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**The use of stratification in a Mixed Abilities Class to facilitate note-taking
in Italian L2 during Geography lessons:
A case study conducted in an after-school laboratory for migrant students.**

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Abstract

This thesis aims at investigating some strategies useful for learning how to take notes in Italian as a second language during Geography lessons. This research project was conducted within a mixed abilities class, with first-generation migrant students with low levels of language proficiency, enrolled in the third year of Middle School. In order to operate in such a scenario, stratification was employed as a major strategy.

This thesis is composed of two parts: The first part provides a theoretical framework about the phenomenon of migration, language facilitation, the two language dimensions of BICS and CALP and strategies for studying in a second language. The second part presents our case study. The first chapter presents the reference framework, namely the migratory situation in Italy and in Venice, and the FAMI VOCI Project. The second chapter deals with the concepts of mixed abilities class, linguistic facilitation and linguistic facilitator. The third chapter provides an overview of the concepts of BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) and presents some strategies for studying in Italian as a second language, focussing on note-taking; furthermore, it deals with simplification and facilitation, differentiation and stratification. The fourth chapter presents the case study, describing the method employed, the participants and the data collection tools. The fifth and sixth chapter provide respectively the data analysis and discussion. Finally, the seventh chapter provides some proposals of learning units to learn note-taking in Italian L2 when studying Geography.

Introduction

Motivation for this research project, which was carried out during my university internship in an Ital2 laboratory for first-generation migrant students enrolled in the third year of Middle School, arose when I first met “my” students.

This research project was carried out under the supervision of Professor Graziano Serragiotto and of postdoctoral research fellow Valeria Tonioli.

After having understood students’ linguistic and scholastic situation, and their difficulties in studying in Ital2, we tried to identify a topic which would be meaningful for them, and which would give them the possibility to apply stratification, a strategy I had learnt during the course in Didactics of Italian Language L1, L2, LS, held by Professor Graziano Serragiotto.

In this research project, we tried to investigate our students’ knowledge of learning strategies, above all we focussed on note taking, as, from our point of view, this is a fundamental skill and strategy to develop, especially with students who are going to be enrolled in High School. Note taking, as we will see, is one of the skills that students should possess for studying, and, at the same time, it is a fundamental learning strategy employed by students to learn academic language and content. We were interested in observing whether it was possible for students with low proficiency levels to develop such a skill and strategy. Moreover, note taking activities were carried out during Geography lessons, as we knew that many of our students did not study it in their countries of origin. Finally, stratification was chosen as it is a facilitation strategy that gives the possibility to work on a common input and, at the same time, to respect students’ zones of proximal development.

This thesis is composed of two parts: The first part provides a theoretical framework whereas the second part presents our case study. The first part, which provides the reference framework, is composed of three chapters. Chapter 1 presents an overview of the worldwide and European migratory situation, the Italian and Venetian migratory situation, the Covid-19 pandemic in Italy, some legislation concerning scholastic integration of migrant students, and the FAMI VOCI Project. Chapter 2 will present the topics of Italian as a second language, Mixed Abilities Classes, the concept of linguistic facilitation, and the figure of linguistic facilitator in L2 laboratories. Chapter 3 will deal with the two language dimensions of BICS and CALP, will present some strategies for

learning in a second language, especially focussing on note taking, and will deal with simplification and facilitation, differentiation and stratification.

The second part of this thesis is composed of four chapters and will present our research. Chapter 4 presents our case study, describing the method employed, the participants and the data collection tools. In chapter 4, we will present our research questions, which will be anticipated here:

- **RQ 1:** What learning strategies do our students already know? Were they taught those strategies in their countries of birth and/or in Italy? Do they already know to take notes?

- **RQ 2:** What facilitating actions may be employed in order for students to learn and develop note taking in Ital2?

- **RQ 3:** Can stratification be useful in order for students to learn and develop note taking in Ital2?

Chapters 5 and 6 will provide respectively the data analysis and discussion. Finally, chapter 7 provides some proposals of learning units to learn note-taking in Italian L2 when studying Geography.

In the conclusion, we will try to answer our research questions.

