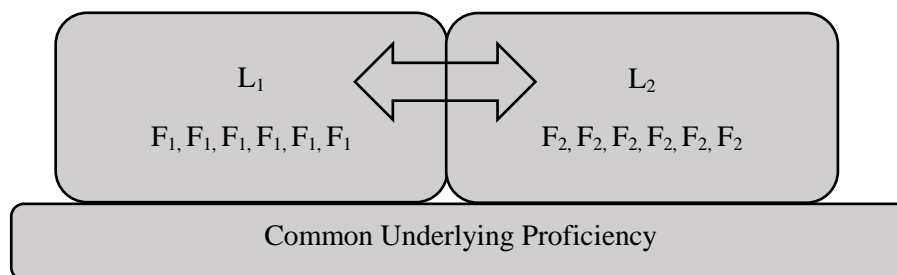


Figure 2.2. Cummins' view of bilingualism (García and Li Wei, 2014: 14)

The translanguaging theory challenges and extends both the traditional model of bilingualism and Cummins' theory, positing that bilingualism is not just additive, but *dynamic*. Therefore, bilinguals have two named languages only from a social and external perspective; however, from their internal point of view, there is just one unitary linguistic system. Thus, bilingualism cannot be interpreted simply in terms of L_1 and L_2 , since there are nor additive or interdependent language systems, but rather a unitary and dynamic linguistic system, characterised by the interactions of linguistic features (F_n),

which are used differently according to the communicative situations, as shown in Figure 2.3 (García and Li Wei, 2014: 13-14; García and Kleyn, 2016: 10; García *et al.*, 2017: 19; Vogel and García, 2017: 5).

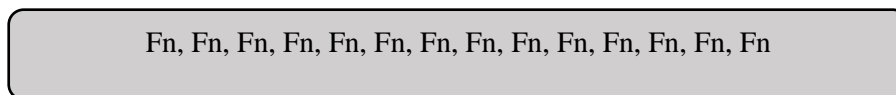


Figure 2.3. Translanguaging view of bilingualism (García and Li Wei, 2014: 14)

Translanguaging theory transcends the traditional societal and national definitions of language and language use, positing that all speakers, including bilingual, multilingual, monolingual or multidialectal speakers, possess a unitary linguistic repertoire, from which they select and deploy features to communicate and make meaning in different situations (García and Li Wei, 2014: 137; García *et al.*, 2017: 19, 24; Vogel and García, 2017: 1). The linguistic repertoires of bilingual speakers include language features that are socially and politically associated with standardised languages, also called *named languages*; therefore, bilingual speakers are traditionally defined as speakers of one or more languages. However, from their perspective, they only possess one linguistic repertoire (García *et al.*, 2017: 18).

Vogel and García (2017: 4) claim that translanguaging theory posits on three main assumptions, which go against the traditional conceptualisations of bilingualism and multilingualism:

1. It posits that individuals select and deploy features from a unitary linguistic repertoire in order to communicate.
2. It takes up a perspective on bi- and multilingualism that privileges speakers' own dynamic linguistic and semiotic practices above the named languages of nations and states.
3. It still recognises the material effects of socially constructed named language categories and structuralist language ideologies, especially for minoritised language speakers.

The first assumption represents the core premise of translanguaging theory, stating that all speakers, either monolingual, bilingual or plurilingual, use their unitary linguistic repertoire selectively, to communicate and make meaning in a specific context

(Vogel and García, 2017: 1). The second and third assumptions emphasise the importance of considering individuals' linguistic repertoires not as constructed and categorised named languages, but rather as unique and varied, yet reckoning the negative effects of named language constructions (García and Kleyn, 2016: 10, 187).

In other words, as observed by García and Li Wei (2014: 18):

A translanguaging approach to bilingualism extends the repertoire of semiotic practices of individuals and transforms them into dynamic mobile resources that can adapt to global and local sociolinguistic situations. At the same time, translanguaging also attends to the social construction of language and bilingualism under which speakers operate.

2.1.3 Code-switching and translanguaging

Translanguaging and code-switching differ from a sociolinguistic perspective. Code-switching refers to the switch between languages, which are considered as separate and autonomous entities; whereas translanguaging considers the use of bilinguals' language practices. Therefore, code-switching considers languages from an external perspective, referring to the standard, national or named languages, thus considering bilinguals as two monolinguals in one. On the contrary, translanguaging transcends the constructed boundaries of named language categories and considers the speakers' internal perspective: from his or her point of view, there are no categorised languages; rather, speakers have one linguistic repertoire, from which they select appropriate features according to the communicative context (García *et al.*, 2017: 20; Vogel and García, 2017: 6). As claimed by Lewis *et al.* (in Jonsson, 2017: 31), code-switching relates to language separation, while translanguaging goes beyond this separation, approving flexibility in language use. The internal perspective may also be referred to as the complexity approach, as proposed by Blommaert (in Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 50), who argues that the external perspective view languages as separated systems, while the complexity perspective promotes innovation, creativity and hybridity among languages.

2.2 Translanguaging in education

Translanguaging pedagogy can be implemented in different educational settings and with different kinds of students. For this reason, there has been an increasing interest in the use of translanguaging practices in education in recent years, and the potential of translanguaging pedagogy has been increasingly recognised by educators around the world (García and Li Wei, 2014: 94, 125; Cenoz and Gorter, 2017: 313). In Europe, the increasing interest in exploring and implementing translanguaging pedagogy is particularly related to the European commitment towards the promotion of plurilingualism and linguistic inclusion within multilingual educational contexts²⁵ (Vogel and García, 2017: 8; Cenoz and Gorter, 2020: 30). In the next paragraphs, we will introduce the translanguaging pedagogy and the main characteristics of translanguaging classrooms.

2.2.1 Translanguaging pedagogy

García and Li Wei (in Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 57) argue that translanguaging as a pedagogical practice rejects the concept of separation among languages within the school, and between the school languages and the languages which are used in family or society.

García *et al.* (2017: 7) identify four main purposes of translanguaging in education:

1. Supporting students as they engage with and comprehend complex content and texts;
2. Providing opportunities for students to develop linguistic practices for academic contexts;
3. Making space for students' bilingualism and ways of knowing;
4. Supporting students' bilingual identities and socioemotional development.

Teachers in translanguaging classrooms need to adhere to three main components of translanguaging pedagogy: 1) Stance; 2) Design; and 3) Shift. The stance refers to the belief that the students' entire linguistic repertoires are valuable resources, which should be leveraged in the classroom space; besides, teachers need to carefully design the instructional units, lessons and assessment to integrate the students' home and school

²⁵ For more information about plurilingualism and inclusion in Europe, see chapter 1.

language practices into the lessons. Therefore, teachers need to have a translanguaging stance and build a translanguaging design; nevertheless, teachers must also be prepared to make translanguaging shifts, which refer to the moment-by-moment decisions and changes which may occur during lessons. In other words, teachers should always be flexible and follow the *translanguaging corriente*²⁶ which runs through their classroom spaces (García *et al.*, 2017: 27-28; Vogel and García, 2017: 10).

García *et al.* (2017: 72-74) illustrate the main elements of the translanguaging unit plan, which include: essential questions, content standards, content and language objectives, translanguaging objectives, culminating projects and assessments, and texts. Furthermore, they describe the translanguaging instructional design cycle, which teachers follow to structure and sequence the elements of their instruction. The design cycle includes five steps, namely: 1) Explorar; 2) Evaluar; 3) Imaginar; 4) Presentar; and 5) Implementar.

Firstly, the teachers introduce a new topic or theme, encouraging the students to explore the new content following their interests and curiosities, and building their fields of knowledge. The students are particularly invited to explore the topic using all their language resources, thus expanding their knowledge from different perspectives and through different linguistic viewpoints (García *et al.*, 2017: 72).

In the second stage, students are encouraged to express their ideas, reflections, and opinions about the new topic using their entire linguistic repertoires. Therefore, the teachers invite the students to think actively and critically towards the new theme, instead of simply store new information passively (García *et al.*, 2017: 72-73).

In the Imaginar stage, students are encouraged to stimulate new thinking and ideas, through different activities, such as individual and group brainstorming, drafting, planning, and researching. As in the prior stages, the students are invited to use their whole linguistic repertoires to expand their ideas and brainstorming (García *et al.*, 2017: 73).

During the Presentar stage, the students prepare the presentation and sharing of their works, engaging in peer editing and rewriting activities before sharing their works with the class. The teacher encourages the students to actively participate in the work

²⁶ The term “translanguaging corriente” is used by GARCÍA *et al.* (2017: 21) for indicating the dynamic bilingualism that runs through classrooms: such as the flow of a river changes its course depending on the landscape features, the students’ language features continuously move and change within the linguistic schoolscape.

and think about their use and choice of languages. In the end, students can present their work to teachers and classmates, as well as the school community and families (García *et al.*, 2017: 73).

In the final stage, the teachers encourage the students to use their content and language learning for meaningful and authentic purposes, thus acting in the world as active and responsible citizens. Therefore, students are encouraged to carry out a real task using their languages and what they learnt for communicating with people (García *et al.*, 2017: 73-74).

2.2.2 Translanguaging classrooms

Translanguaging pedagogy can be developed in any educational context and classroom, either monolingual or bilingual. Besides, bilingual students may be either already experienced bilinguals, i.e. speakers who use two or more languages, or emergent bilinguals, i.e. speakers who are still developing their bilingualism. Teachers who implement translanguaging pedagogy allow bilingual students to fully use their linguistic repertoires and bring their language practices into the classroom, rather than keeping them in their heads and just use the official language of instruction (García *et al.*, 2017: 1, 24). According to García *et al.* (2017: 1), a translanguaging classroom is «any classroom in which students may deploy their full linguistic repertoires». Thus, a translanguaging classroom could be defined as «a space built collaboratively by the teacher and bilingual students as they use their different language practices to teach and learn in deeply creative and critical ways» (García *et al.*, 2017: 2). In other words, teachers in translanguaging classrooms support the students' learning process by valuing and leveraging their linguistic repertoires, thus transcending the traditional models of monolingual and bilingual education (García and Kleyn, 2016: 23; García *et al.*, 2017: 1, 24).

2.3 The translanguaging projects

In the next paragraphs, we will illustrate the education projects which translate translanguaging theory into practice, thus using translanguaging as a pedagogical practice for teaching and learning (García and Kleyn, 2016: 221). We will first introduce the CUNY-NYSIEB project, which was initiated in 2011 by Ophelia García

and other scholars from the City University of New York. Secondly, we will move to the European context, specifically the Italian context. We will thus describe the LI.LO project, namely the first Italian translanguaging-related project, which was implemented at a school in Genova by Elena Firpo and Laura Sanfelici; secondly, we will present the set of plurilingual tasks which were implemented at a school in Florence; finally, we will illustrate the AltRoparlante project, which was initiated by Valentina Carbonara and Andrea Scibetta and has been carried out since 2016 in several Italian schools.

These projects are rooted in translanguaging as a pedagogical theory since they aim at promoting and valuing the linguistic repertoires of students in plurilingual classrooms through the implementation of a translanguaging-based approach; yet, they differ for the educational contexts in which they occur: the CUNY-NYSIEB is implemented in New York bilingual schools with considerable numbers of Latino students, whereas the LI.LO project, the plurilingual tasks and L'AltRoparlante are Italian projects which take place in monolingual schools with a great presence of students from migrant backgrounds. The educational framework of Italian schools is therefore different from the schools involved in the New York initiative. Moreover, the increasing interest towards translanguaging in the Italian education system is strongly related to the European linguistic policies which aim at promoting plurilingualism and inclusion (see chapter 1).

2.3.1 The CUNY-NYSIEB project

The City University of New York's State Initiative for Emergent Bilinguals (CUNY²⁷-NYSIEB²⁸) is an education project initiated in 2011 by Arlen Benjamin-Gómez²⁹ and funded by the New York State Education Department (García and Li Wei, 2014: 135; García and Kleyn, 2016: 42).

The research approach of CUNY-NYSIEB project is transformative, as it aims at developing a positive change in schools with large numbers of emergent bilingual

²⁷ CUNY refers to the City University of New York, which is a system of 24 higher education institutions located in New York.

²⁸ For more information on CUNY-NYSIEB, see the project's website: <https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/>.

²⁹ The principal investigator was Prof. Ricardo Otheguy, while the co-principal investigators were Ofelia García, Kate Menken and Tatyana Kleyn.

students³⁰. Furthermore, the CUNY-NYSIEB is an action research, since the project members and teachers work together and establish a close relationship, based on cooperation and shared values. Therefore, the project may be referred to as a *Transformative Action Research*, hence a research approach in which the researchers collaborate with the teachers planning instruction and designing the study, thus becoming teacher-researchers and researcher-teachers, as pointed out by García and Kleyn (2016: 49):

Transformative Action Research inverts the power position of researchers and teachers, as each brings their own expertise into the process, becoming co-learners. In the process, both research and teaching are transformed in ways that improve understanding and educational conditions. Thus, Transformative Action Research creates space for educators to value research on teaching and learning, and space for researchers to value the work of those involved in the act of teaching.

The main goal of the project is to support public schools with large numbers of emergent bilingual students³¹ and considered by the New York State education department as failing schools, due to the low performance of their students on exams. The initiative is centred on translanguaging and aims at providing school leaders and teachers with a base knowledge that can transform the language practices and policies towards emergent bilingual students while improving their education. The CUNY-NYSIEB assumption is that school leaders need to consider the students' home languages as resources and understand the role of translanguaging in order to develop appropriate programs and instruction for emergent bilingual students (García and Li Wei, 2014: 125; Ascenzi-Moreno, Hesson and Menken, 2015: 2, 6, 17, 18; García and Kleyn, 2016: 34).

The schools involved in CUNY-NYSIEB project must adhere to two non-negotiable: the first is to use bilingualism as a resource in education and the second is to create a multilingual ecology. The first principle posits that the home languages of emergent bilingual students should be recognised, leveraged and developed, regardless of the program structure; therefore, the students' resource languages should be

³⁰ For a definition of Emergent Bilinguals (EBLs) see § 2.2.2.

³¹ The students are mainly Spanish speakers (GARCÍA and SANCHEZ in CARBONARA and SCIBETTA, 2020a: 59).

considered as flexible and strategic instructional tools. Moreover, the students should be encouraged to work in groups, thus the teachers should promote cooperation, especially among students with different language resources. The second principle maintains that the language practices of students should be visually represented in the school textual landscape, including classrooms, hallways, offices, home communications and announcements. Therefore, the linguistic schoolscape should involve both the classroom and the school spaces. The plurilingual works collected and displayed in the linguistic schoolscape include, for instance, posters, word walls, notes, books and dictionaries (Ascenzi-Moreno *et al.*, 2015: 6; García and Kleyn, 2016: 44; Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 59-60).

2.3.2 The LILO project

“Lingua Italiana, Lingua di Origine” (LILO) is the first translanguaging-orientated project implemented within the Italian educational context, namely at a middle school in Genova³², with a large presence of Spanish-speaking students of second generations, who were between 11- and 14-year-old. The initiative was an action research project carried out during academic years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 by researchers Elena Firpo and Laura Sanfelici, following the CUNY-NYSIEB model. The project aimed at finding and experimenting teaching methods that could leverage the linguistic repertoires of bilingual students, enhancing and legitimising the use of students’ home languages while improving their linguistic competence in the Italian language (Firpo and Sanfelici, 2016: 125; Scibetta, 2018: 120).

The project had three main goals: 1) help the Spanish-speaking students to improve their cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in both Spanish and Italian; 2) improve the students’ learning skills and metalinguistic abilities; and 3) promote the students’ knowledge and use of TIC, hence information and communication technology (Firpo and Sanfelici, 2016: 127).

The project was conducted with the Spanish-speaking students during weekly extra-curricular meetings, in which students could revise Geography and History subjects through technological tools. The meetings were based on a lexical approach, thus focused on the linguistic terminology related to the subjects, and the input was

³² “Istituto comprensivo Sampierdarena”, Genova.

based on authentic material aiming at improving the receptive abilities of the students. Furthermore, the researchers proposed interlinguistic discussions, which aimed to develop the students' metalinguistic competences (Scibetta, 2018: 122-123).

2.3.3 The set of plurilingual tasks

Another important translanguaging-related project held in Italian schools is the set of plurilingual tasks designed by Raffaella Moretti and other researchers from Pisa University and ILC-CNR³³. The project occurred throughout the academic years 2015-16 and 2016-17 in two schools of Campi Bisenzio (FI)³⁴, which are characterised by a considerable proportion of migrant students, especially from a Chinese background, as well as students with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties. The sample was composed of 300 plurilingual students, both from primary and middle school, and the purpose of the plurilingual tasks was the implementation of cooperative activities based on a dialogical approach³⁵ and technological support, to observe and verify the validity of such methodologies while enhancing the students' plurilingual repertoires (Coppola *et al.*, 2017: 2; Coppola and Moretti, 2018: 398, 402).

During the academic year 2016/2017, the researchers conducted a didactic experiment with a group of students from the same sample, namely 133 middle school students from different migrant backgrounds who studied three languages at school (Italian, Chinese, English and Spanish). The experiment consisted in the implementation of a didactic module called "In quante lingue mangi?" and composed of two different units, for a total of 64 hours. The experiment was coordinated by Professor Daria Coppola and it aimed at observing in which ways the students' linguistic repertoire could be enhanced within cooperative activities implemented through technological tools. The module dealt with the topic of food around the world and it was developed

³³ Istituto di Linguistica Computazionale «A. Zampolli», Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (Pisa).

³⁴ The two schools were part of the "Istituto Comprensivo La Pira" in San Donnino, Campi Bisenzio (FI).

³⁵ The dialogical approach is a didactic methodology based on a concept of language teaching as a complex and interactional experience, in which teachers and students are protagonists in the process of learning and teaching, for the construction of a plurilingual and intercultural competence. The students are involved in cooperative activities which value the differences among the students while enhancing their linguistic and cultural resources, which represent a precious resource for the whole classroom (COPPOLA and MORETTI, 2018: 11).

through the following methodologies: 1) cooperative activities, in which students would work together using their language resources and different abilities; 2) plurilingual tasks, which would involve the students' languages, such as the description of ingredients and recipes; 3) metalinguistic reflections and discussions starting from spontaneous translanguaging; 4) use of technological tools, such as online dictionaries; 5) intercultural activities which would involve the students' families and communities. Moreover, the researchers designed a set of online tests, which were plurilingual and both cooperative and individual-orientated, to observe in what ways the cooperative methodologies based on language interactions had an impact on the students, and verify their linguistic and communicative competences (Coppola *et al.*, 2017: 2; Coppola and Moretti, 2018: 398, 402, 404, 405).

2.3.4 The L'AltRoparlante project

L'AltRoparlante is an Italian education project initiated in 2016 at the University for Foreigners of Siena by researchers Valentina Carbonara and Andrea Scibetta, with the supervision of Professor Carla Bagna³⁶. The project took inspiration from the CUNY-NYSIEB model; thus, it aims at encouraging and promoting individual and collective multilingual repertoires for inclusive instruction in schools with considerable proportions of immigrant students (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2019: 491, 495; Scibetta and Carbonara, 2019: 115). The project started in 2016 and it has been awarded the European Language Label in 2018. Initially, it included two schools based in two Italian regions³⁷; then, in the following years, three more schools³⁸ took part in the project, which nowadays includes five schools in four different regions, both in central and northern Italy³⁹. Teachers and researchers of L'AltRoparlante project collaborate actively for the implementation of a more democratic and inclusive classroom space. The teachers are involved in the action research right from the beginning of the project and they gradually become agents of linguistic choices and change (Carbonara and

³⁶ For more information on L'AltRoparlante, see the project's website: <https://cluss.unistrasi.it/1/116/153/L-AltRoparlante.htm>.

³⁷ "Istituto Comprensivo Martiri della Benedicta" in Serravalle Scrivia (AL) and "Istituto Comprensivo di Cerreto Guidi" (FI).

³⁸ "Istituto Comprensivo Marco Polo" in Prato, "Istituto Comprensivo di Gavardo" (BS) and "Istituto Comprensivo Gasparini" in Novi di Modena (MO).

³⁹ For more information about the schools, see § 4.1 in CARBONARA and SCIBETTA (2020a).

Scibetta, 2020a: 145-146); while the researchers regularly share and discuss their observations with the teachers, to improve their didactic actions in the classroom. Furthermore, the L'AltRoparlante project was conceived as a transformative action research, following the model proposed by García and Kleyn (2016), as explained in Carbonara and Scibetta (2019: 495) and in Scibetta and Carbonara (2019: 117), thus the researchers aim at working not *on* the teachers, but *with* them, sharing insights and opinions on the design of both teaching activities and the research. Moreover, they argue that another goal of their research is to work *for* the teachers, i.e. not simply collecting research data on education, but trying to have a real impact through the elaboration of solutions and strategies for a more democratic and inclusive society (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 201; Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020b: 5). As pointed out by Carbonara and Scibetta (2020b: 17): «the integration of translanguaging pedagogy in classroom practice, in a frame of a Transformative Action-Research conducted with teachers and for teachers, might represent an effective and democratic model of inclusive education».

The main goal of L'AltRoparlante project is «to challenge the monolingual approach in Italian schools with a bottom-up action, in order to encourage silenced students to legitimise their linguistic and cultural identities» (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020b: 4). Namely, the project pursues three main objectives: 1) promote and implement practices based on translanguaging pedagogy in mainstream education, in order to leverage the students' linguistic repertoires and empower their identities; 2) transform and observe the impact of translanguaging on teachers', students' and their families' attitudes and beliefs towards language and cultural diversity, to raise awareness on language rights and democratic education; 3) encourage the development of multilingual literacy skills and support the positive development of *empowerment*⁴⁰ dynamics among the foreign students (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 140-142; Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020b: 4).

Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 145-150; 2020b: 5-6) illustrate the main stages of implementation followed by the schools involved in their project: 1) Contact; 2)

⁴⁰ CUMMINS (2015: 15-16) defines power as «the collaborative creation of power», arguing that «students whose schooling experiences reflect collaborative relations of power participate confidently in instruction as a result of the fact that their sense of identity is being affirmed and extended in their interactions with educators. They also know that their voices will be heard and respected within the classroom. Schooling amplifies rather than silences their power of self-expression».

Professional development; 3) Ethnolinguistic investigation; 4) Designing and first-level implementation; 5) Advanced implementation and monitoring; 6) Dissemination⁴¹.

The phase of contact is the initial moment of the project, in which the researchers «conduct first informal and formal meetings with principals, teachers and parents to provide an introductory overview of the project, sharing educational needs and negotiating modalities, time and resources» (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020b: 5).

Secondly, the researchers hold training sessions, both with the teachers and the students' families. The teachers' training aims at building common knowledge about the students' linguistic rights, as well as plurilingualism and dynamics of power among languages. The researchers usually illustrate the European and Italian linguistic policies and official documents. Furthermore, they present some translanguaging-related projects, including the CUNY-NYSIEB works and the Italian initiatives for the promotion of plurilingualism in schools. These meetings aim at developing the *teacher's stance* (García *et al.*, 2017), hence a common belief among the teachers about the value of their students' bilingualism and linguistic repertoires, which represent a precious resource for the entire classroom (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 146-147). Whereas, the families' meetings aim at spreading awareness about the advantages of bilingualism and the benefits of translanguaging pedagogy, thus inviting the parents to enhance their children's plurilingual repertoires, for instance through the reading of plurilingual books (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 147).

Before the implementation of translanguaging activities, the researchers accompany the teachers and their students in the ethnographic exploration of the languages and dialects present in their classroom. Therefore, both students and teachers discover the richness of linguistic diversity, through recreational activities and ethnographic data collection, such as questionnaires and interviews. In this phase, some typical activities are the language portraits or biographies, which are eventually

⁴¹ The first two phases correspond to the pre-fieldwork phase of the research, in which the researchers collect initial data about the school and the students before planning the implementation of translanguaging; the third, fourth and fifth phases correspond to the fieldwork phase of research, in which the researchers collect data about the students and teachers' opinions through field-notes, observational schemes and video-recordings, as well as language portraits, interviews and focus groups; finally, the sixth phase corresponds to the post-fieldwork phase, in which the researchers transcribe the audio and video recordings of the interviews and create observation grids of the plurilingual schoolscape (CARBONARA and SCIBETTA, 2020a: 201-202; SCIBETTA and CARBONARA, 2019: 118)

described by the students to their peers and teacher, in order to share the perceptions and emotions related to their linguistic repertoires⁴² (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 147).

In the fourth phase of the project, the researchers and teachers start planning the translanguaging activities which will be integrated into the lessons. Therefore, this moment corresponds to the *design* stage of the translanguaging model illustrated in García *et al.* (2017). Firstly, the teachers and researchers create the plurilingual landscape of the classroom, usually starting from a plurilingual notice board, which represents a collective space in which the students can display and collect the language inputs and outputs; secondly, the students' families are invited in the classroom for the implementation of plurilingual storytelling activities (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 148).

After two years from the beginning of the project, the teachers become more independent and prepare their own materials and resources for including the students' languages during lessons and conduct discussions about rights and languages. The teachers autonomously plan the translanguaging activities, which can still change over the course of lessons, depending on the *translanguaging corriente* (see § 2.2.1); in fact, this moment corresponds to the *shift* dimension proposed by García *et al.* (2017), indicating the teachers' flexibility in translanguaging classrooms. In this phase, the students, both individually and in groups, become more capable of dealing with different plurilingual texts, either in productive or receptive uses, and they become more independent in making inferences and reflections about languages (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 148).

Finally, the last phase of the project concerns the dissemination of the class works and research results which emerged throughout the project. The teachers and researcher of L'AltRoparlante share their experience during public meetings both in schools and other contexts, as well as on the Internet and social media. In fact, the connection with the external world, and not just with teachers and schools, is fundamental for the transformative impact of the project, which aims at bringing outside the positive experiences of translanguaging practices in school, thus proposing a new model of education and relationships which could lead to a more democratic society (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 149).

⁴² For more information about language portraits, see § 4.5.3 in chapter 4.

2.4 The translanguaging debate

Translanguaging theory and pedagogy create both interest and criticism within the scientific community. Some scholars fully embrace the translanguaging theory, while others are more sceptical about its foundations and only partially accept the theory's premises, whereas some others strongly resist the translanguaging assumptions (Vogel and García, 2017: 1). Therefore, the academic debate on translanguaging principles and assumptions is still active in the scientific community, and it strictly relates to the scholars' beliefs around the concept of *named languages*. According to García and Kleyn (2016: 19), scholars adhere to either a strong or weak version of translanguaging: the former includes the scholars who do not see boundaries among languages, but rather see a unitary repertoire of linguistic features, while the latter refers to the scholars who support named language boundaries.

Among the strong supporters of translanguaging theory are Otheguy, García and Reid (in García *et al.*, 2017: 2), who reject the concept of named languages and define translanguaging as «the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named languages». On the contrary, MacSwan (in Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 68-69) rejects translanguaging theory and defends the code-switching theory, seeing named languages as linguistic entities with specific grammars, thus rejecting the translanguaging premises.

On the contrary, some scholars may be referred to as weak supporters of translanguaging, since they do not fully defend the concept of named languages, but rather demand a softening of named language boundaries (García and Kleyn, 2016: 19); in other words, as pointed out by García and Lin (2016: 126), a weak version of translanguaging supports national and state language boundaries but calls for softening these boundaries». For instance, during a conference on translanguaging, in 2019⁴³ (as reported in Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 67), Cummins acknowledges the importance of translanguaging practices for constructing a more equal school system, yet not fully embracing the linguistic delegitimation and disruption of named languages. In his view, the existence of language-related concepts and constructs is not only essential for

⁴³ The conference was held in April 2019 at Linnaeus University in Sweden (CARBONARA and SCIBETTA, 2020a: 67).

developing practices that include the students' plurilingual repertoires, but it is also deeply related to the reality of materials and symbols used in schools, such as the notions of home languages and language of schooling, as well as the language didactic programs, class materials and certifications. Therefore, though he agrees on the existence of negative power relations and unfair hierarchies among the students' languages, he does not fully agree on dismantling the named languages concept for the implementation of an equal school system, where the students' plurilingual identities are valued and legitimised (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 68).

Jaspers (in Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 69) states that translanguaging pedagogy may not always represent a liberating practice that leads to positive experiences and transformative changes within the school system and, more generally, within society. Translanguaging practices should be implemented as part of a wider framework, in which education institutions cooperate with political institutions, thus developing a more equal and inclusive society. This assumption is also underlined by García and Kleyn (2016: 29, 199), who highlight the transformative potential of translanguaging theory to disrupt hierarchies and power relations both in education and society, thus leading to a better and more just world, though they reckon that translanguaging is «is unable, by itself, to create the conditions for social justice and equality in education».

Turner and Lin (in Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 70; Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020b: 4) argue that named languages should not necessarily be considered as critical or negative concepts; rather, they could serve as a tool for enhancing and expanding the students' whole linguistic repertoires, but also for transforming their perceptions of historically named languages.

Carbonara and Scibetta (2020b: 4, 17) embrace the moderate vision proposed by Turner and Lin, pointing out that even though languages are social constructions, the concept of named languages is deeply interrelated with historical and identity processes both for societies and individuals. Thus, the deconstruction of named languages might seem intimidating, especially for teachers, and could therefore diminish the pedagogical and political potential of translanguaging in schools. Nevertheless, the authors (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020b: 17) highlight that it is important «to make visible those named languages which are usually neglected in schools, to question linguistic inequalities and reposition outside of power hierarchies all linguistic repertoires, but without discharging symbolic, identity, and cultural aspects related to named

languages». Moreover, the authors (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 70) underline the importance of interpreting translanguaging theory not as a universal nor fixed paradigm, but as a flexible concept, which is deeply related to the differences among educational contexts:

The assumed universalism of translanguaging as practical theory of language needs a wider consideration of the numerous sociolinguistic realities within educational framework [...]. We need a contextualisation of translanguaging practices, in order to show the extendibility and flexibility of the translanguaging concept and thus promote its epistemological growth, going beyond the dangerous vision of a branded and uniform translanguaging theory.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Translation of the author. Original version: «Il preteso universalismo del translanguaging come teoria pratica del linguaggio necessita di un maggiore confronto con le numerose realtà sociolinguistiche del mondo educativo [...]. Occorre una contestualizzazione delle pratiche translinguistiche per dimostrare l'estensibilità e la flessibilità del costrutto "translanguaging" e favorirne, così, la crescita concettuale, andando oltre una pericolosa visione "brandizzata" e uniforme».

CHAPTER 3

TRANSLANGUAGING IN ACTION

In this chapter, we will introduce the context of our research, thus the timing and class environment (§ 3.1), as well as the articulation of the lessons during which we tried to implement translanguaging pedagogy (§ 3.2). Moreover, we will describe the translanguaging practices (§ 3.3) and translanguaging activities (§ 3.4) which were experimented over the course of our research.

3.1 Introduction

The translanguaging practices and activities outlined in the following paragraphs were experimented during the researcher's internship as teacher of Italian as a second language for newly arrived migrant students. Therefore, the teacher-researcher conducted an action research within the classroom, as we will further explain in chapter 4 (§ 4.2).

The language course occurred in a blended learning modality (see § 3.2.1) and the activities were specifically implemented within a classroom of eleven newly arrived migrant students, who were learning Italian as a second language. The students were both males and females and came from different countries; namely, nine students came from Bangladesh, one student came from Moldova and one student came from Brazil. The students had therefore different home languages, respectively Bangla, Romanian and Portuguese. The classroom context and the students' characteristics will be specifically described in chapter 4 (§ 4.3 and § 4.4).

3.2 The articulation of the lessons

In this paragraph, we will illustrate the structure of the lessons during which the translanguaging practices and activities were implemented.

3.2.1 Blended learning

The language course was based on a blended-learning modality, which combined classroom-based, thus face-to-face learning, with technology-mediated learning (Bonk and Graham, 2006: 5; Allan, 2007: 4). As far as the former modality is concerned, the lessons occurred in an outdoor context, namely a schoolyard, due to the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented the course from occurring inside a school; whereas the online learning experience was both synchronous and asynchronous (Vaughan, Cleveland-Innes and Garrison, 2006: 26), since the Google Meet platform was used once a week for conducting synchronous online lessons; while the Edmodo platform (see § 3.2.2) was adopted as an asynchronous educational tool.

3.2.2 Edmodo as a virtual linguistic schoolscape

Edmodo⁴⁵ is a free social learning platform, which provides an opportunity for students and teachers to communicate and interact with each other, as well as share educational content and resources (Hamutoglu, Gemikonakli and Gezgin, 2019: 132). Therefore, Edmodo represents a supplementary tool that could be used by teachers to enhance and support the traditional face-to-face learning environment (Uzun, 2015: 79; Hamutoglu *et al.*, 2019: 128)

As far as our research is concerned, we decided to use Edmodo as a virtual linguistic schoolscape (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020a: 161), which could reflect the students' home languages and cultures (García and Kleyn, 2016: 204). Thus, we regularly collected and posted photographs of the plurilingual student works on the platform (see § 3.4.2 and § 3.4.3). Therefore, Edmodo functioned as a virtual space where students could find their classroom works and comment or share opinions with both their classmates and teacher, since the outdoor learning environment prevented us from creating a concrete linguistic landscape and displaying the linguistic artefacts around the classroom (García and Kleyn, 2016: 304). For this reason, we decided to collect photographs of the class works and post them on Edmodo (see Figure 3.1).

⁴⁵ <https://new.edmodo.com/>

In the next paragraph, we will present the translanguaging practices and activities that we managed to implement, both within the classroom-based environment and through the e-learning experience.

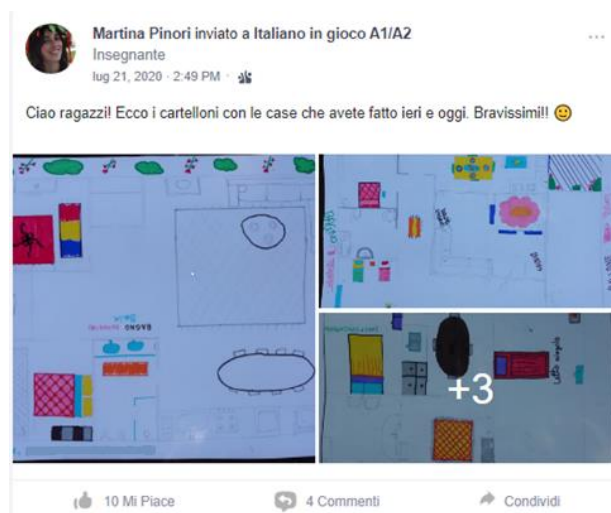


Figure 3.1. Screenshot of a post from the Edmodo platform

3.3 Translanguaging strategies

The translanguaging pedagogical strategies featured in the following paragraphs were integrated into the lessons, both classroom-based and online, on a moment-by-moment basis and throughout the entire course. We considered the translanguaging shifts as essential elements during our lessons, since they allowed us for flexibility and momentaneous changes or decisions to regularly occur within the lessons (García *et al.*, 2017: 77-78; Vogel and García, 2017: 10). We were mainly inspired by the translanguaging practices and activities proposed in the *CUNY-NYSIEB translanguaging guide for educators*, by Celic and Seltzer (2013), as well as the activities outlined in Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 161-170); moreover, we took inspiration from the translanguaging strategies presented in García *et al.* (2017: 75-76). We will now illustrate the main strategies and practices incorporated in our class.

3.3.1 Use of the L1 in class

Students were encouraged to talk, discuss, and express themselves using all their linguistic resources (Celic and Seltzer, 2013: 62, 65, 128; García *et al.*, 2017: 75). Our

main objective was to include the students' linguistic repertoires within the lessons. Thus, we encouraged the students to use their languages during the classroom works and activities, as well as in moments of difficulties or misunderstanding, hence using their linguistic repertoire as a resource for learning another language (García and Kleyn, 2016: 157, 175-176; García *et al.*, 2017: 15, 78). Moreover, the use of the students' whole language resources was encouraged both during ordinary face-to-face lessons and online classes.

3.3.2 Use of translation tools

We encouraged the students to access online translation tools, such as Google Translate⁴⁶, to make meaning and translate new words and sentences from Italian into the home language, and vice versa (Celic and Seltzer, 2013: 97; García *et al.*, 2017: 55, 75, 78). The students could therefore use their cell phones during classes; likely, we used our cell phone to access online translation tools, since we did not have any Wi-Fi nor interactive whiteboard within the outdoor classroom. This strategy not only helped the students understand new Italian words or phrases, but it also represented an extremely important opportunity for the teacher to easily interact with the students by valuing their language repertoires and learning new words into their home languages.

3.3.3 Small group works

The activities integrated into the lessons were frequently based on a group learning mode, specifically on small group works (Nunan, 2004: 71-72). Therefore, we frequently invited the students to divide into small groups and use their full linguistic repertoire for discussing during the tasks (García and Kleyn, 2016: 126, 136; García *et al.*, 2017: 76). Moreover, since many students were from Bangladesh (see Graph 4.1) and therefore shared the same home language, we often created small groups with students speaking Bangla as their home language. Nevertheless, we also grouped students with different home languages and encouraged them to discuss and participate to the activities using the languages that would include everyone in the conversation, thus not only the home languages. This strategy was particularly adopted when we

⁴⁶ <https://translate.google.it/>

grouped the Brazilian or the Moldovan student with other Bangladeshi students: they had different home languages and were thus encouraged to use languages which would include everyone in the conversation.

3.3.4 Plurilingual notes

We encouraged the students to take notes using their home language, as well as Italian and the home languages of their peers (Celic and Seltzer, 2013: 108). For instance, during a lesson about the days and seasons, a Bangladeshi student took notes using not only Italian and her home language, Bangla, (Figure 3.2), but also other languages, such as Portuguese and English (Figure 3.3).



Figure 3.2. Plurilingual notes about months and seasons⁴⁷

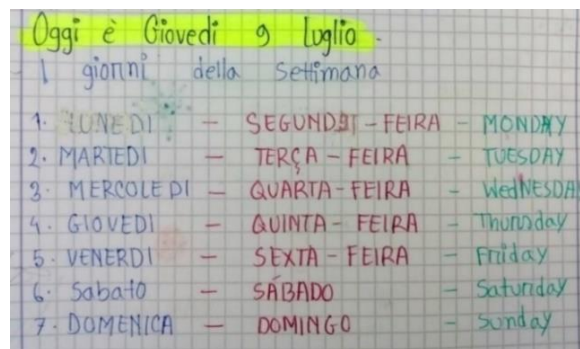


Figure 3.3. Plurilingual notes about days of the week⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Languages: Italian and Bangla.

3.4 Translanguaging activities

In the following paragraphs, we will present the translanguaging activities integrated into the lessons, thus showing the photographs of the student works which were posted on the Edmodo platform. We were mainly inspired by the translanguaging works proposed in Celic and Seltzer (2013), as well as in García and Kleyn (2016) and Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a). Table 3.1 summarises the different types of translanguaging activities which we implemented in each week of the course. We collected photographs of all the class works, which include the students' language portraits, the plurilingual board and posters, the plurilingual writing project, and the bilingual homework.

	JULY				AUGUST		
Activity	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
Language portraits	First week						Final week
Plurilingual board	I giorni		Le preposizioni di luogo	Le parti del giorno	Gli aggettivi		
	Le stagioni						
Plurilingual posters		La famiglia	La casa		Le regole del gruppo		
Plurilingual writing project					Il volantino della città	I personaggi della città	
Bilingual homework					Descrivi la tua giornata		

Table 3.1. Timetable of translanguaging activities integrated into the lessons

The translanguaging activities will be described through a schematic and structured table, which was created with the help of the researcher's critical friend⁴⁹, who provided us with fundamental support for both the elaboration and filling of the schemes. As far as the items are concerned, we included ten descriptors for each activity, namely: the

⁴⁸ Languages: Italian, Portuguese and English.

⁴⁹ The critical friend for our research was Claudia Meneghetti, a PhD student specialising in Translanguaging pedagogy at Ca' Foscari University.

title of the activity; the activity topic (related to a unit of the textbook⁵⁰ or independent); the support used (the whiteboard, posters or the students' notebook); the linguistic objectives (related to the learning of Italian L2) and the plurilingual objectives (inspired to the descriptors indicated in the FREPA document⁵¹); the learning mode (individual, small group work, and/or whole class)⁵²; the ability to develop through the activities (written, oral, and/or interactional⁵³) and the modality (classroom-based and/or technology-based⁵⁴; finally, the languages involved in the activity⁵⁵ and the phases of the activity.