Part one: Theoretical Framework

1. Reference Framework

This first chapter acts as a contextual framework for our research project: A case study which took place in the Municipality of Venice and involved students from migrant backgrounds during their process of integration in the host society. For this reason, this chapter will deal with two important topics: Migration and Integration.

Migration is a global phenomenon, thus a brief large-scale overview of the migratory situation around the world will be presented (1.1). Then, little by little, the chapter will zoom into Europe (1.1) and Italy (1.2). As far as Italy is concerned, both the overall migrant population and students from migrant backgrounds (1.3) will be taken into account. The chapter will then zoom into a regional and provincial context and will deal with Veneto and Venice (1.4). In 1.5, there will be presented the first data available on the impact of Covid-19 on migration flows and school. The topic of integration, in line with the purpose of our research project, will be discussed in 1.6 with respect to school. Finally, in 1.7, the chapter will zoom into a more precise contextual framework: the FAMI VOCI Project.

1.1 A brief overview of the worldwide and European migratory situation

Although international migration is not a new phenomenon and people on the move have always been part of our societies, from the turn of the millennium, on average, the number of people moving from one country to another has been growing annually.

2020 started with the outbreak of Covid-19, “a new coronavirus, which has not been previously identified in humans” (World Health Organization, n.d.). From its first occurrence on 31 December 2019 in Wuhan, People’s Republic of China, the virus has been spreading worldwide at a fast rate and on 11 March 2020 the World Health Organization declared that Covid-19 could be defined as a pandemic. This has led many countries to adopt movement restrictions. As we can imagine, and as confirmed by scientific literature, this has had an impact on international migration. United Nations (2020), despite recognising the current difficulty to understand the actual impact of Covid-19 on international migration flows, estimated that international migrants decreased by around 2 million around the world by mid-2020.

However, given the peculiar features of what the world has been experiencing since the beginning of 2020, in order to give a brief overview of migration flows, a longer-term trend will now be taken into account. According to the *World Migration Report 2000*, “more than 150 million international migrants celebrated the turn of the millennium outside their countries of birth” (p.3)¹ and highlights the importance of international migration during the twentieth century. The same *Report* predicts a similar migratory trend for the twenty-first century as well. Data collected on international migrants² by the Population Division of United Nations’ Department of Economic and Social Affairs during these twenty years confirmed this prediction: In the past few decades, an ever-growing number of people have left their countries of birth or citizenship to reach another country, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. International migrant stock³ at mid-year, 1990-2020⁴.

Reference year	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
International migrants worldwide	152.986.157	161.289.976	173.230.585	191.446.828	220.983.187	247.958.644	280.598.105

Source: Data were extrapolated from United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). *International Migrant Stock 2020*.

As can be seen from the table, the worldwide presence of international migrants has been increasingly growing, especially from the turn of the millennium, more precisely from 2005. As a matter of fact, the growth registered in the period between 2005 and 2020 (+89.151.277), despite a slight deceleration between 2010 and 2015, overduplicated the growth registered in the period between 1990 and 2005 (+38.460.671). Labour and family have been identified as the two main driving forces for such a growth (OECD, 2020). Moreover, from the turn of the millennium, due to humanitarian crisis in different parts of the globe, the world has experienced also a growth in the number of refugees and asylum seekers (+17.304.079), reaching an estimated 33.807.795 people (United Nations, 2020).

¹ The *International Migration Stock 2020* estimates for the year 2000 the presence of 173.230.585 international migrants at mid-year.

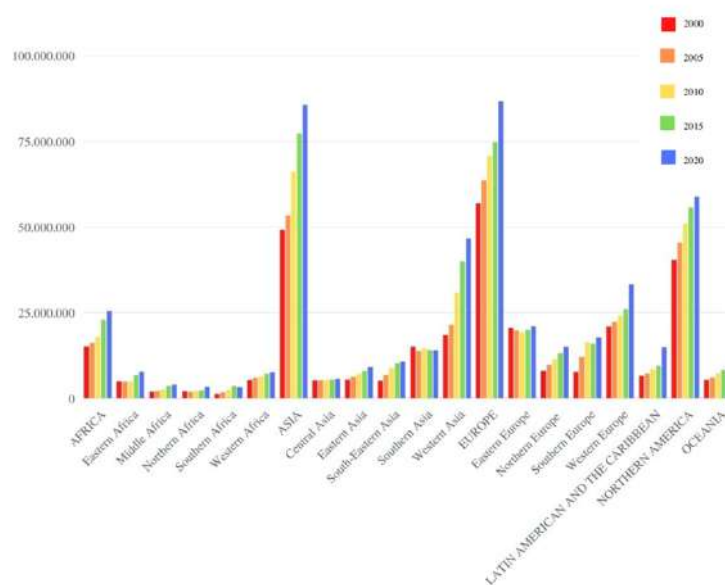
² Defined as “persons who are either living in a country other than their country of birth or in a country other than their country of citizenship” (United Nations, DESA, Population Division, 2019, p.3).