3.4.1 Language portraits

In this paragraph, we will illustrate the students' language portraits, which were collected both at the beginning (Figure 3.4-3.11) and the end of the course (Figure 3.12-3.20) in order to answer the second research question, as we will further explain in chapter 4.

⁵⁰ The coursebook we used for the course is «In classe con Tommy. Percorsi linguistici per accelerare e rinforzare il processo di acquisizione della lingua italiana (livello pre A1-A1)», by GABRIELLA DEBETTO (see References).

⁵¹ The plurilingual objectives were taken from the descriptors indicated in FREPA (Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to languages and cultures), which was elaborated by the ECML (European Centre for Modern Languages). The descriptors concern, respectively, the knowledge (“K”), attitudes (“A”) and skills (“S”) which could be developed through the implementation of pluralistic approaches (CANDELIER *et al.* (2012: 9). For more information, see § 1.3.1 in chapter 1.

⁵² This item is inspired to the concept of learning mode introduced by NUNAN (2004: 71-72), for distinguishing between activities in which learners work individually and those in which they operate in groups. The author further specifies that when the learners operate as part of a group, the task may involve either the whole class, small groups or pair groups.

⁵³ The interactional modality refers to the interaction modality indicated in CEFR (COUNCIL OF EUROPE, 2018: 32, 81), thus referring to the moments in which the students are engaged in conversational dialogues and co-constructing discourse.

⁵⁴ The technology-based modality refers to the use of the Edmodo platform as a tool for collecting and displaying the class works.

⁵⁵ Italian was always involved during the activity, since it was the target language. Furthermore, the students' home languages, namely Bangla, Romanian and Portuguese, were involved in most of the activities; while English was integrated in a few activities. French and Russian were used during some activities, whereas Sinhala was used only for one activity, since it was the home language of a volunteer who helped the teacher during some lessons (see § 4.2 in chapter 4)

Activity title	«Language Portraits Silhouettes»
Activity topic	<input type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> poster <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Complete a silhouette with one's own languages
Plurilingual objectives⁵⁶	- Sensitivity to plurilingualism (A 2.5); - Considering one's own representations and attitudes towards plurilingualism as objects about which questions may arise (A 9.2); - Assuming one's own linguistic identity (A 16); - Accepting a plurilingual identity (A 16.2.2); - Being sensitive to the value of one's own linguistic competences (A 17.1).
Learning mode	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala

⁵⁶ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section I, III, V and VI of Attitudes (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 38-49).

<p>Activity phases</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduce the activity by drawing on the board a language portrait silhouette which represents the teacher's portrait, thus assigning different colours to each language. 2) Give the students an empty silhouette and encourage them to think about the languages they know and/or feel inside themselves and are therefore important to them. 3) Tell the students to choose a colour for each language and assign that colour to a body part, then complete the empty silhouette with their languages. 4) After they complete the drawing, ask if any of the students want to explain their silhouette to the teacher and the class.
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Table 3.2



Figure 3.4

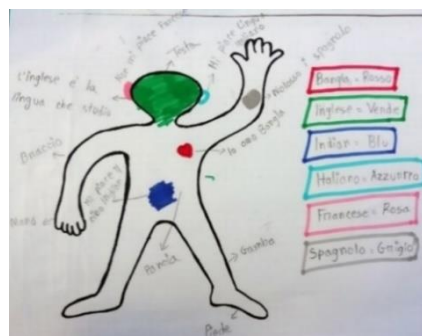


Figure 3.5



Figure 3.6

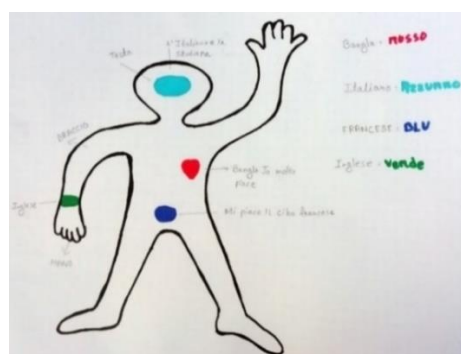


Figure 3.7

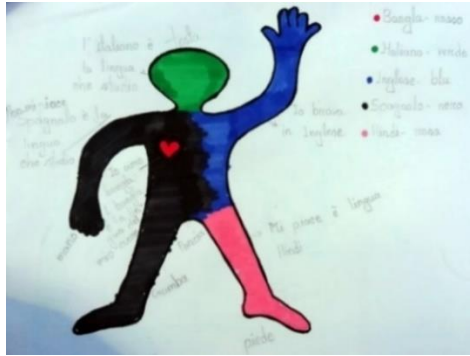


Figure 3.8



Figure 3.9

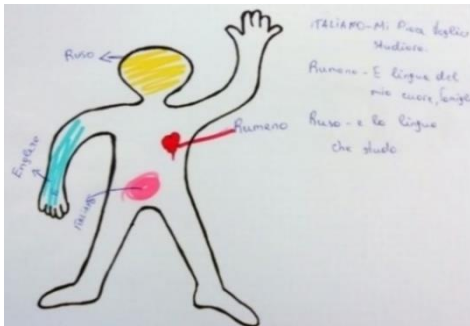


Figure 3.10

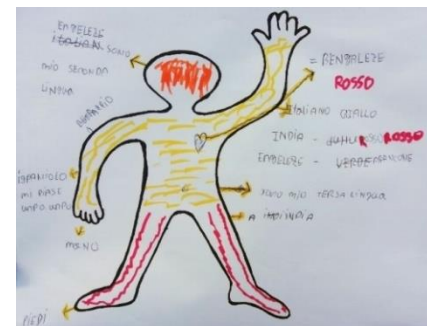


Figure 3.11

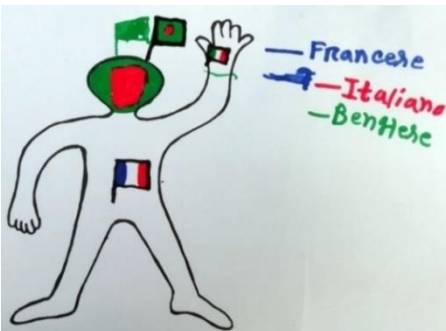


Figure 3.12



Figure 3.13

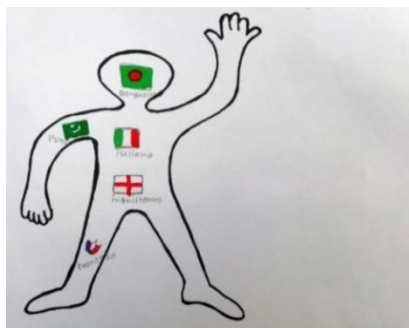


Figure 3.14



Figure 3.15

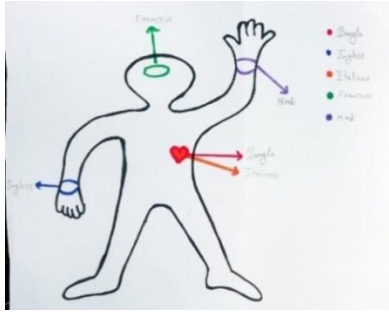


Figure 3.16



Figure 3.17



Figure 3.18

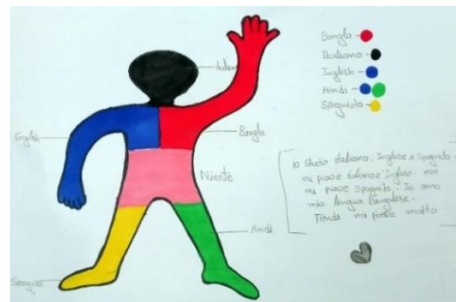


Figure 3.19

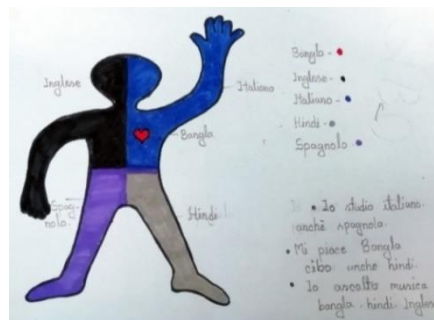


Figure 3.20

3.4.2 Plurilingual board

In this paragraph, we will present the activities implemented through the whiteboard, thus during the classroom-based lessons. However, the photographs of the whiteboard were all posted on Edmodo, therefore can be considered as both classroom-based and technology-based activities.

Specifically, we used the board as a tool for introducing new words and expressions as well as for discussing the similarities and differences among Italian and the students' home languages.

Activity title	«I giorni»
Activity topic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Learn the days of the week
Plurilingual objectives⁵⁷	- Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); - Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4); - Openness to languages (A 5.3); - Ability to reproduce unfamiliar features of a language (S 7.2).
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala

⁵⁷ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section II and V of Attitudes (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 38-49).

<p>Activity phases</p>	<p>1) Introduce the vocabulary about the days of the week by observing with the students the calendar on the textbook (Figure 3.21) and asking them to identify the current month and day.</p> <p>2) Ask the students if they know the names of the days in Italian, then ask some volunteers to come up to the board and write the days in their home languages (Figure 3.22).</p> <p>3) After they wrote the days in each language, ask them to pronounce the words to their peers, so that they can better notice the similarities and differences among the languages.</p>
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Table 3.3



Figure 3.21⁵⁸

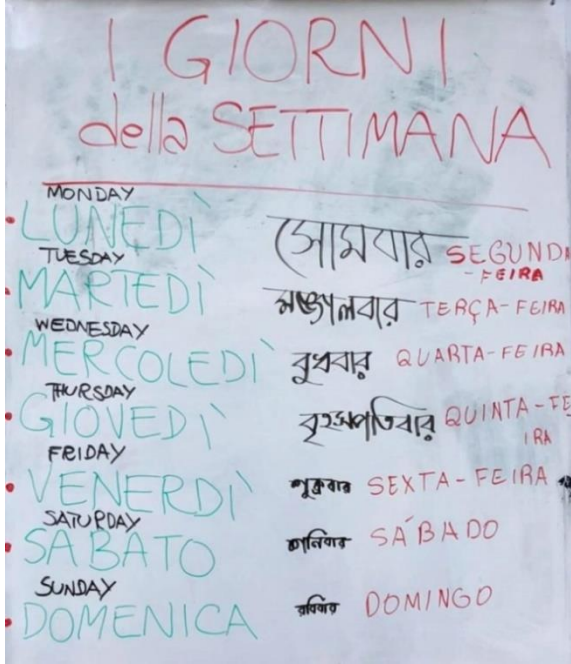


Figure 3.22

⁵⁸ DEBETTO (2020: 20).

Activity title	«Le stagioni»
Activity topic	<input type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Learn the words of the four seasons
Plurilingual objectives⁵⁹	- Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); - Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4); - Openness to languages (A 5.3); - Ability to reproduce unfamiliar features of a language (S 7.2).
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala

⁵⁹ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section II and V of Attitudes (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 38-49).

<p>Activity phases</p>	<p>1) Ask the students if they know the name of the season they are in and then explore the main characteristics of each season, by writing the Italian terms on the board.</p> <p>2) Discuss with the students about the similarities and differences among the Italian seasons and the seasons of their countries.</p> <p>3) Ask some volunteers to come up to the board for writing the name of the four seasons in their home languages (Figure 3.23) and read the words aloud, so that their classmates can listen and learn how to pronounce the new words.</p> <p>4) Explore the similarities and differences among the words, reflecting on the metalinguistic features of Italian and the students' home languages⁶⁰.</p>
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Table 3.4

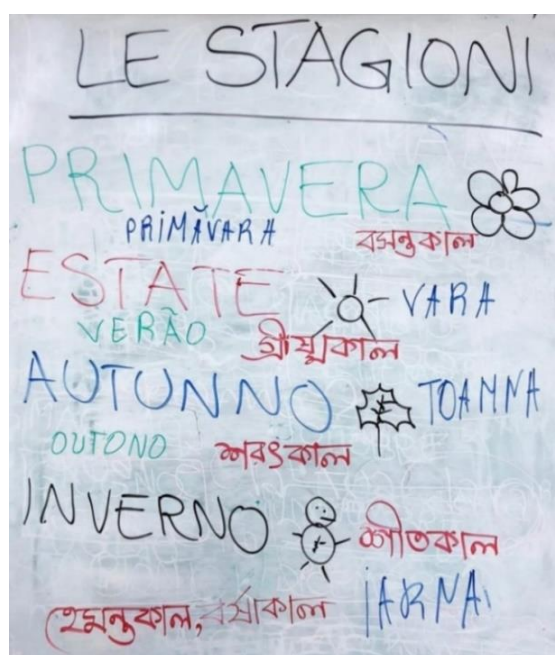


Figure 3.23

⁶⁰ Over the course of lessons, we tried to develop a metalinguistic awareness in the students, since we often discussed the similarities and differences among languages (CELIC and SELTZER, 2013: 3). We particularly reflected on the linguistic similarities among Portuguese, Romanian and Italian, as well as the linguistic differences among these three languages and Bangla.

Activity title	«Le preposizioni di luogo»
Activity topic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Learn the main prepositions of place
Plurilingual objectives⁶¹	- Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); - Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4); - Openness to languages (A 5.3); - Ability to reproduce unfamiliar features of a language (S 7.2).
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala
Activity phases	1) Start with a brainstorming on the prepositions of place by observing and analysing the pictures in the coursebook (Figure

⁶¹ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section II and V of Attitudes and section VII of Skills (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 38-49; 50-59).

	<p>3.24) and making some examples with the objects around the students.</p> <p>2) Write the prepositions on the board and ask some volunteers to write the same expressions in their home languages (Figure 3.25) and pronounce them to their peers.</p> <p>3) Ask some students to repeat the expressions in the home language of their classmates.</p>
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Table 3.5



Figure 3.24⁶²

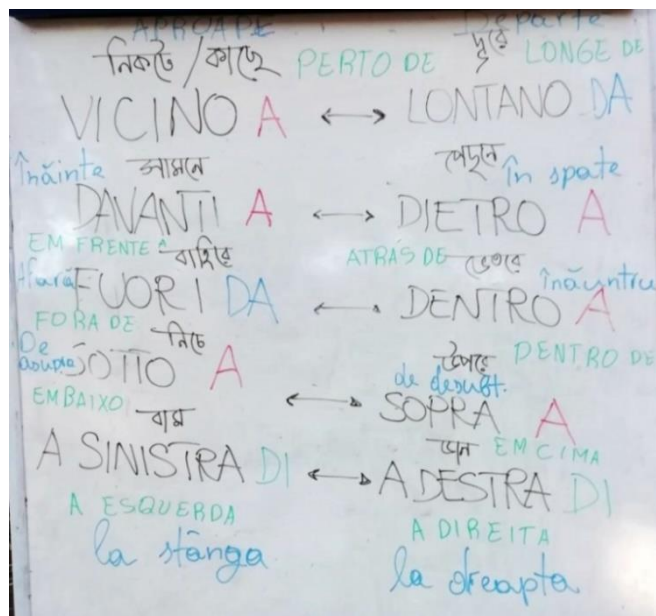


Figure 3.25

⁶² DEBETTO (2020: 49).

Activity title	«Le parti del giorno»
Activity topic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Learn the parts of the day
Plurilingual objectives⁶³	- Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); - Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4); - Openness to languages (A 5.3); - Ability to reproduce unfamiliar features of a language (S 7.2).
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala

⁶³ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section II and V of Attitudes and section VII of Skills (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 38-49; 50-59).

Activity phases	<p>1) Do a brainstorming about the parts of a day by observing the pictures in the textbook (Figure 3.26) and exploring with the students what the characters are doing.</p> <p>2) Discuss about what the students do during the different parts of the day, thus sharing their daily habits and routines.</p> <p>3) Write the Italian words for the different parts of the day on the board, including the hours in brackets (Figure 3.27), then ask some volunteers to write the terms in their home languages and read the words aloud to the classmates.</p>
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Table 3.6



Figure 3.26⁶⁴

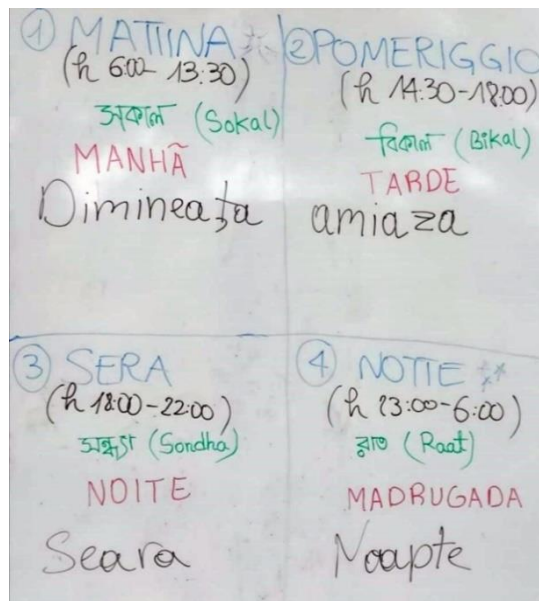


Figure 3.27

⁶⁴ DEBETTO (2020: 62-63).

Activity title	«Gli aggettivi»
Activity topic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Learn some descriptive adjectives
Plurilingual objectives⁶⁵	- Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); - Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4); - Openness to languages (A 5.3).
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala

⁶⁵ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section II and V of Attitudes and section VII of Skills (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 38-49; 50-59).

Activity phases	<p>1) Ask the students to observe the pictures in the textbook (Figure 3.28) and comment on the activities the characters do in their free time. Invite them to decide which activity they like or dislike, by completing the table in the same page.</p> <p>2) Explore the different adjectives shown in the coursebook (Figure 3.29) and ask the students if they already know some of the expressions.</p> <p>3) Write the Italian adjectives on the board and ask some volunteers to come up to the board for writing the correspondent words in their home languages (Figure 3.30).</p>
------------------------	--

Table 3.7

PAROLE

1 Osserva le attività illustrate nelle vignette, poi segna nello schema le tue attività preferite.

Tommy guarda la tv. Ywen ascolta la musica. Ana suona la chitarra. Marco gioca a carte con suo fratello.

Ahmed gioca a un videogioco. Mansur legge un libro. José fa un giro al centro commerciale. Irina va in bicicletta al parco.

Sofia naviga in internet. Liza va in palestra.

Luca corre con lo skateboard. Natalia va a pattinare.

Attività	😊	☹️
Ascoltare la musica		
Chattare		
Scrivere un sms		
Guardare la televisione		
Navigare in internet		
Giocare a un videogioco		
Leggere un libro		
Correre con lo skateboard		

Figure 3.28⁶⁶

2 Scegli tre attività tra quelle illustrate nelle vignette dell'esercizio 1 e abbinare un aggettivo per te giusto.

noioso 😞 • piacevole 😊 • divertente 😄 • faticoso 🥱 • triste 😞 • pauroso 😨

Figure 3.29⁶⁷

⁶⁶ DEBETTO (2020: 94).

⁶⁷ DEBETTO (2020: 95).

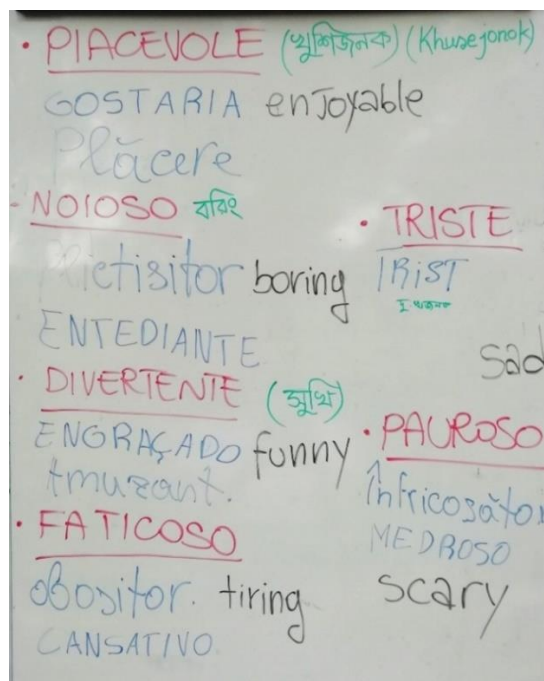


Figure 3.30

3.4.3 Plurilingual posters

In this paragraph, we will illustrate the activities implemented using posters. The activities were based on small group works (see § 3.3.3), since the students worked in small groups to complete the tasks. Moreover, each activity was preceded by a collective brainstorming, where we introduced the topic and elicited the students' knowledge.