³ Stock refers to the estimates of the number. These data, as specified by United Nations, based on national statistics, have collected through population censuses. Information on the number and composition of international migrants has been retrieved from population registers and nationally representative surveys.

⁴ The *Documentation of the International Migrant Stock 2020* clarifies that “estimates refer to 1 July of the reference year 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015 and 2020” (p.4).

International migration is a worldwide yet heterogeneous phenomenon in terms of territorial distribution, as shown in graph 1.

Graph 1. Territorial distribution of international migrant stock at mid-year, 2000-2020.



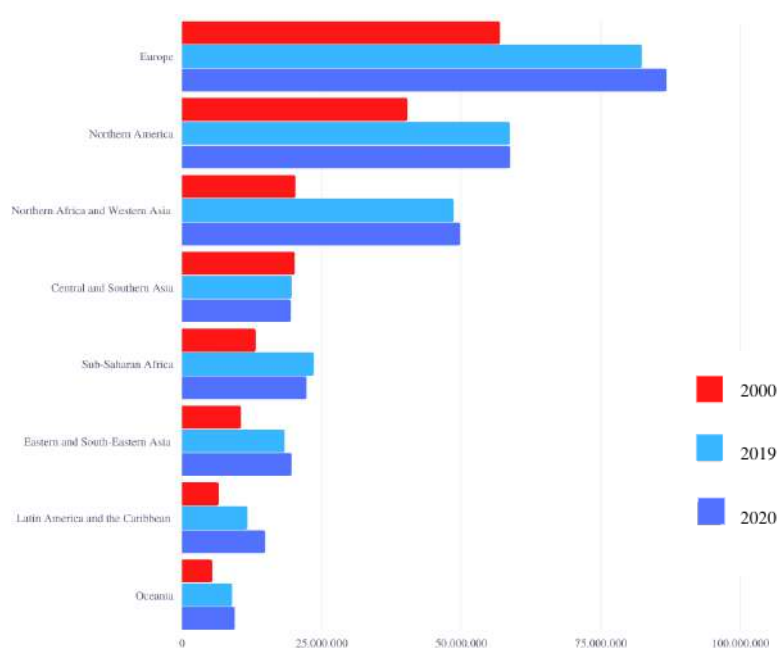
Source: Data were extrapolated from United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). *International Migrant Stock 2020*.

Between 2000 and 2020, on average, Europe has been the continent hosting the largest number of international migrants, reaching an estimated 86.706.068 people in 2020. Only in 2015 did Europe not occupy the first position, as it was surpassed by Asia, which at the time was hosting an estimated 77.191.249 international migrants. On average, in 2020, 30,9% of all international migrants were hosted in Europe, 30,5% in Asia, 20,9% in Northern America; Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Oceania hosted a small proportion of all international migrants, respectively 9,1%, 5,3% and 3,3%⁵.

In order to compare data for the pre-pandemic year 2019 and for the year 2020, the regions of destination were grouped following the same criterion used in the *International Migration Report 2019* (2019), as shown in graph 2.

⁵ These percentages were calculated using the data extrapolated from the *International Migrant Stock 2020*.

Graph 2. Territorial distribution of international migrant stock at mid-year, 2000, 2019, 2020⁶



Source: Data for the year 2019 were extrapolated from United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). *International Migrant Stock 2019*.

Data for the years 2000 and 2020 were extrapolated from United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). *International Migrant Stock 2020*.

At the beginning of the new Millennium, more than a half of all international migrants lived in Europe (56.858.793) and Northern America (40.351.710). These two geopolitical areas were followed by Northern Africa and Western Asia, which hosted an estimated 20.321.397 international migrants. 20 years later, this scenario has not changed. As a matter of fact, both during the pre-pandemic year and until mid-2020, these three geopolitical areas still occupied the podium. As far as the 4th-to-6th positions are concerned, in the three years taken into account, the scenario changed slightly. In 2000, Central and Southern Asia was the fourth geopolitical area hosting the largest number of international migrants (20.139.825). During these two decades, contrarily to what happened in all the other geopolitical areas, the number of international migrants decreased (19.627.025, occupying the 5th position in 2019; 19.427.576, occupying the 6th position in 2020). Sub-Saharan Africa⁷, in 2000, occupied the fifth position (13.151.229),

⁶ Both data for 2019 and 2020 are taken into account, for a pre-pandemic and pandemic overview, as data are relative to mid-year.

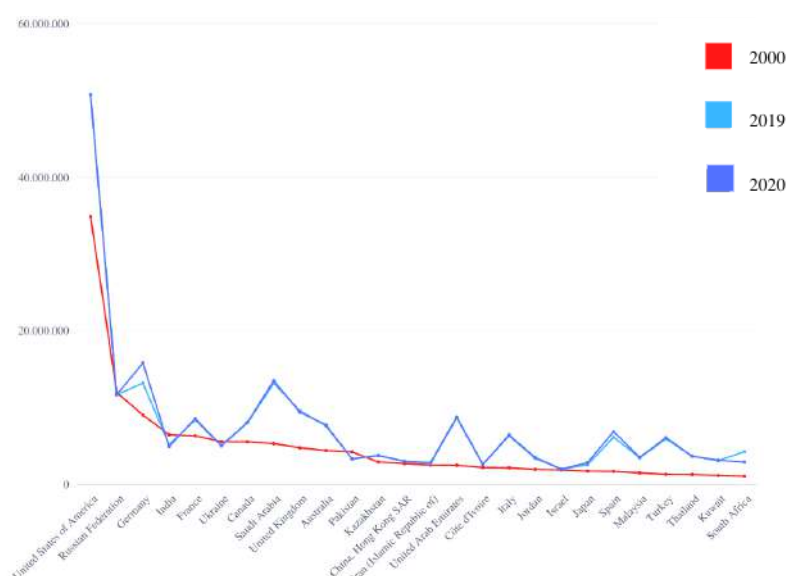
⁷ Sub-Saharan Africa includes Eastern Africa, Middle Africa, Southern Africa and Western Africa.

whereas during 2019 and 2020 it gained ground, despite a slight decrease in the number of international migrants in 2020 (23.573.485 in 2019; 22.221.538 in 2020). It was followed by Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, which hosted 10.506.212 in 2000 and 18.296.631 in 2019. Only in 2020 did it gain one position, by hosting 19.591.106 international migrants and, therefore, by surpassing Central and Southern Asia. Latin America and the Caribbean and Oceania, during these two decades, remained the geopolitical areas hosting the lowest numbers of international migrants (respectively 6.539.738 and 5.361.681 in 2000; 11.673.288 and 8.927.925 in 2019; 14.794.623 and 9.380.653 in 2020).

Between 2000 and 2020, all geopolitical areas registered an increase in the number of international migrants, being Europe the first one, with a growth by 29.847.275 people. An exception is given by Central and Southern Asia, which in two decades lost an estimated 712.249 international migrants. By looking at a shorter time period, i.e. between 2019 and 2020, Europe was still the geopolitical region registering the greatest increase in its migrant stock (+ 4.401.529 international migrants), whereas it was Sub-Saharan Africa who registered the greatest loss (- 1.351.947 international migrants).

In 2020, 20 countries were hosting two thirds of all international migrants (United Nations, 2020), a tendency which can be observed also in 2000. Graph 3 takes into account the years 2000, 2019 and 2020 and shows how the scenario has changed.

Graph 3. Twenty countries with the largest number of international migrant stock, 2000, 2019 and 2020.⁸



Source: Data for the year 2019 were extrapolated from United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). *International Migrant Stock 2019*.

Data for the years 2000 and 2020 were extrapolated from United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). *International Migrant Stock 2020*.