Activity title	«La famiglia»
Activity topic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Learn the words for family members
Plurilingual objectives	- Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); - Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4);

	<p>- Openness to languages (A 5.3);</p> <p>- Ability to communicate in plurilingual groups taking into account the repertoire of one's interlocutors (S 6.1).</p>
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-base <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Russian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sinhala
Activity phases	<p>1) Do a brainstorming on the names of family members by observing the picture in the coursebook (Figure 3.31), which represents the family tree of the book's main protagonist.</p> <p>2) Ask the students to share the names of family members in their home languages, without writing them on the board.</p> <p>3) Notice the similarities and differences among the terms in their languages and reflect about the variety of names used for indicating the same family member.</p> <p>4) Divide the students into small groups and invite them to draw a family tree on a poster, where they should write both the personal names of the family members and the linguistic terms in their home languages.</p> <p>5) After all students finished the task, create one big poster where students write "family" in their languages (Figure 3.32) and glue on it the plurilingual family trees created by the groups (Figure 3.33, 3.34 and 3.35).</p>

Table 3.8

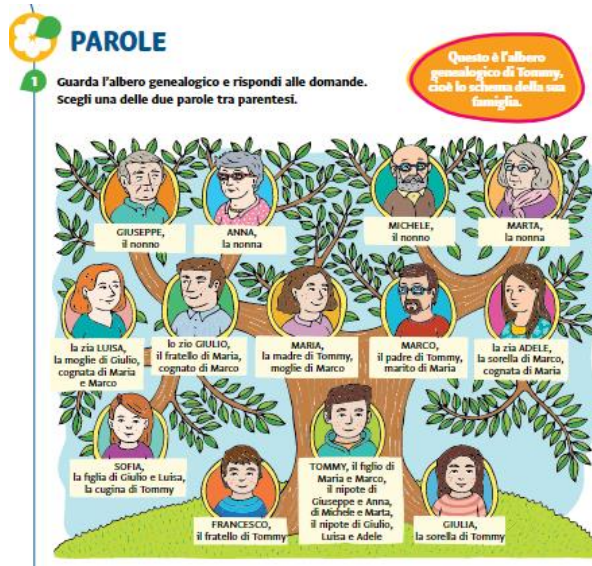


Figure 3.31⁶⁸



Figure 3.32⁶⁹

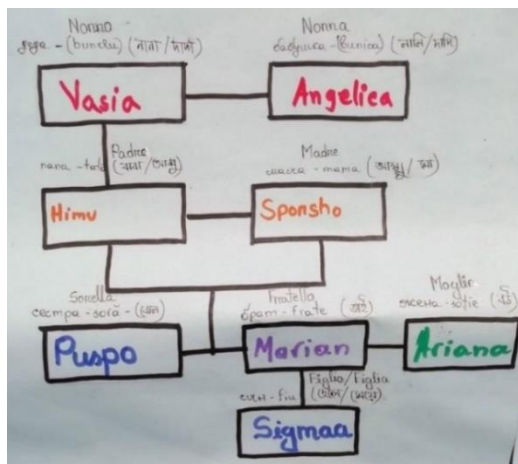


Figure 3.33⁷⁰

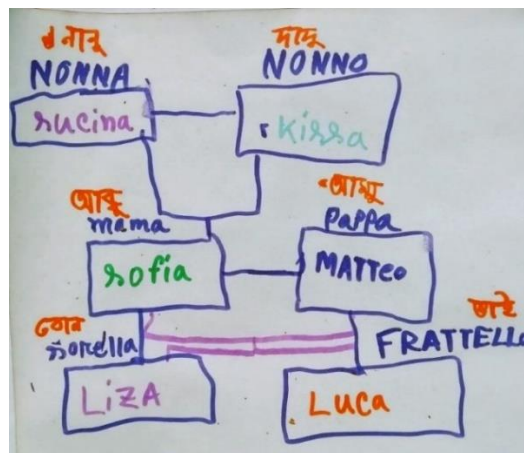


Figure 3.34⁷¹

⁶⁸ DEBETTO (2020: 28).

⁶⁹ Languages: Italian, Russian, Portuguese, Bangla and Sinhala.

⁷⁰ Languages: Italian, Russian, Romanian and Bangla.

⁷¹ Languages: Italian and Bangla.



Figure 3.35⁷²

Activity title	«La casa»
Activity topic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Learn the terms for the parts of a house
Plurilingual objectives⁷³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); - Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4); - Openness to languages (A 5.3); - Ability to communicate in plurilingual groups taking into account the repertoire of one's interlocutors (S 6.1).
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based

⁷² Languages: Italian, Portuguese and Bangla.

⁷³ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section II and V of Attitudes and section VI and VII of Skills (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 38-49; 50-59).

	<input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala
Activity phases	<p>1) Observe the picture of the house in the textbook (Figure 3.36) and try to elicit the words already known by the students.</p> <p>2) Discuss about the names for the parts of a house, asking for the translation into the students' home languages.</p> <p>3) Divide the students into small groups and invite them to draw a house plan, like in Figure 3.37. Encourage them to write the names of each part of the house both in Italian and their home languages (Figure 3.38, 3.39 and 3.40).</p>

Table 3.9

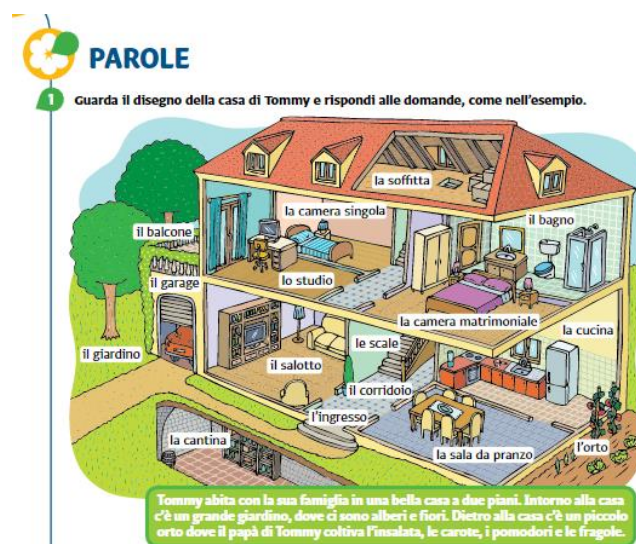


Figure 3.36⁷⁴

⁷⁴ DEBETTO (2020: 44).

4 Guarda il disegno della casa di Ahmed e completa il testo.



La casa di Ahmed

Ahmed abita con la sua famiglia in un appartamento piccolo, ma ben organizzato. C'è un ingresso, una _____, un bagno, un bel salotto e due _____ da letto. In cucina c'è anche una finestra che porta su un _____.

Nella camera grande dormono i genitori di Ahmed, nella _____ piccola dormono Ahmed e suo fratello.

In _____ c'è un comodo _____ dove la famiglia si siede a guardare la televisione.

Figure 3.37⁷⁵

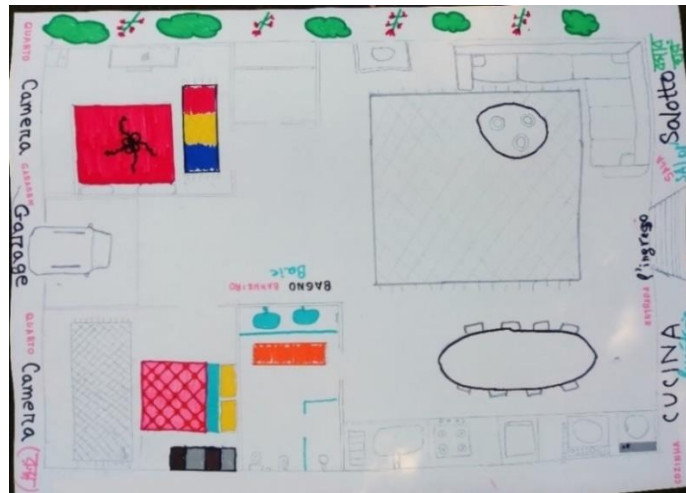


Figure 3.38⁷⁶

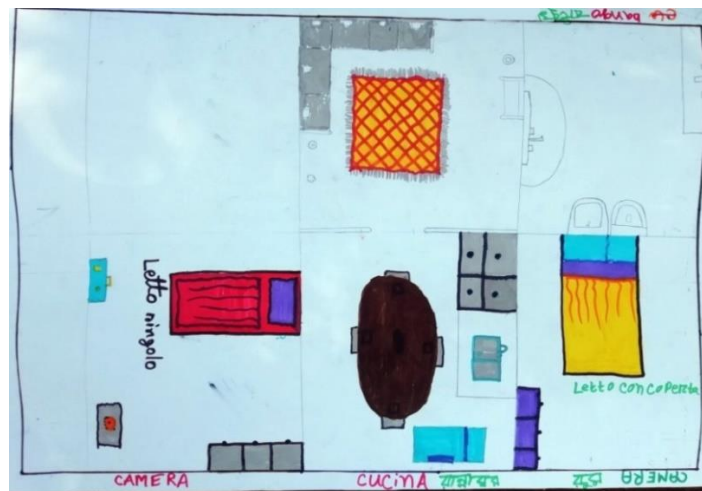


Figure 3.39⁷⁷

⁷⁵ DEBETTO (2020: 45).

⁷⁶ Languages: Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Bangla.

⁷⁷ Languages: Italian and Bangla.



Figure 3.40⁷⁸

Activity title	«Le regole del gruppo» ⁷⁹
Activity topic	<input type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Write the rules for working in a group
Plurilingual objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); - Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4); - Openness to languages (A 5.3); - Ability to reproduce unfamiliar features of a language (S 7.2).
Learning mode	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional

⁷⁸ Languages: Italian and Bangla.

⁷⁹ We decided to conduct this activity since the students were often invited to work in small groups during the lessons (see § 3.3.3). Therefore, we thought it was important to discuss with the students about the rules for getting along with others and working within a group.

Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input type="checkbox"/> French <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala
Activity phases	<p>1) Do a brainstorming about the social dynamics within a group, sharing opinions and thoughts on how the students should behave for working well in a group.</p> <p>2) After the students elicited some ideas for working within a group, write on the board five main rules in Italian and invite the students to translate the sentences into their home languages on some pieces of paper⁸⁰,</p> <p>3) While the students are translating the sentences, ask some other students to write the rules in Italian on a poster, by copying from the board.</p> <p>4) After all students wrote the sentences in their home languages, glue their notes under the correspondent Italian rules on the poster (Figure 3.41).</p> <p>5) Invite each student to read the rules aloud in their home languages to the classmates.</p> <p>6) Finish the activity by focusing on the fifth rule, thus asking the students to try pronouncing the kind phrases to each other in all languages.</p>

Table 3.10

⁸⁰ Since there were many Bangladeshi students, we assigned to each of them one sentence to translate in Bangla; whereas we told to the Brazilian and Moldovan students to translate all the sentences in their home languages, thus in Portuguese and Romanian. Moreover, the student from Moldova decided to write the rules also in Russian.

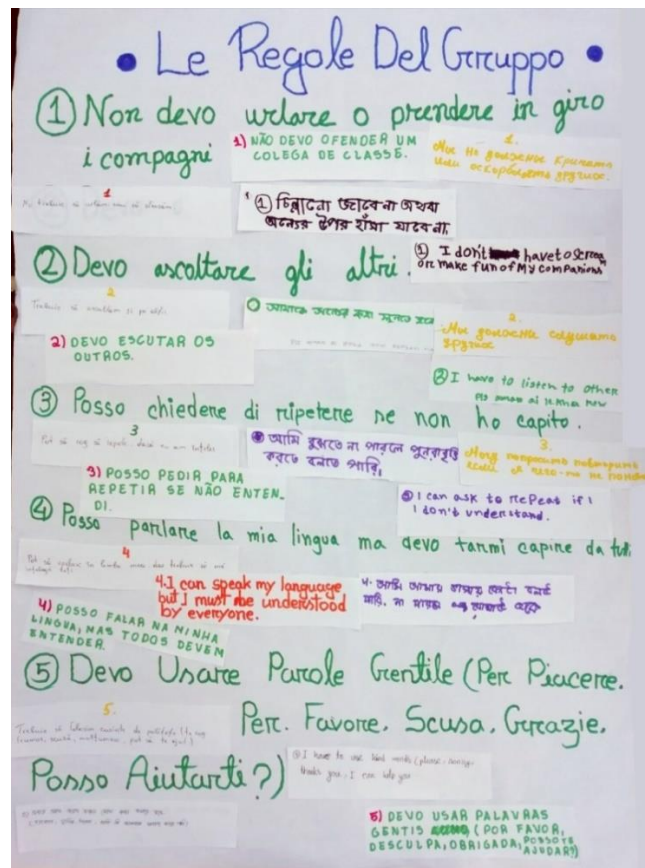


Figure 3.41

3.4.4 Plurilingual writing project

In this paragraph, we will present the translanguaging activities implemented as part of a creative writing project which occurred throughout the language course⁸¹. This project was called “Il nostro mondo” and was held every week with all the classes. Each class invented an imaginary country, which included imaginary cities. In each class, students were grouped into three small groups and invented a city, whose features would be developed during the project, according to the lesson programme. During the week, the small groups would develop different tasks related to their imaginary cities and, on the final day, the groups would present their work to the other classes.

As far as our research is concerned, we decided to incorporate some translanguaging practices into two activities of the writing project. In the first activity, students wrote a plurilingual flyer for tourists who would visit their city (Table 3.11); whereas in the second activity the students wrote a description of some influential characters of their cities, namely the city mayor, a famous writer and a famous singer

⁸¹ The idea of developing a creative writing project with all the classes arose from my internship supervisor, Laura Schiattone, who took inspiration from PEZZALI (2019).

(Table 3.12). The writing project, therefore, represented an opportunity for creating a plurilingual final product for a specific purpose (Celic and Seltzer, 2013: 185). The students were grouped into three small groups: two groups with students who shared the same home language, namely Bangla, and one group with different home language speakers, namely Bangla, Romanian and Portuguese.

Activity title	«Il volantino della città»
Activity topic	<input type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Write the brochure of a city
Plurilingual objectives⁸²	- Ability to communicate in plurilingual groups taking into account the repertoire of one's interlocutors (S 6.1); - Ability to produce a text in which language alternate functionally (S 6.5.2)
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> small group work <input type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English

⁸² The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section VI of Skills (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 50-59).

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala
Activity phases	<p>1) Write on the board some incipit sentences for the task, which should include a short story about the origins of the city and a description of the main attractions and museums.</p> <p>2) Divide the students into small groups and tell them to start the activity. Remember them to respect the five rules for working within a group (Figure 3.41).</p> <p>3) Encourage the students to brainstorm, discuss and then write using all their resource languages.</p>

Table 3.11



Figure 3.42⁸³

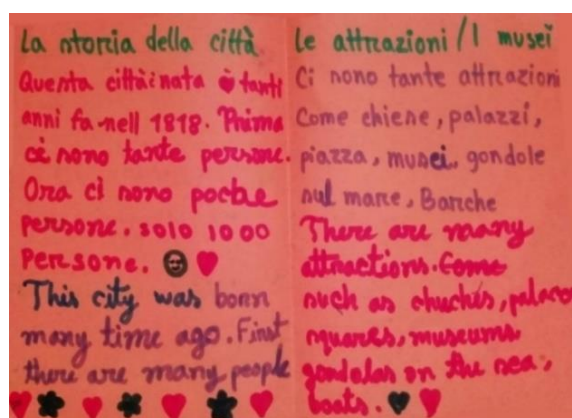


Figure 3.43⁸⁴

⁸³ Languages: Italian, English, Bangla and French.

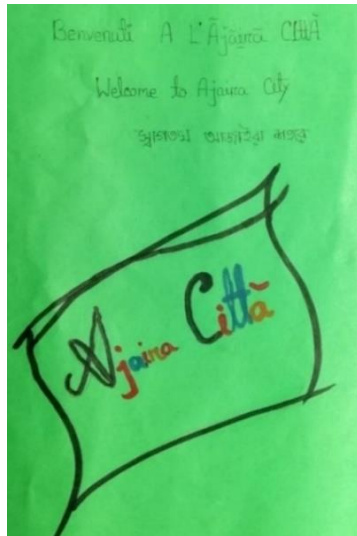


Figure 3.44⁸⁵

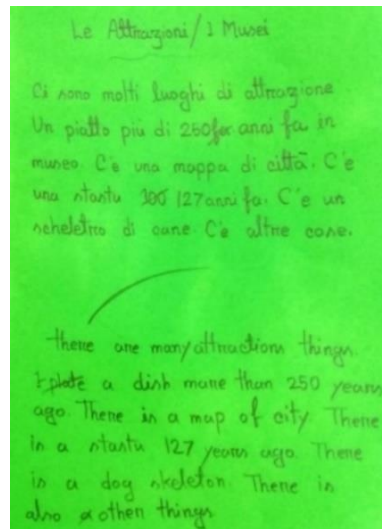


Figure 3.45⁸⁶



Figure 3.46⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Languages: Italian and English.

⁸⁵ Languages: Italian, English and Bangla.

⁸⁶ Languages: Italian and English.

⁸⁷ Languages: Italian, Portuguese, English, Bangla and Romanian.

Activity title	«I personaggi della città»
Activity topic	<input type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Write a description of some characters
Plurilingual objectives⁸⁸	- Ability to communicate in plurilingual groups taking into account the repertoire of one's interlocutors (S 6.1); - Ability to produce a text in which language alternate functionally (S 6.5.2).
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> small group work <input type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala

⁸⁸ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section VI of Skills (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 50-59).

<p>Activity phases</p>	<p>1) Write on the board the key points for describing characters, which would include their name, age, physical aspects, personality and languages⁸⁹.</p> <p>2) Divide the students into the usual small groups and give them some paper with the drawings of different figures.</p> <p>3) Encourage the students to discuss, brainstorm and write in both Italian and their home languages, using Google Translate or asking the teacher in case of difficult words.</p> <p>4) Invite the students to colour their figures and draw a speech balloon next to the descriptions, where they can write a sentence in a language of their repertoire.</p>
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Table 3.12

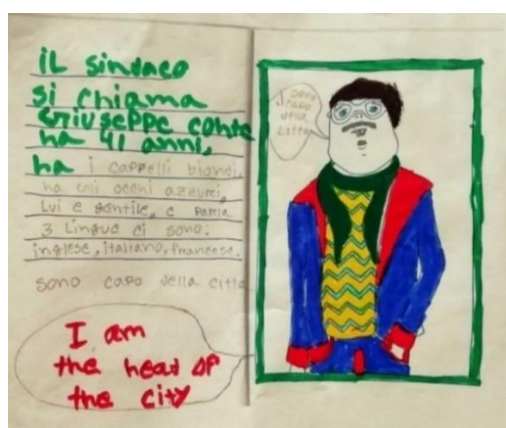


Figure 3.47



Figure 3.48

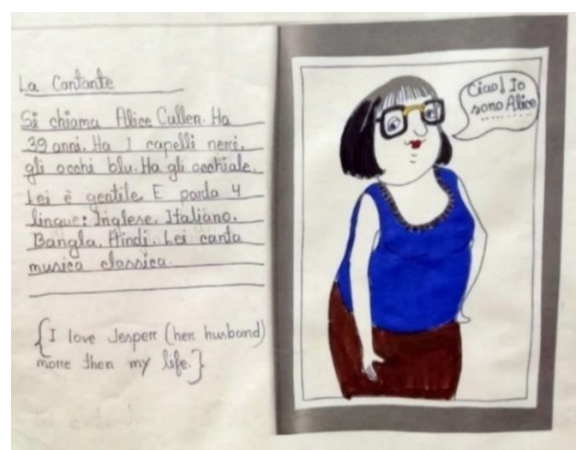


Figure 3.49

⁸⁹ We invited the students to imagine their characters as plurilingual speakers, in order to associate the plurilingual repertoire with a positive and empowering value (GARCÍA *et al.*, 2017: 76).