The graph shows the dynamicity characterising migration flows during the years. As a matter of fact, during these 20 years, international migrants' destinations have changed. The red line shows a linear trend, as the graph was constructed starting from data for the year 2000. The two lines for the years 2019 and 2020 show a completely different situation. The only common feature is that, during these two decades, United States of America have maintained their role as the country hosting the largest number of international migrants. During these twenty years, their migrant stock increased by around 16 million, even though between 2019 and 2020 it lost around 28.313 international migrants. Countries such as China, Iran, Côte d'Ivoire, Israel and Jordan do not belong to the list any longer and, in 2019, were substituted by Spain, Malaysia, Turkey, Thailand, South Africa. The latter, which lost more than a million international migrants in just one year, was substituted by Kuwait in 2020. Between 2000 and 2019, Spain and Turkey, which did not belong to this classification in 2000, gained respectively 10 and 11 positions. The countries which remained in the list during the two decades taken into account either gained or lost some positions, showing a dynamic trend, as mentioned

⁸ The graph represents twenty-six countries as it combines the first twenty countries for each year taken into consideration.

above. By considering a short time period, i.e. the time period between 2019 and 2020, the scenario appears to be more static, especially in the first 9 positions⁹ of this classification, slightly more dynamic in the last 11 positions¹⁰. Among the first 10 countries, in all three years taken into account, a half were European countries.

A brief overview of European (EU) migratory situation will now be presented.

Data have shown how Europe is the area hosting the largest number of international migrants. As far as the European Union is concerned, the more recent data are relative to 2018 and 2019, therefore they do not capture the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. On 1 January 2019, the foreign population living in one of the 28 European countries¹¹ amounted to 41.329.537, representing 8,0% of the total population. Of these, 23.401.580 people came from non-EU countries and 17.927.957 people were European citizens living in another EU country (D'Angelo, A., 2020). During 2019, an estimated 4.897.041 people immigrated to one of the EU Member States (Eurostat, 2021). The first five EU countries registering the largest increase in their stock during 2019 were Germany (+886.341), Spain (+750.480), United Kingdom (+680.906), France (+385.591) and Italy (+332.778) (Eurostat, 2021).

In terms of territorial distribution, migration in the European Union reflects the aforementioned worldwide migratory situation: The foreign population is heterogeneously distributed across all EU Member States, as shown in graph 4.

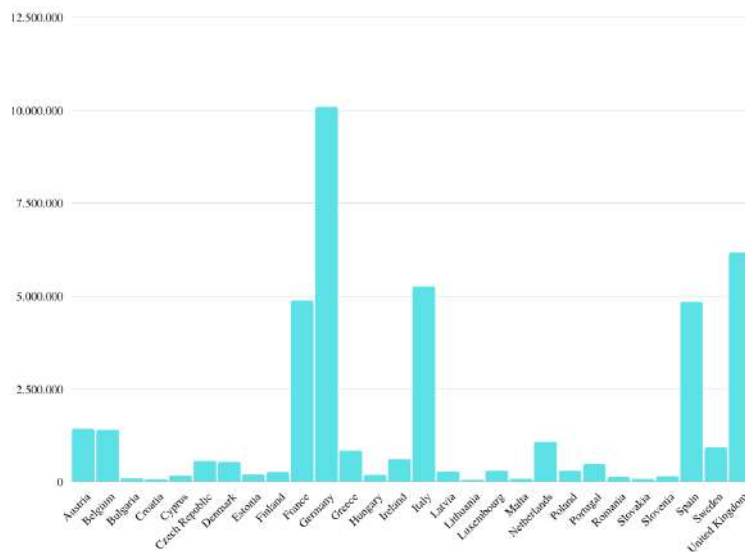
⁹ In order from the first position to the ninth position: United States of America, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, France, Canada, Australia.

¹⁰ In order from the tenth position to the twentieth position (2019): Italy, Spain, Turkey, India, Ukraine, South Africa, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Malaysia, Jordan, Pakistan.

In order from the tenth position to the twentieth position (2020): Spain, Italy, Turkey, Ukraine, India, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Malaysia, Jordan, Pakistan, Kuwait.

¹¹ These data still include United Kingdom, as it left the European Union on 31 January 2020.

Graph 4. Territorial distribution of foreign population across EU Member States (absolute values), 1 January 2019.