3.4.5 Bilingual homework

In this paragraph, we will present some short essays, which the students were assigned for homework. The students were encouraged to write their homework in Italian and then translate it into their home language (Celic and Seltzer, 2013: 57).

Activity title	«Descrivi la tua giornata»
Activity topic	<input type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> poster <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	Write one's own typical day
Plurilingual objectives⁹⁰	- Make interlingual transfers of production from a known language to an unfamiliar one (S 5.3); - Being familiar with translation as a learning strategy (K 7.5.1)
Learning mode	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written <input type="checkbox"/> oral <input type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Italian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French

⁹⁰ The descriptors are inspired by the list of resources described in section V of Skills and Section VII of Knowledge (CANDELIER *et al.*, 2012: 50-59; 24-37).

	<input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala
Activity phases	<p>1) Invite the students to write ten lines about what they do on a normal day of the week.</p> <p>2) Encourage them to write first in Italian and then translate the text into their home language.</p> <p>3) Correct the homework and give a verbal feedback to each student.</p>

Table 3.13

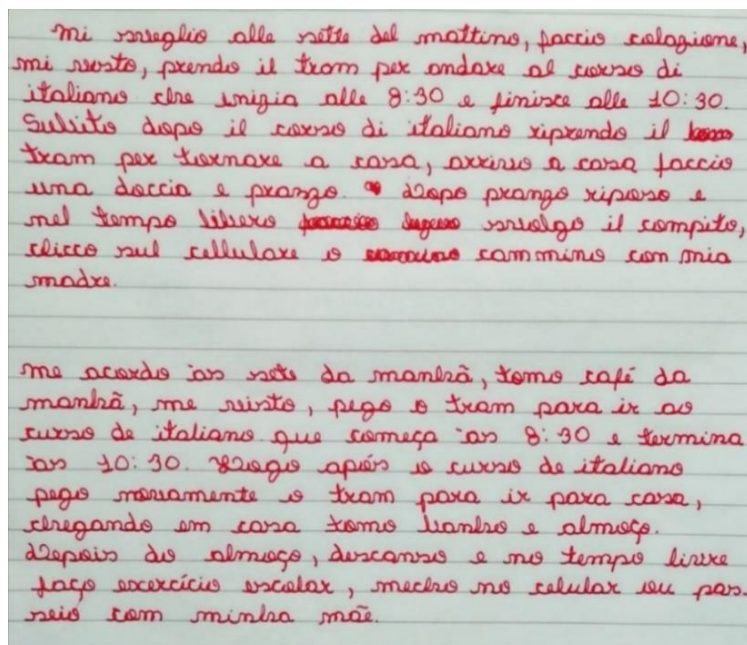


Figure 3.50⁹¹

⁹¹ Languages: Italian and Portuguese.

Mi alzo alle 7:00. Alle 7:30 io mangio colazione. Dopo io vado a scuola alle 8:00 perché io imparo l'italiano. Fino al corso io vado al supermercato con mia mamma o mia amici. Alle 2:00 io mangio pranzo. dopo io guardare la televisione. Alle 4:30 io leggere libro. Alle 5:45 io incontrare uscire con gli amici. E alle 7:00 io vado al parco. Dopo alle 9:00 io aiutare mia mamma per cucinare. Alle 10:00 io mangio cena. Alle 11:00 io fare compiti. Dopo Alle 12:00 dormire.

Bangla

আমি সকাল ৭:০০ বাজে ঘুম থেকে উঠি. ৭:৩০টা বাজে আমি স্কুলের
 নান্দা করি. তারপর আমি আমার ইন্টারন্যাশনাল ভাষা শিক্ষিত
 আমি স্কুল ও যায়. স্কুল শেষ হওয়ার পর আমি সুপারমার্কেট
 এ যায় আমার আঙ্গুর বা ফলসহে সাথে যায়. ২টা বাজে আমি
 হুসুরের ভাত খাই. আমি টিভি দেখি. ৪:৩০টা বাজে আমি হই চাই

Figure 3.51⁹²

mia orario
 Io alzo ogni mattina alle 7:00. faccio colazione alle 7:30.
 Poi io vado una corso di italiano alle 8:00.
 quand finito il corso, io arrivo casa mia.
 poi io aiuto mia mamma cucinare. poi io
 parlo alle 4:00. poi vado all parco con
 alle gli amici alle 5:00. poi arrivo mia
 casa alle 7:00. poi poco tempo usite mia
 telefono. poi stadi italiano. Io non ^{ZZZ}
 mangio di notte. poi Dormire.....

আমার রুটিন

Bangla

ami protin din sokal 7:00 ta baje gum theke utthi.
 Sokal nasti kori 7:30 e. pore ami akta
 cours e jai sokal 8:00 ta baje. * amar
 cours ses hole ami bari cole asi. pore ami
 amar ammek ramrao kaje sahajjo kori.
 Ami dupure khaber khi 4:00 baje. pore
 ami bahire jai amar bundu der sathe 5:00
 ta baje. Pore basay cole asi. kisu kham
 mobile dett dekhi. pore Italian pora.
 Ami rate khaber khi na. pore guma...

Figure 3.52⁹³

⁹² Languages: Italian and Bangla.

⁹³ Languages: Italian and Bangla.

Mi sveglio alle 7 del mattino. spazzuolo e mangio
 biscotti al latte. [আমি সকাল ৭টা মূহ্ন থেকে উঠি ব্রাক
 করি এবং দুধ, কিছুটা খাই।] Esco di casa alle 7:45
 per andare a scuola. [আমি স্কুলের জন্য ৭টা ৪৫এ
 বাসা থেকে বাহির হই।] Ho lezioni dalle 8:30 del
 mattino alle 10:30, poi torno a casa alle 11.
 [সকাল ৮টা ৩০ থেকে ১০টা ৩০ পর্যন্ত ক্লাস করি তারপর
 আমি বাসায় আছি মনটন।] Aiuto la mamma a
 cucinare dalle 11:00 alle 13:00. [আমি মতা থেকে
 ১টা পর্যন্ত মাকে আবার বানাতে সাহায্য করি।] Quando
 la cottura è finita, faccio un bagno e pranzo.
 [আবার বানানো শেষ হলে, গোসল করি এবং দুপ্লের
 আবার খাই।] Dormo un po dalle 15 alle 17. [আমি
 ৩টা থেকে ৫টা পর্যন্ত একটু ঘুমাই।] Esco con mia
 madre nel pomeriggio e resto fino a sera.
 [আমি বিকালে মার সাথে বাহির যাই এবং সন্ধ্যায়
 অগ পর্যন্ত থাকি।] Studio dalle 6:30 alle 8:00.
 [আমি ৬:৩০ থেকে ৮:০০টা পর্যন্ত পড়ানো করি।] Dalle
 8:00 alle 10:00 guardo cartoni animati o film
 sul cellulare e finisco la cena. [৮:০০ থেকে

১০:০০টা পর্যন্ত আমি মোবাইল কাটেন বা স্ক্রি দেখি
 এবং রাতের আবার শেষ করি।] Vado a letto alle
 11:00 e non vedo l'ora che arrivi una
 bella mattinata. [আমি মনটন দুপ্লায় যাই এবং একটা
 সুন্দর সকালের অপেক্ষায় থাকি।]

Figure 3.53⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Languages: Italian and Bangla.

CHAPTER 4

THE STUDY

In this chapter, we will firstly introduce the paradigm of our research, which was qualitative-oriented and could be defined as both a classroom-based and action research (§ 4.1). Secondly, we will present the research objective and main research questions (§ 4.2). Moreover, we will illustrate the context of research, hence the timing and class environment (§ 4.3), as well as the participants of the research (§ 4.4). Finally, we will describe the research instruments used for collecting data (§ 4.5) and, lastly, the data collection process (§ 4.6).

4.1 Research approach

In the next paragraphs, we will describe the main characteristics of the research paradigm, which was qualitative-oriented, and could namely be referred to as a classroom and action research.

4.1.1 Qualitative research

The present study is qualitative-oriented. As pointed out by Burns (1999: 22), the fundamental goal of qualitative studies is «to offer descriptions, interpretations and clarifications of naturalistic social contexts»; furthermore, qualitative studies differ from the quantitative approach, since qualitative researchers do not follow a predetermined research procedure and do not aim at formulating, confirming or disconfirming hypotheses.

Denzin and Lincoln (in Dörnyei, 2007: 35) highlight that each qualitative research has its own set of methods and practices; therefore, a clear paradigm or theory about qualitative studies does not exist. Nevertheless, Dörnyei (2007: 45-48) identifies some common features which may apply to qualitative research. The first important characteristic is the emergent nature of qualitative studies, which are naturally fluid and open since new aspects or details might appear over the course of inquiry. Therefore, research questions are flexible and may change or evolve during the study; and researchers conduct the study with an open-minded attitude. Secondly, qualitative

researchers usually collect data through different kinds of instruments, such as interviews, field notes, journals, diaries, as well as photos or video recordings. Moreover, qualitative researchers usually transform the data into a textual form (Dörnyei, 2007: 124) and they conduct their study in a natural setting, through direct contact with the participants. Furthermore, qualitative studies aim at gaining insights into the participants' opinions, feelings and experiences. Finally, the sample of qualitative studies is usually small, and the analysis of data is interpretive and subjective. Thus, the researchers' values, ideas and perceptions become an integral part of the study, as observed by Haverkamp (in Dörnyei, 2007: 35) and Hammersley (in Van Lier, 1988: 8).

4.1.2 Classroom-based and action research

The present research is a classroom-based research (Dörnyei, 2007: 176; Riazi, 2016: 34), hence a research that is mainly conducted in a classroom. According to Allwright and Bailey (in Qi, 2008: 46), the main goal of classroom-centred research is «to gain insights and increase our understanding of classroom learning and teaching». Furthermore, our research was conducted within a classroom of Italian as a second language, therefore it can also be referred to as second-language classroom research (Van Lier, 1988)⁹⁵.

This research can also be defined as action research, which is a form of classroom research (Qi, 2008: 48; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 441). Action research is contextual, small-scale and localised, as well as evaluative and reflective since it aims at implementing and evaluating practice (Burns, 1999: 30; Elliott in Cohen *et al.*, 2018: 440). Action research thus represents a useful instrument for change and improvement (Cohen *et al.*, 2018: 440; Banegas and Villacañas de Castro, 2019: 571).

Action research may be conducted in a variety of research areas, including the educational field, as highlighted by Cohen *et al.* (2018: 440-441). Action research is particularly useful for classroom teachers, given its practical and flexible nature (Burns, 1999: 24-25). Furthermore, as pointed out by Burns (in Hadfield and Dörnyei, 2013: 298-299): «action research offers a means for teachers to become agents rather than

⁹⁵ For more information about second-language classroom research, see the first chapter in VAN LIER (1988: 1-48).

recipients of knowledge about second language teaching and learning». Teachers conduct their research within the classroom context, driven by curiosity and interest towards an educational issue, which they decide to explore from an insider perspective with their available resources (Banegas and Villacañas de Castro, 2019: 571; Banegas and Consoli, 2020: 176-179). Furthermore, teachers could conduct their research both individually and cooperatively, during their everyday classes, to explore and understand the educational practices, as well as become more effective and aware of the classroom environment and students' dynamics (Burns in Dörnyei, 2007: 191; Qi, 2008: 48; McAteer in Cohen *et al.*, 2018: 440).

As far as our research is concerned, we were driven by interest and curiosity about an educational issue (McNiff in Cohen *et al.*, 2018: 440), namely translanguaging pedagogy; we thus focused on a discovery teaching method (Cohen *et al.*, 2018: 441).

Banegas and Consoli (2020: 179) point out that action research is «context-driven, practical, collaborative, cyclical, ecological, and transformative»; furthermore, it does not aim at making universal statements or generalisations about certain issues (Wallace, 1998: 18).

According to Banegas and Villacañas de Castro (2019: 573), action research is characterised by four main stages: the first stage is the *exploration* phase, as the researcher explores and reflects on the issue of interest. The second phase is the *action* phase, where the researcher starts planning the research and the process of data collection. The third phase is the *implementation* phase, which includes the implementation of the researcher's ideas, thus the actual collection of research data. Finally, the fourth stage is the *reflection* phase, in which the researcher reflects on the data collected and evaluates the research results. However, Qi (2008: 48) observes that «the teacher-as-researcher is constantly reflecting on her/his practices». Therefore, action research is also defined as “reflection-in-action” or “ideas-in-action”, since researchers need to reflect during each phase of research (Wallace, 1998: 17; Qi, 2008: 48; Riazi, 2016: 5; Banegas and Villacañas de Castro, 2019: 573).

Finally, Banegas and Villacañas de Castro (2019: 571) argue that the teachers' beliefs and ideas about education become an essential part of the action research process. Besides, teachers-researchers are usually supported in their study by a critical friend, or critical colleague, hence a friend who gives advice and feedback to the researcher over the course of research (Kember *et al.*, 1997: 464). As regards our study,

the critical friend was an essential figure of guidance and support, since she provided us with feedback and help throughout all the stages of research⁹⁶.

4.2 Purpose of research and research questions

The present research was conducted in July and August 2020, during my university internship in Mestre (Venice), within a course of Italian as a second language for newly arrived students, as part of the project FAMI “VOCI - Vivere Oggi Cittadini in Italia”⁹⁷. This project is funded by the European Union and organised by the City of Venice⁹⁸, in partnership with Ca’ Foscari University LabCom⁹⁹, and provides free literacy courses of Italian as a second language for both adults and young immigrant learners living in Venice municipality.

During my internship, I worked as a language teacher assistant within three courses of Italian as a second language, starting from February 2020. For the last two months of the internship, namely from July 6st to August 21st 2020, I was proposed to teach a class of eleven students, within the course “Italiano in gioco”, in cooperation with two volunteers of the Civil Service¹⁰⁰ and with the supervision of my internship supervisor¹⁰¹. As explained in chapter 3 (§ 3.2.1), the course occurred in a blended modality, hence both in a schoolyard and online, through the Google Meet and Edmodo platforms. This experience was extremely enriching, not only for improving my skills and knowledge about teaching Italian as a second language but also for conducting the present research.

⁹⁶ As explained in chapter 3, the critical friend for our research was Claudia Meneghetti, a PhD student specialising in Translanguaging pedagogy at Ca’ Foscari University.

⁹⁷ FAMI: Fondo Asilo, Migrazione e Integrazione 2014-2020 - VOCI: Vivere Oggi Cittadini in Italia. Percorsi sperimentali di apprendimento di italiano e di educazione civica. For more information, see “FAMI VOCI” in <https://www.unive.it/data/16955/>.

⁹⁸ Servizio Pronto Intervento Sociale, Inclusione e Mediazione – Comune di Venezia. For more information, see: <https://www.comune.venezia.it/it/content/servizio-pronto-intervento-sociale>.

⁹⁹ Laboratorio di Comunicazione interculturale e didattica, Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Culturali Comparati - Università Ca’Foscari Venezia.

¹⁰⁰ The Italian term is “Servizio civile”, which indicates a national volunteering programme for Italian citizens among 18 and 29 years old.

¹⁰¹ The internship supervisor was Laura Schiattone, who was also the main responsible of the courses.

The intention to conduct this action research originated from the combination of my strong curiosity towards translanguaging pedagogy and the opportunity to explore this teaching approach during my internship since the class I was assigned to was composed of eleven multilingual students with different nationalities, as we will explain in § 4.4. Translanguaging as a pedagogical approach can be implemented by any language teacher, whether monolingual or bilingual, in different educational settings and with different kinds of students (García and Li Wei, 2014: 94; García and Kleyn, 2016: 203; García *et al.*, 2017: 7). Therefore, the main purpose of the research was to integrate translanguaging practices within our language learning context, i.e. a multilingual class of young immigrants learning Italian as a second language, and see how this teaching methodology was experienced by the students, both in terms of their attitude towards language diversity and their perception towards the linguistic repertoires. Hence, the two driving questions addressed in our research are:

1. In what ways can translanguaging practices be implemented in a classroom of Italian as a second language for newly arrived students?
2. What is the impact of translanguaging practices on the students' attitude towards language diversity and the perception of their linguistic repertoires?

4.3 Context

The language course occurred in a blended modality, as mentioned in chapter 3, thus in an outdoor context, namely in the schoolyard of the “Giulio Cesare” middle school in Mestre, Venice¹⁰², and online, through the Google Meet platform and Edmodo. The outdoor classroom was furnished with a whiteboard, a desk for the teacher and the students' chairs.

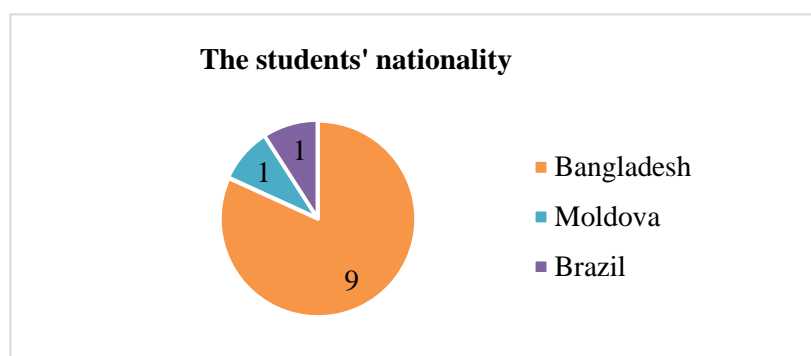
The language course lasted seven weeks, from July 6th until August 21st. The lessons occurred in the schoolyard from Monday to Thursday, from 8:30 till 10:30 am, whereas on Fridays the lessons would be held completely online, through the Google Meet platform, from 9:30 till 10:30 am. Moreover, the classes would be held via Google Meet in case of bad weather conditions, which would prevent the outdoor modality, but this happened only for two lessons.

¹⁰² Istituto Comprensivo “Caio Giulio Cesare”, Mestre (Venezia).

To conclude, the students attended approximately nine hours of lessons per week, for a total of sixty-three hours¹⁰³.

4.4 Participants

The subjects of this research were 11 immigrant students, respectively six females and five males. The students were between 13 and 16 years old and had different nationalities, as shown in Graph 4.1: one student came from Brazil (L1: Portuguese), another student came from Moldova (L1: Romanian), while the other nine students came from Bangladesh (L1: Bangla).



Graph 4.1. The students' nationality

The students had an A1-A2 level of Italian¹⁰⁴; as a result, they could initially understand and produce very basic phrases and use only familiar expressions. The students were all newly arrived¹⁰⁵ migrant learners, thus none of them arrived in Italy more than two years before the language course started. Moreover, some of the students already attended a lower-secondary school in Italy, while others arrived around February 2020, shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic started, and could not enrol in the Italian school system until September 2020.

¹⁰³ In order to obtain the certificate of attendance, students had to attend at least 70% of the lessons.

¹⁰⁴ The A1-A2 level is the basic user level, according to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). For more information, see COUNCIL OF EUROPE (2020).

¹⁰⁵ The technical term for indicating the newly arrived students is NAI, which stands for "Neo Arrivati in Italia" and indicates that the foreign students enrolled in Italian schools from less than two years (see FAVARO, 2018: 40).

4.5 Instruments

The main instruments used for the collection of data were:

- class artefacts
- teacher diary
- language portraits
- focus group

Specifically, we used the teacher diary and class artefacts for answering the first research question, whereas the language portraits and the focus group transcription functioned as instruments for answering the second research question. The instruments will be presented in the following paragraphs, while the data collected through these tools will be described in chapter 5.

4.5.1 Class artefacts

The class artefacts shown in chapter 3 were used as an instrument for our research, namely for answering the first research question. We specifically decided to use an analysis scheme to outline the main characteristics of each activity, as well as observe the similarities and differences among the class works. The results that emerged from the analysis will be presented in chapter 5.

The scheme that we adopted (Table 4.1) was inspired to the didactic schemes (“schemi delle attività”) proposed on the website of the AltRoparlante project¹⁰⁶. Furthermore, the researcher’s critical friend provided us with fundamental feedback about the scheme structure and internal items. Specifically, as described in chapter 3 (§ 3.4), we introduced ten items, which represent the main aspects of each translanguaging activity implemented within our class.

¹⁰⁶ <https://cluss.unistrasi.it>

Activity title	
Activity type	<input type="checkbox"/> unit-related <input type="checkbox"/> independent
Activity support	<input type="checkbox"/> whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> notebook
Linguistic objective	
Plurilingual objectives	
Learning mode	<input type="checkbox"/> individual <input type="checkbox"/> small group work <input type="checkbox"/> whole class
Activity ability	<input type="checkbox"/> written <input type="checkbox"/> oral <input type="checkbox"/> interactional
Activity modality	<input type="checkbox"/> classroom-based <input type="checkbox"/> technology-based <input type="checkbox"/> homework
Languages	<input type="checkbox"/> Italian <input type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input type="checkbox"/> Romanian <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhala
Activity phases	

Table 4.1. The scheme model for the class artefacts analysis

4.5.2 Teacher diary

The teacher diary was the most important instrument, especially for answering our first research question (see § 4.2), as it helped to systematically document the class activities and the research process (Riazi, 2016: 276).

Silverman and Duff (in Dörnyei, 2007: 160) argue that keeping a diary is extremely useful for qualitative researchers, as it helps them document their thoughts and reflections about the research project while finding new ideas and improving time management.

Moreover, writing a research diary helps the researchers remember important details and reflecting on their work, as well as raising awareness about their teaching approach and experiences; yet, they are a very simple and flexible instrument (Wallace, 1998: 39; Brock *et al.* in Wallace, 1998: 63). For these reasons, we decided that keeping a diary would be a useful choice for conducting our research.

According to Cryer (in Dörnyei, 2007: 161), diaries should include the researchers' moves, hence what they do, and where, how, when, and why they do it. Moreover, they should record any thoughts, surprises, or achievements, as well as any ideas and feelings that may be relevant for the research. As far as our research diary is concerned, we decided to include in the diary regular accounts of our reflections, feelings, reactions, and explanations (Burns, 1999: 79) about the following aspects:

- Class activities and events
- Students' interactions
- Teacher's choices and actions

Since the focus of our research was the implementation of translanguaging practices in the classroom, we specifically focused on the translanguaging activities (see § 3.4) and the students' interactions during translanguaging activities, as well as the teacher's choices and actions concerning the translanguaging practices and strategies implemented within the class.

4.5.3 Language portraits

The language portrait (LP) is a research instrument used by teachers who want to explore the linguistic identities and multilingual repertoires of their students, thus validating their languages within the classroom (Cummins and Early in Dressler, 2015: 43, 50; Kusters and De Meulder, 2019).

Language portraits began to be used as research instruments at the beginning of the 1990s, since researchers, especially in the educational field, wanted to observe the

students' linguistic repertoires and elicit narratives on their language experiences, attitudes and practices (Busch, 2006: 10; Busch, 2010: 286; Wolf, 2014: 92, 10). Nevertheless, language portraits cannot be used as an instrument for gaining insight into the linguistic competences of the students, nor can it function as a measurement instrument (Kusters and De Meulder, 2019).

As far as our research is concerned, we used the language portraits produced by the students (see § 3.4.1) as a tool for answering the second research question (see § 4.2). Namely, the model used for the activity represents a silhouette (see Figure 4.1) with no clothing and no gender specific details, as observed by Busch (in Kusters and De Meulder, 2019). The students were asked to complete their linguistic silhouette both at the beginning and the end of the course, since we wanted to see whether there was any difference in the students' perceptions of their linguistic repertoires.

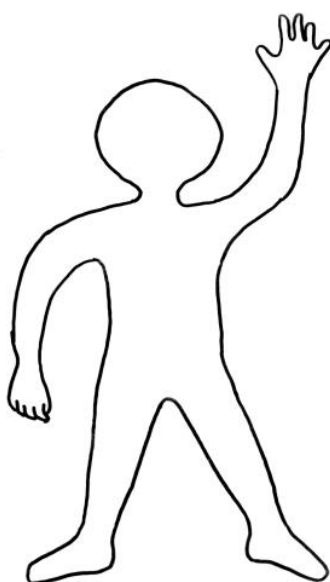


Figure 4.1. Language portrait model (heteroglossia.net)¹⁰⁷

4.5.4 Focus group

During the final week of the course, we conducted two focus group interviews with the students. The idea to adopt this method originated from the necessity to answer the second research question (see § 4.2), hence the decision to draw some final

¹⁰⁷ https://www.heteroglossia.net/fileadmin/user_upload/portrait_child.pdf.

considerations about the translanguaging practices and activities experienced by the students throughout the course.

Focus groups are a kind of group interviews where group members interact with each other and discuss topics elicited by the researcher (Cohen *et al.*, 2018: 532). The topics that emerged from the discussion and interaction among the group members provide essential data for research analysis (Denscombe in Cohen *et al.*, 2018: 534). As pointed out by Dörnyei (2007: 144):

The focus group format is based on the collective experience of group brainstorming, that is, participants thinking together, inspiring and challenging each other, and reacting to the emerging issues and points. This within-group interaction can yield high-quality data as it can create a synergetic environment that results in a deep and insightful discussion.

Moreover, Dörnyei (2007: 145-146) states that during focus group interviews the researcher does not act as an interviewer, but rather as a facilitator and moderator of the discussion among the students; furthermore, he underlines the versatile and information-rich nature of focus group interviews. Nevertheless, he claims that focus groups may cause some problems. Firstly, the researcher needs to cover multiple functions simultaneously and may need to improvise over the course of the discussion, since new questions could arise. Furthermore, some participants may tend to dominate the discussion, while others could not easily express their opinions, due to differences in personalities or attitudes.

To conclude, focus groups do have some weaknesses, yet represent a useful research instrument for data collection. We thus decided that the focus group interview would represent a suitable instrument for our research. The results of the focus groups analysis will be presented in chapter 5.

4.6 Data collection

In the next paragraphs, we will illustrate the process followed for the collection of data. As we can see from Table 4.2, we used four different instruments.

The class artefacts were collected over the course of the research since the teacher conducted at least one translanguaging activity per week (see Table 3.1). Similarly, the teacher diary was used every day, over the course of the study, thus during the seven

weeks of course; whereas the language portraits activity occurred twice over the course of research, namely at the beginning and the end of the language course. Finally, the focus group interview was conducted during the last week of course.

	JULY				AUGUST		
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
Class artefacts							
Teacher diary							
Language portraits							
Focus group							

Table 4.2. Data collection timetable

4.6.1 Class artefacts

The class works were collected at the end of each lesson or activity; namely, we collected photographs of the whiteboard and the students' notebooks, as well as the posters created by the students. At the end of the course, we outlined a scheme (see Table 4.1) which served as a tool for analysing the students' works, thus observing the similarities and differences among the characteristics of the translanguaging activities and trying to explore the reasons for the strengths or weaknesses of the results. The results of the analysis will be therefore presented in chapter 5, to answer the first research question.

4.6.2 Teacher diary

We wrote in the diary any ideas, intuitions, reflections and interpretations which emerged over the course of lessons. We specifically wrote the entries at the end of the day, when we had more free time (Wallace, 1998: 62); and we decided to observe the following rules, as indicated by Altrichter and Holly in Dörnyei (2007: 161):

1. Write regularly;

This activity was proposed at the beginning of the language course, thus during the first week, and in the last week of course. For the first language portraits activity, we collected the drawings of the eight students who were present. We asked the students if they agreed on describing their drawings to the classmates, since the drawing and colouring part is usually succeeded by a narrative explanation and comment, where students describe why they chose certain colours, shapes or symbols for their silhouettes (Dressler, 2015: 43; Kusters and De Meulder, 2019). However, only three of the students accepted to be video recorded. Thus, we decided to take pictures of the eight drawings, but we did not video record the explanation of the three students since we did not want to create embarrassment or uneasiness. During the final language portrait activity, nine students were present. When the portraits were finished, we asked if any of the students wanted to comment on his or her silhouette to the teacher, who would video record their explanation. We did not ask to describe the portrait in front of the class, but only to the teacher, as we did not want to make the students feel uncomfortable in front of their peers. Of the nine students, only four accepted to describe their drawings and be video recorded¹⁰⁸. Therefore, we decided to collect the pictures of the nine final portraits, as well as the video records of the four students' narratives. However, in order to answer the second research question, we decided to analyse only the language portraits of those students who completed both the first and the last language portrait, namely six students. The six portraits will be analysed in chapter 5.

4.6.4 Focus group

Focus group interviews are usually conducted with small groups of participants, which are 'segmented', thus composed of people who share some characteristics. Furthermore, there should be homogeneity within a group and heterogeneity among the different groups (Dörnyei, 2007: 145).

As concerns our research, we conducted two focus group interviews, thus the students were divided into two small groups, composed of respectively six and five

¹⁰⁸ We decided to videotape the four students, in order to better observe whether there were any differences among their first and final language portraits.

students¹⁰⁹. The first focus group was conducted with a group of five students sharing the same L1 (Bangla), while the other focus group was composed of six students with different L1 (Bangla, Romanian and Portuguese). Both focus groups were homogeneous, though for different reasons: the first group included students who shared their first language, thus the homogeneity was given by the same L1, namely Bangla; the second group, instead, was homogeneous in the sense that students had different home languages, thus students did not share the same L1; rather, they shared Italian as an L2, as well as the plurilingual nature of their linguistic repertoires. We decided to divide the class into these two different groups since we wanted to see whether we could elicit different answers from the two groups.

The focus group included five semi-structured questions based on some key themes (Riazi, 2016: 122) since the focus group discussion usually includes no more than five-ten broad questions around some key topics (Dörnyei, 2007: 145). The teacher-as-researcher posed some initial questions to the students, and the responses were used for posing new questions and eliciting further elaborations (Riazi, 2016: 122). Namely, the teacher posed the following questions during the first focus group:

- 1) Did you like having classmates who can speak Bangla?
- 2) Do you think it is important to have classmates who speak different languages, such as Romanian or Portuguese?
- 3) Did you like it when your peers from Moldova and Brazil tried to pronounce words in Bangla? Do you think it is useful to write in your language, as you did in the homework about your free time?
- 4) Do you think it is better if we only speak Italian during lessons?
- 5) Do you like the languages of your peers? Would you like to learn them?

As far as the second focus group is concerned, the questions were partly different:

- 1) Do you think it is useful to have classmates who can speak your language?
- 2) Do you think it is important to have classmates who speak different languages?

¹⁰⁹ The size of the sample also coincides with the suggestions about the focus group sample, made by MORGAN and FOWLER (in COHEN *et al.*, 2018: 533).

- 3) Do you think it is useful to write in your languages, as you did in the posters about family members or the group rules?
- 4) Do you think it is better if we only speak in Italian during lessons?
- 5) Do you like the languages of your peers? Would you like to learn them?

Thus, in both interviews, the questions were focused on five main topics, namely: the presence of classmates with same languages (question 1) or different languages (question 2); the use of one's own home language in class (question 3); the use of the L2 during lessons (question 4); and finally, the students' curiosity towards the classmates' languages (question 5). The questions were semi-structured since we prepared and posed the first three broad questions (question 1, 2 and 3), but we added the last two questions (question 4 and 5) over the course of the interview, as the topics were elicited by the students' answers to the initial questions.

The focus group interview was conducted in the schoolyard, with the students sitting in a circle. However, the discussion was not conducted where the usual lessons occurred, but rather in a quieter area of the schoolyard, in a distanced place from the other students¹¹⁰.

The focus group interviews were both audio- and video recorded, through two cell phones¹¹¹, since we wanted to be sure we could identify who was speaking (Dörnyei, 2007: 146).

The interview session started with an introduction, in which we welcomed the students and indicated the purpose of the discussion. Furthermore, we explained the reason why we used the video and audio record, and we emphasised that the students could express their opinions and experiences since there was no right or wrong answer (Dörnyei, 2007: 145). Finally, we ensured that the students' identity would be preserved as every intervention would remain anonymous (Banegas and Villacañas de Castro, 2019: 574).

¹¹⁰ The schoolyard was used both by our class and another class at the same time, therefore we decided to conduct the focus group into a more silenced area of the schoolyard. However, it was not possible to conduct the interview in a very quiet and silent atmosphere, given the traffic around the school and the general limitations of the outdoor setting.

¹¹¹ The video record was done through the researcher's cell-phone, while the audio record was done using the cellphone of another teacher, who was present during both the focus group interviews.

The group interviews lasted approximately fifteen minutes per each, and the second focus group was done immediately after the first. At the end of each session, we asked if anyone wanted to add some more opinions about further issues (Dörnyei, 2007: 146), then we concluded by thanking the students for their participation.

In the following days, when the language course was already finished, we listened to the audio record and watched the video of both the focus group sessions. Thus, we transcribed the entire discussions and identified the main themes among the students' opinions, which will be presented in chapter 5, to answer the second research question.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this final chapter, we will first analyse the data collected throughout the research, namely the class artefacts, the teacher diary, the language portraits silhouettes and the focus group interviews (§ 5.1). Secondly, we will present the results of our research, thus discussing both the first and second research questions (§ 5.2). Finally, we will provide our conclusions on the research results (§ 5.3) and we will illustrate both the limitations of our findings and some indications for future research (§ 5.4).

5.1 Data analysis

As was mentioned in chapter 4 (§ 4.5), the data collected through the teacher diary and the class artefacts were used for answering the first research question, whereas the focus group transcription and language portraits were used for exploring the second research question. Thus, in the following paragraphs, we will provide an analysis of the data collected through these research instruments.

5.1.1 Class artefacts

The class works were collected over the course of the research; thus, we regularly gathered the materials related to the different translanguaging activities, such as the language portraits and the bilingual homework, as well as the photographs of the plurilingual board and posters made during the lessons. To analyse the students' artefacts and explore the first research question, we created a structured scheme (see Table 4.1), which allowed us to outline the main characteristics of the students' works and class activities. Overall, we outlined twelve tables, as shown in chapter 3, including ten main items for describing the different translanguaging activities implemented during the lessons. From the analysis of the tables, we could identify the following features about the class works:

- Topic: half the activities were related to a unit of the textbook¹¹², while the other half were independent¹¹³.
- Support: most of the activities were carried out through the whiteboard (see § 3.4.2) or posters (see § 3.4.3 and § 3.4.4), whereas only two activities were carried out on the students' notebook (see § 3.4.1 and § 3.4.5).
- Linguistic objectives: the objectives concerning Italian as a second language were mainly centred on learning new vocabulary¹¹⁴ or improving the students' writing skills¹¹⁵.
- Plurilingual objectives: these objectives were based on the FREPA descriptors, particularly those included in the Attitudes and Skills sections (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 38-49, 50-59). Specifically, the descriptors regarding Attitudes were mostly: Sensitivity towards one's own language and other languages (A 2.1); Sensitivity both to differences and to similarities between different languages (A 2.4); Openness to languages (A 5.3).¹¹⁶ While the descriptors related to Skills were mainly: Ability to communicate in plurilingual groups taking into account the repertoire of one's interlocutors (S 6.1)¹¹⁷; Ability to produce a text in which language alternate functionally (S 6.5.2)¹¹⁸; Ability to reproduce unfamiliar features of a language (S 7.2)¹¹⁹.
- Learning mode: most of the activities were based on the collective interaction among students, thus involving the whole class in activities such as brainstorming or discussions¹²⁰; many activities were based on small group works¹²¹, whereas only a few activities required the students to work individually¹²².

¹¹² Tables 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9

¹¹³ Tables 3.2, 3.4, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 3.13

¹¹⁴ Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9

¹¹⁵ Tables 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 3.13

¹¹⁶ Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10

¹¹⁷ Tables 3.8, 3.9, 3.11, 3.12

¹¹⁸ Tables 3.11, 3.12

¹¹⁹ Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.10

¹²⁰ Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10

¹²¹ Tables 3.8, 3.9, 3.11, 3.12

¹²² Tables 3.2, 3.13

- Ability: most of the activities were focused on written, oral, and interactional abilities, thus involving all the abilities included in the table. In fact, the students were frequently asked to write words in their home languages and then pronounce or explain the meaning to their classmates, thus practicing both written and oral skills¹²³. Likely, the students were asked to interact with the peers during brainstorming moments or group works¹²⁴. Thus, the written ability was linked to both oral and interactional abilities, except for the homework task, which was not followed by any oral nor interactional activity¹²⁵.
- Modality: apart from the homework task, all the activities illustrated in the tables were carried out within the classroom space, thus during the face-to-face lessons. Moreover, all the class works were photographed and then published on the Edmodo platform (see § 3.2.2), thus could be considered as both classroom- and technology-based.
- Languages: Italian was the target language, thus it emerged in all the activities. Moreover, we tried to include the students' home languages during lessons, especially when we introduced new vocabulary and therefore ask the students to translate the Italian words into their languages. Thus, the most frequently used languages were respectively Italian, Bangla¹²⁶, Portuguese¹²⁷, and Romanian¹²⁸. Finally, English would emerge in some activities¹²⁹, whereas other languages, such as Russian¹³⁰, French¹³¹ and Sinhala¹³² appeared only in a few activities.
- Phases: the activities carried out through the whiteboard (see § 3.4.2) usually started with brainstorming about a certain topic, followed by a collective

¹²³ Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7

¹²⁴ Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12

¹²⁵ Table 3.13

¹²⁶ Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.13

¹²⁷ Tables 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.13

¹²⁸ Tables 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11

¹²⁹ Tables 3.3, 3.7, 3.11, 3.12

¹³⁰ Tables 3.8, 3.10

¹³¹ Table 3.11

¹³² Table 3.8

discussion about the similarities and differences among Italian and the students' languages; similarly, the activities carried out on posters (see § 3.4.3 and § 3.4.4) started with a brainstorming moment, which was followed by a discussion and finally a group or whole class task.

5.1.2 Teacher diary

Over the course of the language course, we regularly wrote on the teacher diary any ideas, intuitions, reflections, and interpretations which emerged during the lessons. Thus, we will now report the most significant excerpts from the diary, which include our reflections about the translanguaging strategies and activities implemented throughout the course (see § 3.3 and § 3.4), as well as the students' interactions and our choices during the translanguaging activities. Specifically, the excerpts are nine in total and will be presented in English (see the original Italian version in Appendix A).

Excerpt 5.1 presents the teacher's reflections about the use of students' home languages in class as well as their reactions to the opportunity to share their languages during the lessons (see § 3.3.1).

During the lesson, the students gladly accepted to come up to the board for writing a translation of the words in their languages, though some students appeared less eager to do it (especially the more introvert students). Overall, the students seemed to enjoy that they could write their languages on the board, and the atmosphere was relaxed, both when the students came to the board and when I repeated the words in their language. The students seemed proud to teach the correct pronunciation of their language and happy that they could bring their languages within the class, as well as communicate with their peers using their home language.

Excerpt 5.1: Comment on the use of home languages during lessons

Excerpt 5.2 presents a positive comment about the small work groups as a learning mode (see § 3.3.3).

So far, the small group works seem the best method for carrying out activities in class, especially when the students are asked not only to work in group but also to test their drawing abilities, since drawing and working in group seem to involve everyone in the tasks.

Excerpt 5.2: Comment on small group works

Excerpt 5.3 comments on the use of some translanguaging strategies during an online class.

During the reading and comprehension activity carried out online, I tried to involve the students asking them to translate some Italian words in their languages, both for facilitating the comprehension of new vocabulary and for helping them reflect on the similarities or differences between Italian and their home languages. I noticed that some students spontaneously wrote the translation in the google meet chat, thus using the chat as a virtual board. Moreover, I asked for some volunteers to try repeat the words in the home languages of their peers and I surprisingly noticed that a student who is usually shy was particularly active and enthusiastic during this task.

Excerpt 5.3: Comment on translanguaging during online classes

Excerpt 5.4 presents a general reflection about the activity on the students' language portraits silhouettes (§ 3.4.1).

The activity went very well, though it was a bit hard to explain the task at the beginning, but drawing my silhouette helped me explain it better to the students. I think everyone liked the activity since it was an opportunity for reflecting on one's own languages from a different and new perspective. They looked a bit confused at first when I asked them to think about their languages and the parts of their body in which they felt those languages, but they appeared to enjoy the task at the same time. My goal was to help the students reflect upon themselves and their languages. Overall, I think the goal was reached and every student enjoyed the activity.

Excerpt 5.4: Comment on the activity «The language portraits»

Excerpt 5.5 concerns the teacher's reflections about the problematic aspects of involving all students in repeating some words using the languages of their classmates.

I should find a way to encourage the students to repeat the words in the languages of their peers, since so far when the students' home languages emerged, I was the only one repeating the words or sentences. I would like to involve the whole class in this task, so that all students could familiarise with the languages of their peers.

Excerpt 5.5: Comment on the moments of languages' sharing

Finally, Excerpt 5.6, Excerpt 5.7, Excerpt 5.8 and Excerpt 5.9 comment on some activities in which we tried to include and legitimise the students' home languages, thus practicing translanguaging.

The brainstorming over the days and seasons in Italian went well: everyone seemed active and involved in the task; moreover, the Bangladeshi students tried for the first time to repeat some words in Portuguese and Romanian. We further reflected on the similarities and differences between the Italian seasons and those in the students' countries, which turned out to be an interesting topic for the entire class. We also noticed the linguistic similarities among Italian, Portuguese, and Romanian.

Excerpt 5.6: Comment on the activity «I giorni» and «Le stagioni»

The brainstorming on Tommy's family went very well. The students shared the different words for indicating family members in their languages, and it was particularly interesting to notice the similarities among the terms, as well as observe the multitude of family-related words which exist in their languages. Overall, the students seemed to enjoy the activity, especially during the small group works in which they were asked to draw family trees. Finally, the students seemed to enjoy the collective and dynamic moment in which they had to stick all their family trees on a large poster, which would be later posted on Edmodo.

Excerpt 5.7: Comment on the activity «La famiglia»

The activity went well. Students came up to the board for writing the prepositions in their languages. Plus, there was a surprising episode: I asked some students to repeat the words on the board, thus practicing their peers' languages, and the Moldovan student remembered the exact pronunciation of a word in Bangla, which positively surprised all the Bangladesh students.

Excerpt 5.8: Comment on the activity «Le preposizioni di luogo»

The activity was the most interactive and inclusive so far, since not only did the students share their languages, but they also practiced the new words and sentences using the languages of their peers. When the students finished to write the sentences in all languages, I asked some volunteers to read the words and sentences aloud, but I was often the only one trying to repeat and pronounce those words, so it was not easy to involve everyone. However, I managed to create a collective moment later, when I asked the students to try pronounce and tell each other the kind sentences using the peers' languages, so that they could learn how to pronounce the

Excerpt 5.9: Comment on the activity «Le regole del gruppo»

5.1.3 Language portraits

The language portraits silhouettes were collected both at the beginning and the end of the course. However, to answer the second research question, we decided to analyse only the drawings of those students who completed both the first and the last language portrait, namely six students, including five Bangladeshi students and the Brazilian student. We will now illustrate the language portraits of each student, thus comparing the two versions of the drawings and exploring the similarities or differences between the portraits made at the beginning and in the final week of course. Through the analysis of the silhouettes, we tried to observe whether the students registered a change in the perception of their language repertoires at the end of the course, particularly focusing on the perception of their home language, hence Bangla or Portuguese, and Italian.

The language portraits shown in Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 reveal a significant change: in the first silhouette, the student associated Italian language with her legs and feet, thus positioning this language in the lowest part of the silhouette, and writing the words “cibo” and “amici” next to it; whereas the home language, Portuguese, is placed in the arms and chest, thus in the highest part of the silhouette, and linked with the Italian words “famiglia” and “paese”. Interestingly, though, the perspective changes in the second silhouette, since the student placed Italian in the higher part of the body, where there was her home language at first, adding the Italian sentence “mi piace molto”; while the student located her home language in the heart and lower area, adding the sentence “è la mia prima lingua”. The student further described her silhouette (Figure 5.2) to the teacher, who video-recorded the explanation¹³³, using these words: «I put Italian in my head, in my hand, and close to my heart because I like it. Portuguese is my first language, so I put it close to my heart and in my belly».

¹³³ As explained in chapter 4 (§ 4.6.3), for the final versions of language portraits we decided to video-record the narratives of some volunteer students, who agreed on describing their drawing to the teacher, in Italian. Thus, we reported some extracts from the students’ descriptions of their silhouettes (Figure 5.2, Figure 5.4, and Figure 5.6).



Figure 5.1



Figure 5.2

A significant difference between the two language portraits can also be observed in Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4, where the student reveals a different perception of her linguistic repertoire, particularly in the representation of the home language and Italian. In the first drawing, the student located Italian in the right ear, while she associated her home language, Bangla, with the heart. Whereas in the silhouette made at the end of the course, the student still located her home language within the heart, adding “Io amo Bangla”; however, the Italian language is inside the head, together with English, and linked with the sentence “Mi piace lingua Italiana”. The student described her drawing (Figure 5.4) to the teacher saying: «I love Bangla because it is my first language, I put Italian here because I like it very much».

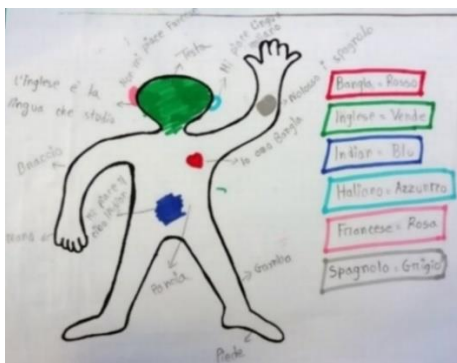


Figure 5.3

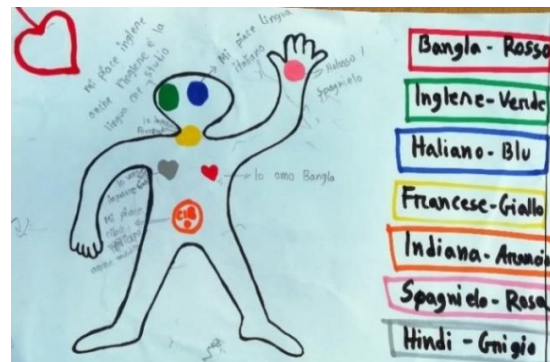


Figure 5.4

The language portraits shown in Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6 show a significant change in the perception of the student’s language repertoire: in the first silhouette, the home language, Bangla, is located in the heart, while the Italian language is placed in the head. Interestingly, the perspective changes in the second portrait, in which the

student put both her home language and Italian within the heart. The student further explained the drawing (Figure 5.6) to the teacher using these words: «In my heart, there are Bangla and Italian, I really like them».

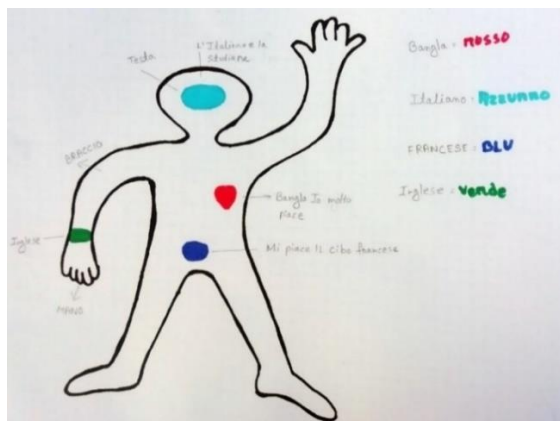


Figure 5.5

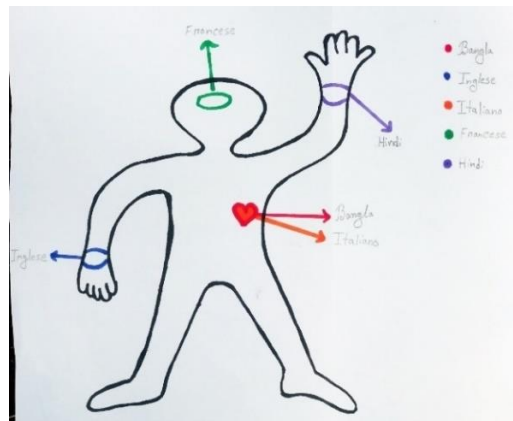


Figure 5.6

The language portraits shown in Figure 5.7 and Figure 5.8 suggest that the student changed her perspective about the perception of the Italian language: at first, the student located Italian only in her head, while in the second silhouette Italian is still in the head, together with the English language, but also in the right arm and the chest, thus close to the heart, where the student placed her home language, Bangla.

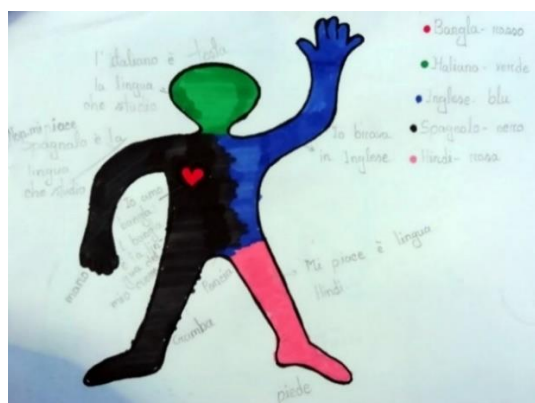


Figure 5.7

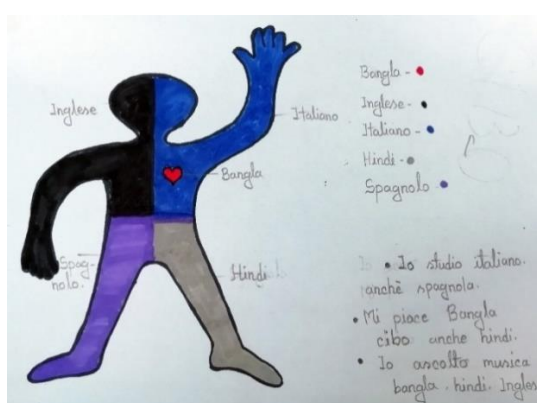


Figure 5.8

Thus, the language portraits seen above reveal an interesting change in the perception of the students' plurilingual repertoires, especially in terms of their home language and Italian language. However, two of the students whose silhouettes were analysed did not register any change in the perception of their repertoires. Namely, the

language portraits shown in Figure 5.9 and Figure 5.10 suggest that the student placed the Italian language in her head, both in the first and final silhouette, whereas the home language, Bangla, was first in the central part of the silhouette, and then in the right arm and heart.

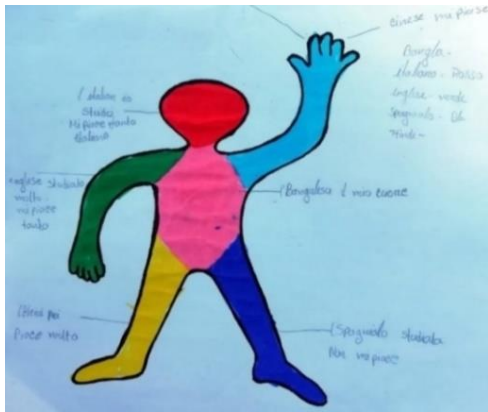


Figure 5.9

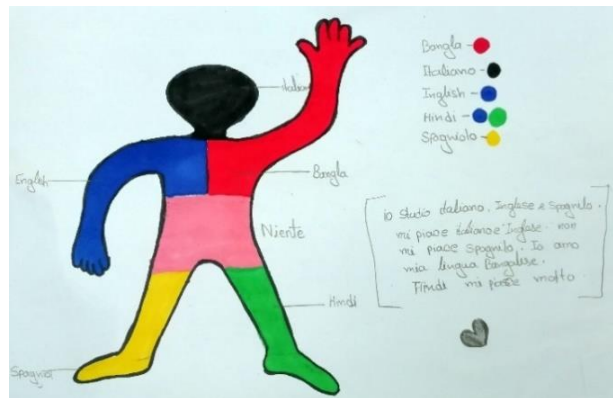


Figure 5.10

Similarly, there were no significant differences between the language portraits shown in Figure 5.11 and Figure 5.12, thus showing that the student did not change her perception about the home language and Italian, which appear in the same position, though in different colours.



Figure 5.11



Figure 5.12

5.1.4 Focus group

In the final week of the course, we conducted two focus group interviews with the students. Namely, the students were divided into two groups based on their home

language: the first interview session (focus group 1) was held with a group of five Bangladeshi students, thus sharing Bangla as the first language, while the second group interview (focus group 2) was composed of six students with different home languages, hence four Bangladeshi students and two students with, respectively, Romanian and Portuguese as a home language. As explained in chapter 4, we decided to divide the students into two different groups since we wanted to see whether we could elicit different answers from the two groups, given the differences due to their home languages.

We will now illustrate the most significant extracts from both the focus groups, reporting them in English (see the original Italian version in Appendix B). As far as the topics are concerned, five broad themes emerged from the analysis of the group interviews:

1. Classmates with same home languages (Table 5.1)
2. Classmates with different home languages (Table 5.2)
3. Use of the home language in class (Table 5.3)
4. Use of the Italian language in class (Table 5.4)
5. Learning the peers' home languages (Table 5.5)

Table 5.1 illustrates the students' comments about their perception towards classmates who speak their languages. Students from Focus group 1 particularly appreciated the opportunity to have classmates who could speak Bangla, addressing them as family members, as pointed out by student Z. («they understand my language, they are like brother or sister»), and highlighting their support in achieving a better comprehension during lessons, as expressed by student A. («when you didn't understand you can ask your peer»). Similarly, students from Focus group 2 agreed on the importance of having classmates who speak the same languages, both for achieving better comprehension and for learning Italian more easily, as claimed by student M. («it is easier when there are classmates from your country, it is easier to learn»). Nevertheless, student B., hence the Brazilian student, also alluded to the possible disadvantages of having classmates who speak your language, since such students may only use their home language with each other and not practicing the second language («it depends...it can be easier or more difficult to learn another language»).

1. Classmates with same home languages	
Focus group 1	Focus group 2
	Teacher: Do you think it is useful to have classmates who can speak your language?
Teacher: Did you like having classmates who can speak Bangla?	F: yes, because initially when I started school, I didn't understand anything, then I asked in Bangla and they helped me...at first, I didn't understand anything, now I do understand.
Z: yes, because they understand my language, they are like a brother or sister.	M: I think it is easier when there is a classmate from your country, it is easier to learn...he or she can help you.
A: yes, because when you didn't understand something you can ask your peer.	B: it depends because if there is a classmate who speaks Portuguese, I speak with him or her, but not in Italian...it can be easier or more difficult to learn another language.

Table 5.1. Focus group extract n.1

Table 5.2 shows the students' opinions about having classmates who speak different languages. Students from both Focus group 1 and Focus group 2 revealed a very positive attitude towards their peers with different home languages. For instance, student R., i.e. a Bangladeshi student, commented about the Brazilian and Moldovan peers: «they help us learn other languages», whereas student B, i.e. the Brazilian student, stated: «we can get to know other countries and cultures».

2. Classmates with different home languages	
Focus group 1	Focus group 2
Teacher: Do you think it is important to have classmates who speak different languages, such as Romanian or Portuguese?	Teacher: Do you think it is important to have classmates who speak different languages?
R: yes, because we write in Bangla and they write in Romanian or Portuguese...they help us learn	B: yes, because we can get to know different countries and cultures.
	F: yes, because when someone says something,

other languages.	we can learn what he or she said.
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Table 5.2. Focus group extract 2

In Table 5.3, it is possible to observe the students' reflections about the use and legitimisation of the home languages during lessons. As far as focus group 1 is concerned, the students expressed their gratification about their peers trying to pronounce Bangla, as stated by student Z. («I really like when they speak Bangla»), and student R. also highlighted that he liked when the teacher tried to pronounce the words in Bangla. Furthermore, students from both focus group 1 and focus group 2 seemed to appreciate the opportunity to write in their languages during class, as they all agreed on the importance of writing in their languages both for achieving better comprehension of Italian and exploring other languages, as claimed by student I. («if we don't understand something in Italian, we can look at the words in our language and then we learn») and student B. («we can learn how to write in Bangla and Romanian»).

3. Use of the home language in class	
Focus group 1	Focus group 2
<p>Teacher: Did you like it when your peers from Moldova and Brazil tried to pronounce words in Bangla?</p> <p>A: yes, this is good because they can understand a bit of Bangla.</p> <p>Z: yes, I really like it when they speak Bangla.</p> <p>R.: yes, I also liked when you [the teacher] spoke Bangla.</p> <p>Teacher: Do you think it is useful to write in your language, as you did, for instance, in the homework about your free time?</p> <p>S: yes, because if you don't understand something at first, then you understand it.</p>	<p>Teacher: Do you think it is useful to write in your languages, as you did, for instance, in the posters about family members or the group rules?</p> <p>B: Yes, because we can learn another language...for instance we can learn how to write in Bangla and Romanian, and I can write some words that I don't know in Portuguese.</p> <p>I: and if we don't understand something in Italian, we can look at the words in our language and then we learn, I think this is good.</p>

Table 5.3. Focus group extract 3

As can be observed in Table 5.4, the students further commented on the use of the Italian in class, showing different opinions within the two focus groups. Namely, student Z. underlined the importance of speaking Bangla with her peers, arguing that «if everyone speaks Italian I don't understand, this is not good»; similarly, students H. and F. agreed on the importance of using both Bangla and Italian in class. Interestingly, though, student M., namely the Moldovan student, expressed more scepticism about the use of the home language in class, arguing that «we have to learn Italian, so we have to speak Italian...we can speak our language sometimes, but the main language should be Italian».

4. Use of the Italian language in class	
Focus group 1	Focus group 2
<p>Teacher: Do you think it is better if we only speak Italian during lessons?</p> <p>Z: no, this is not good...If I ask N. “did you understand?”, she says “yes, I did”, I can ask her “please, tell me in Bangla so I can understand”, then she tells me in Bangla and I understand better. If everyone speaks in Italian I don't understand, this is not good.</p>	<p>Teacher: Do you think it is better if we only speak Italian during lessons?</p> <p>M: I think so, because we have to learn Italian, so we have to speak Italian...of course, if someone doesn't understand a word, he or she can explain in Bangla, but we have to speak Italian with each other because we have to learn...we can speak our language sometimes, but the main language should be Italian.</p> <p>H: no, both Bangla and Italian.</p> <p>F: no, only Italian no.</p>

Table 5.4. Focus group extract 4

Finally, the comments in Table 5.5 suggest that students from both focus groups developed a sense of curiosity towards the home languages of their peers. Overall, the students' attitude towards such languages is positive, as shown by student R. in focus group 1 («I like Portuguese»), or student B. in focus group 2 («I like the script of Bangla, it is very beautiful»). Nevertheless, none of the students has shown curiosity towards learning more about these languages, as shown by student M., who commented about Portuguese: «I like it, but I don't want to learn it». Thus, overall, the students did not seem particularly enthusiastic about learning their peers' languages. Yet, a new awareness and familiarity towards the languages of their peers can be observed in the

statement of student I.: «I don't want to learn them, but now if I hear someone saying words in Portuguese, I can understand that it's Portuguese».

5. Learning the peers' home languages	
Focus group 1	Focus group 2
	Teacher: Do you like the languages of your peers? Would you like to learn them?
Teacher: Do you like the languages of your peers? Would you like to learn them?	B: I like the script of Bangla, it is very beautiful.
R. yes, I like Portuguese.	I: I don't want to learn them, but now if I hear someone saying words in Portuguese I can understand that it's Portuguese...I don't understand it, but now when someone is talking I understand if it is Portuguese.
	M: I wanted to learn Portuguese, but it's hard...I like it, but I don't want to learn it.

Table 5.5. Focus group extract 5

5.2 Research results and discussion

In this paragraph, we will describe the results of our research, thus commenting on the themes that emerged from the analysis and discussing the research questions, which were respectively:

1. In what ways can translanguaging practices be implemented in a classroom of Italian as a second language for newly arrived students?
2. What is the impact of translanguaging practices on the students' attitude towards language diversity and the perception of their plurilingual repertoires?

5.2.1 Research question 1

The first research question intended to explore the types of translanguaging activities and strategies which could be implemented in a classroom of newly arrived

students of Italian as a second language, focusing on both the class works collected throughout the course and the most significant data that emerged from the teacher diary.

From the analysis of the class artefacts (§ 5.1.1), we could identify the main features of the translanguaging practices which were incorporated into the lessons. Specifically, it emerged that the activities were mainly carried out into the classroom space, namely an outdoor context, through the support of the board or posters, which would be regularly photographed and posted on the Edmodo platform. Besides, the analysis has shown that the translanguaging activities were either related to a unit of the textbook or independent. Furthermore, we could observe that the activities were particularly focused on improving the students' vocabulary and writing skills in Italian while including and enhancing their plurilingual repertoires at the same time. As regards the plurilingual objectives, the majority of the activities aimed at fostering the students' attitudes and skills, as indicated in the FREPA document (Candelier *et al.*, 2012: 38-49, 50-59), particularly encouraging their openness to language and their sensitivity towards linguistic diversity, as well as their ability to work in plurilingual groups. The students' home languages, i.e. Bangla, Romanian, and Portuguese, emerged in almost all the activities, as well as Italian, hence the target language. Moreover, all the activities started with a collective brainstorming, which was generally followed by a discussion and, in some cases, a small group work. As a result, all the activities focused on improving the students' written, oral, and interactional abilities, except for the homework activity, which was only a written task.

From the analysis of the teacher diary (§ 5.1.2), we could observe several elements, regarding both the class activities and the students' interactions during such activities. Firstly, the teacher observed that the students seemed to appreciate the opportunity to share their languages during lessons, though the shy students appeared less interested in coming up to the board or pronounce the words in their languages (Excerpt 5.1). Secondly, the teacher commented that the small group works appeared to be particularly efficient, especially when the students were asked both to work in a group and complete a drawing task (Excerpt 5.2). Interestingly, the teacher also noted the potential benefits of using an online platform such as google meet for practicing translanguaging, since the students could use the virtual chat for writing the translation of new words in their languages, and the shy students even appeared more eager to participate in the lesson (Excerpt 5.3). Moreover, the diary shows that the most successful activities were those in which the students completed their language portraits (Excerpt 5.4), but also the

activities focused on introducing the days and seasons in Italian (Excerpt 5.6), as well as the family members (Excerpt 5.7), the prepositions of location (Excerpt 5.8), and the activity regarding the rules of the group (Excerpt 5.9). According to the teacher, these activities particularly succeeded in involving the students in the lesson, by creating collective moments in which they could both reflect on their languages and share their linguistic repertoires with the peers. However, the teacher diary also suggests some problematic aspects regarding the use of the home languages in class, as shown in Excerpt 5.5 and 5.9. In fact, these excerpts show that the teacher encountered some difficulties when trying to involve the students in repeating and pronouncing the words or sentences in the home languages of their classmates, thus suggesting the difficulties of encouraging the whole class to familiarise and feel interest towards these languages.

5.2.2 Research question 2

The second research question sought to observe the impact of translanguaging practices on the students' attitude toward linguistic diversity and the perception of their linguistic repertoires, thus collecting data both through the language portraits silhouettes and the focus group interviews.

From the analysis of the students' language portraits (§ 5.1.3), it emerged that some students changed the perception of their language repertoires, especially in terms of the representation of the home language and Italian. Thus, some students have shown significant differences in the representation of such languages between the language portraits made in the first week of the course and the portrait of the final week (Figure 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8), whereas other students did not show a relevant change between the two silhouettes (Figure 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12). Therefore, of the six language portraits which were collected at the end of the course, only four revealed different colours, shapes, or positions of the students' languages, compared to the portraits made at the beginning of the course. Interestingly, the main difference between the initial and final language portraits made by the students can be observed in the representation of the home language and Italian language.

From the analysis of the focus group interviews (§ 5.1.4), we could observe some differences between focus group 1, hence the monolingual group, and focus group 2, thus the plurilingual group. From Table 5.1, it can be observed that the main differences concern the students' opinions about having classmates who speak the same languages.

All students have shown enthusiasm and gratification for this opportunity, though the Bangladeshi students in focus group 1 particularly highlighted the importance of having classmates who spoke Bangla; whereas the Brazilian student, in focus group 2, alluded to some possible disadvantages of such opportunity, which could help the students, but also prevent them from practicing the target language. Table 5.2 indicates that the students' answers from both groups appeared more homogeneous regarding the opportunity to have classmates who speak different languages, especially in terms of exploring new languages and cultures. In fact, students from both groups showed a general positive attitude towards the plurilingual dimension and language diversity of the class. These findings are consistent with those reported by Carbonara and Scibetta (2020b: 14, 17), who noticed a generalised positive perception among their interviewees regarding the translanguaging activities, as well as a plural vision of the plurilingual dimension of the class. Moreover, Table 5.3 suggests that Bangladeshi students, in focus group 1, particularly appreciated the moments in which both their peers and teacher tried to pronounce their language, and they seemed to value the opportunity to write in their languages, such as in the homework task. Similarly, when asked about the opportunity to write in their languages, such as in the posters about family members, students from focus group 2 have shown their appreciation, highlighting the importance of such strategies both for better understanding Italian and learning other languages. As regards the use of the Italian language in class, students from both groups underlined the importance of speaking not only the target language, i.e. Italian, in class but also their home language, for the reasons explained above; however, the Moldovan student was particularly critical about this aspect, claiming that the main language during lessons should be only Italian, thus implying that the use of home languages would prevent the students from learning the target language. Finally, none of the students seemed particularly interested in learning the peers' languages, thus we could not observe the development of new learning targets towards the languages of the classmates, as was instead reported by Carbonara and Scibetta (2020b: 16) regarding their research results. Nevertheless, the analysis of our focus group interviews suggests that the students developed a new awareness and sense of familiarity towards the peers' languages. This finding supports the ideas of Carbonara and Scibetta (2020a: 225; 2020b: 14), who identified the development of a new sense of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship

among their interviewees, due to the multilingual dimension of the translanguaging activities experimented through the AltRoparlante project¹³⁴.

5.3 Conclusions

In summary, the findings discussed above suggest that the implementation of translanguaging practices into a classroom of Italian as a second language may represent a positive and enriching opportunity both for the students and their teacher.

From the analysis of both the class artefacts and teacher diary, it emerged that the students' languages could be integrated into the lessons through a variety of activities and practices. Specifically, the students' languages were mainly involved in the lessons during brainstorming activities and collective discussions, which aimed at introducing new vocabulary and words in Italian while enhancing and valuing the students' home languages at the same time. Thus, the translanguaging experience in our class was mainly related to the vocabulary activities, since the main priority of the lessons was to improve the students' vocabulary knowledge, especially during the first weeks of class (see Table 3.1). Therefore, it was a natural choice for us to implement translanguaging practices during such activities. Whereas the writing and more elaborated activities were gradually introduced to the class in the second part of the course (see Table 3.1), when the students were invited to write a short essay using both Italian and their home languages, or during the small group works, in which they were asked to write simple stories and descriptions using all their resource languages. Interestingly, our findings suggest that the students seemed more involved when they could both use their languages and work in small groups, thus this learning mode turned out to be an effective method for the implementation of translanguaging practices into our class.

The analysis of the language portraits and focus group interviews shows that the students' attitude toward language diversity in the classroom was generally positive since all students seemed to appreciate the opportunity to share their languages and learn about others' languages and cultures at the same time. Interestingly, though, we observed a different attitude between the two focus groups towards the opportunity to have classmates speaking the same language. Namely, while the Bangladeshi students highlighted the importance of having classmates who spoke Bangla, the Brazilian and

¹³⁴ For more information about the L'AltRoparlante project, see § 2.3.4.

Moldovan students alluded to some possible disadvantages of such opportunity, which could facilitate the learning of the target language, but also prevent the students from truly practicing it. This finding is particularly interesting since it indicates that the Bangladeshi students had a different perception of language diversity, compared to the Moldovan and Brazilian students, who represented a minority within the class and could thus feel less empowered when using their languages in class. Moreover, as regards the students' perception of their language repertoires, we could note a difference between the portraits made by some students at the beginning and during the final week of course. Namely, some of the drawings made in the final week show different colours, shapes, or positions, which suggest a new perspective about both the home language and Italian, represented more positively and harmonically within the silhouette, compared to the language portraits made at the beginning. This result may be explained by the positive impact of translanguaging practices on the students, which could have changed their perception of both the Italian language and their resource languages, leading to a new perspective of their plurilingual repertoires, in which Italian does not simply represent a foreign language, but rather a familiar element within the students' linguistic repertoires.

5.4 Limitations and further research

The research results shown in the previous section suggest that the implementation of translanguaging in a classroom of Italian L2 contributes to the development of a positive learning experience for the students. However, some important limitations need to be considered.

First, the methodological approach taken in our research was qualitative-oriented, thus we did not aim at providing generalisations or confirming hypotheses about the implementation of translanguaging pedagogy in a classroom of Italian L2. As a result, the analysis of data was subjective and interpretive, and the results should be interpreted with caution. Therefore, further research might explore the implementation of translanguaging into a classroom of Italian as a second language using quantitative methods, such as questionnaires, or other qualitative instruments, such as observation fields or interviews.

Secondly, our research was limited by the classroom environment. The lessons were conducted mainly in an outdoor context, which was naturally limited in terms of

class space and tools, thus preventing us from creating a real linguistic schoolscape and leading us to the use of an online platform, e.g. Edmodo, as a virtual linguistic schoolscape. Thus, it would be interesting for further research to implement translanguaging pedagogy in a normal classroom environment, and observe the potential benefits of indoor classroom space, compared to the outdoor context.

Another significant limitation was the limited use of the Edmodo platform in terms of the promotion and enhancement of the students' plurilingual identities and language awareness (Gorter, 2017; Scibetta, 2019). In fact, Edmodo was used merely as a tool for displaying the class works and activities of the students; however, we did not particularly encouraged the students to share their languages on the platform, thus inviting them to write comments or posts using all their resource languages. In other words, we did not use the platform as a potential tool for enhancing the students' plurilingual identities. Therefore, it would be interesting for further research to experiment the use of the Edmodo platform in a more constructive and enriching modality, which could involve the students' languages by encouraging them to share their plurilingual repertoires in a virtual modality.

Furthermore, an important limitation lies in time restrictions, since the language course lasted only two months, thus preventing us from implementing translanguaging pedagogy at a more advanced and elaborated level, which could involve the students' families for storytelling moments, or the elaboration of more structured class works. Therefore, future research might concentrate on the implementation of translanguaging practices in a long-term course of Italian as a second language.

Finally, a significant limitation of our study was the structure of the focus group interviews, since from the questions it did not emerge whether the translanguaging practices had an impact on the students' identities, in terms of a new sense of empowerment and pride towards their plurilingual repertoires (Carbonara and Scibetta, 2020b: 13). Thus, future research may examine more closely the correlation between the implementation of translanguaging practices and the students' perception of the positive and empowering value of their plurilingual repertoires (García *et al.*, 2017: 76).

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APPENDIX A

TEACHER DIARY

Durante la lezione, gli studenti hanno risposto positivamente alla richiesta di scrivere alla lavagna le parole nelle proprie lingue, anche se alcuni erano meno volenterosi ad alzarsi (soprattutto gli studenti più introversi). In generale, gli studenti sembravano contenti di poter scrivere le loro lingue sulla lavagna, e l'atmosfera era rilassata, sia quando chiamavo alla lavagna sia quando anche io ripetevvo le parole nelle loro lingue. Sembravano orgogliosi di poter insegnare la pronuncia della loro lingua, e divertiti dal fatto di poter comunicare liberamente con i compagni.

Excerpt 5.1: Comment on the use of home languages during lessons

Il lavoro in piccoli gruppi si conferma finora il miglior metodo per svolgere le attività in classe, soprattutto se il lavoro in gruppo è unito alla dimensione del disegno, dato che il disegno in gruppo sembra un'ottima strategia per coinvolgere tutti nelle attività.

Excerpt 5.2: Comment on small group works

Durante l'attività di lettura e comprensione del testo svolta online, ho cercato di coinvolgere gli studenti nel tradurre alcune parole nelle loro lingue, sia per facilitare la comprensione di nuove parole, sia quando volevo che riflettessero sulle differenze e similarità tra la loro lingua e l'Italiano. Ho notato che alcuni hanno scritto spontaneamente la traduzione nella chat di google meet, come se stessero scrivendo su una lavagna virtuale. Ho chiesto ad alcuni volontari di ripetere le parole nelle lingue dei compagni e ho notato con piacere che una studentessa di solito timida era particolarmente attiva e partecipe durante questo esercizio.

Excerpt 5.3: Comment on translanguaging during online classes

L'attività è andata molto bene, anche se è stato un po' difficile spiegare e farmi capire all'inizio, ma disegnare la mia silhouette è stato utile per far capire meglio l'attività agli studenti. Penso che l'attività sia piaciuta a tutti, perché è stata un'occasione per riflettere sulle proprie lingue in modo diverso e innovativo. A giudicare dalle loro espressioni, abbinare una lingua ad una parte del corpo sembrava strano o un po' spiazzante all'inizio, però allo stesso tempo divertente e coinvolgente. Mi premeva che riflettessero su di sé e sulle loro lingue. Credo che il fine sia stato raggiunto e che l'attività sia piaciuta a tutti.

Excerpt 5.4: Comment on the activity «The language portraits»

Vorrei riuscire a coinvolgere di più gli studenti a ripetere le parole nelle diverse lingue, perché finora quando sono emerse sono stata solo io a ripeterle. Vorrei riuscire a coinvolgere tutta la classe in questa attività, così che gli studenti possano familiarizzare con le lingue dei compagni.

Excerpt 5.5: Comment on the moments of languages' sharing

Il brainstorming su giorni, mesi e stagioni è stato positivo: tutti hanno partecipato attivamente e volentieri; per la prima volta ho sentito gli studenti Bangladeshi ripetere alcune parole in Portoghese e Rumeno. L'ampliamento sulle stagioni nei loro paesi ha reso la lezione coinvolgente e stimolante per tutti. Abbiamo notato la somiglianza tra le parole in Rumeno, Italiano e Portoghese.

Excerpt 5.6: Comment on the activity «I giorni» and «Le stagioni»

Il brainstorming sulla famiglia di Tommy è riuscito bene: sono emersi i diversi termini per indicare le parentele nelle loro lingue, ed è stato interessante notare le somiglianze tra i vari nomi, ma anche vedere quanti termini esistono per indicare le parentele nelle varie lingue. Gli studenti erano coinvolti, soprattutto durante l'attività di costruzione degli alberi, in cui sembravano tutti coinvolti e divertiti. L'aver messo tutti gli alberi su un unico cartellone, poi pubblicato su Edmodo, ha reso l'attività ancora più collettiva e dinamica.

Excerpt 5.7: Comment on the activity «La famiglia»

L'attività con le preposizioni di luogo è riuscita bene: sono riuscita a far venire alla lavagna tutti per tradurre nelle loro lingue. In più, si è verificato un episodio positivo: ho chiesto ad alcuni studenti di ripetere le parole sulla lavagna, quindi nelle lingue dei compagni, e lo studente Moldavo si ricordava la pronuncia corretta di una parola in Bangla, il che ha lasciato piacevolmente sorpresi gli studenti Bangladeshi.

Excerpt 5.8: Comment on the activity «Le preposizioni di luogo»

Questa attività è stata la più interattiva e coinvolgente finora; infatti, gli studenti hanno condiviso le proprie lingue tra loro, ma anche messo in pratica nuove parole ed espressioni usando le lingue dei compagni. Quando gli studenti hanno finito di scrivere sui cartellini, ho chiesto ad alcuni di leggere le parole e le frasi ad alta voce nelle proprie lingue, ma spesso ero solo io a ripetere le parole, quindi non è stato facile coinvolgere tutti. Dopo, però, sono riuscita a creare un momento particolarmente collettivo, quando ho chiesto agli studenti di pronunciare e dirsi le frasi gentili in tutte le lingue, pronunciandole in base alle indicazioni dei compagni.

Excerpt 5.9: Comment on the activity «Le regole del gruppo»

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP

1. Compagni di classe con la stessa L1

Focus group 1	Focus group 2
	Insegnante: Secondo voi è utile avere compagni di classe che parlano la vostra lingua?
Insegnante: Vi è piaciuto avere compagni che parlano Bangla?	F.: sì, perché quando ho iniziato la scuola non capivo nulla, poi ho chiesto in Bangla e loro mi hanno aiutato...prima io non capivo nulla, adesso sì.
Z.: sì, perché loro capiscono la mia lingua, loro sono come un fratello o sorella.	M: sì, secondo me è più facile quando c'è un compagno del tuo paese, è più facile imparare...l'altro può aiutare.
A.: sì, perché quando non hai capito una cosa chiedi a un compagno.	B: più o meno, perché se c'è un compagno che parla Portoghese, parlo con lui o lei ma non parlo Italiano...può essere più facile o più difficile per imparare un'altra lingua.

Table 5.1. Focus group extract 1

2. Compagni di classe con lingue diverse

Focus group 1	Focus group 2
Insegnante: Secondo voi è importante avere compagni di classe che parlano lingue diverse, come il Portoghese o Rumeno?	Insegnante: Secondo voi è importante avere compagni di classe che parlano lingue diverse?
R: sì, perché se abbiamo scritto in Bangla loro hanno scritto in un'altra lingua, come Rumeno e Portoghese...aiutano a imparare anche un'altra lingua.	B: sì, perché conosciamo tutti i paesi e le culture diverse.
	F: sì, perché quando qualcuno dice qualcosa possiamo imparare che cosa ha detto.

Table 5.2. Focus group extract 2

3. Uso della L1 in classe

Focus group 1	Focus group 2
Insegnante: Vi è piaciuto quando i vostri compagni della Moldavia e del Brasile hanno provato a pronunciare parole in Bangla?	Insegnante: Secondo voi è utile scrivere nelle vostre lingue, come avete fatto, ad esempio, nei cartelloni sulla famiglia o sulle regole del gruppo?
A: sì, questo è buono, perché loro capiscono un po' Bangla.	
Z: sì, mi piace molto quando loro parlano Bangla.	B: sì, perché conosciamo un'altra lingua...per esempio impariamo come si scrive anche in Bangla o Rumeno, e alcune parole che non so le scrivo in Portoghese.
R.: sì, mi è piaciuto anche quando lei [l'insegnante] ha parlato Bangla.	I: e anche quando qualcuno non capisce qualcosa in Italiano guarda la sua lingua e capisce cosa c'è scritto, impara...questo è buono.
Insegnante: Secondo voi è importante scrivere nelle vostre lingue, come avete fatto, ad esempio, nei compiti sul tempo libero?	
S.: sì, perché se all'inizio non capisci qualcosa, poi capisci meglio.	

Table 5.3. Focus group extract 3

4. Uso della L2 in classe

Focus group 1	Focus group 2
	Insegnante: Secondo voi è meglio parlare solo in Italiano a lezione?
Insegnante: Secondo voi è meglio parlare solo in Italiano a lezione?	M: secondo me sì, perché dobbiamo imparare Italiano, quindi dobbiamo parlare Italiano...certo, quando qualcuno non capisce una parola può spiegare in Bangla, ma dobbiamo parlare in Italiano tra noi perché dobbiamo imparare...possiamo parlare la nostra lingua qualche volta, ma la lingua di base deve essere l'Italiano.
Z: no, questo non va bene...Se io chiedo a N. "tu hai capito?", lei dice "sì ho capito", io dico "dai dimmi in Bangla così capisco meglio"...lei dice in Bangla e io capisco meglio. Se tutti parlano Italiano io non capisco, questo non va bene.	H: no, Bangla e Italiano. F: solo Italiano no.

Table 5.4. Focus group extract 4

5. Imparare le lingue dei compagni

Focus group 1

Focus group 2

Teacher: Vi piacciono le lingue dei vostri compagni? Le vorreste imparare?

R.: sì, mi piace il Portoghese.

Insegnante: Vi piacciono le lingue dei vostri compagni? Le vorreste imparare?

B: mi piace la scrittura del Bangla, è molto bella.
I: non voglio impararle, ma quando qualcuno dice parole in Portoghese capisco che questa è lingua Portoghese...non la capisco, ma quando qualcuno parla io capisco che è lingua Portoghese.

M: volevo imparare Portoghese, ma è difficile...mi piace, ma non voglio impararlo.

Table 5.5. Focus group extract 5