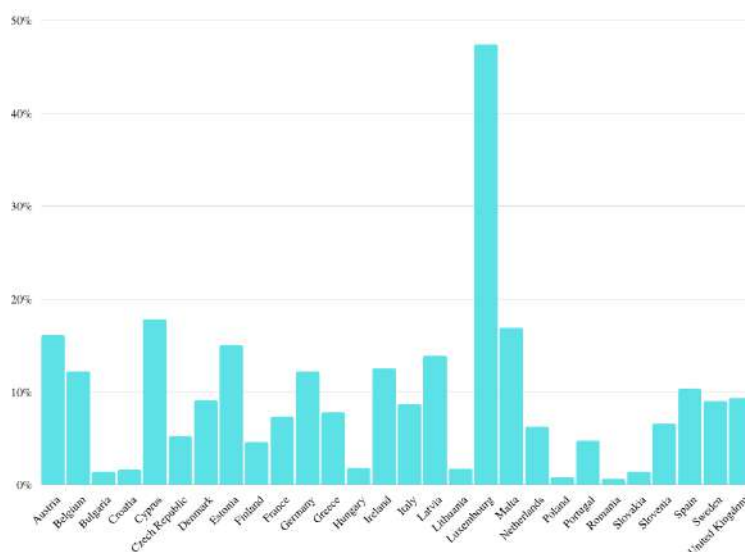


Source: Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS. Elaboration of Eurostat data.

The graph shows a territorial distribution which is far from being homogeneous. As a matter of fact, only five EU countries hosted three quarters of all foreign people living in the European Union. These countries were Germany (10.089.292), United Kingdom (6.171.948), Italy (5.255.503), France (4.882.614) and Spain (4.840.207) (D'Angelo, A., 2020).

A completely different scenario appears when taking into account migrants as a percentage of the entire population in each EU country, as shown in the following graph.

Graph 5. Migrants as a percentage of total population in EU-28 Member States, 1 January 2019.



Source: Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS. Elaboration of Eurostat data.

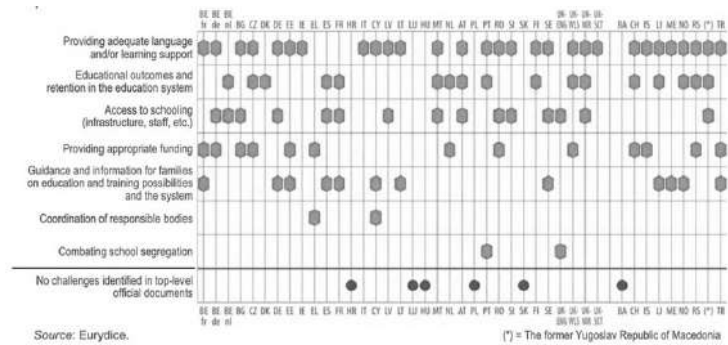
The highest percentages were registered in small EU Member States. In this graph especially one percentage stands out. It is the datum concerning Luxembourg, a country where migrants represented 47,4% of the total population. Luxembourg was followed by Cyprus and Malta, even though their percentages were lower, respectively 17,8% and 16,9% (D’Angelo, A., 2020).

As far as the younger population is concerned, as reported by UNHCR, UNICEF, & IOM (2019), on 31 December 2018, there were an estimated 6.653.722 children and adolescents from migrant backgrounds living in EU+¹² countries. In the same period, 6,6% of total school-age children and adolescents were of migrant backgrounds, born either in another EU+ country or outside the EU+. Their territorial distribution reflected that discussed before: A lot of students of non-EU+ origin were hosted in Germany (688.669), the United Kingdom (569.308), France (555.192), Spain (492.520) and Italy (389.180). In such a scenario, as highlighted by the European Commission (2019), the integration of students from migrant backgrounds into European education systems is of primary importance, as “a student who is well-integrated into the education system both academically and socially has more chance of reaching their potential” (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019, p.31). In this respect, EU Member States have developed different models in order to integrate children and adolescents from migrant backgrounds. In order to achieve this goal, EU education systems faced, on average, seven

¹² EU+ refers to EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

main challenges, as maintained by data collected by Eurydice and reported by European Commission (2019). These challenges are presented in graph 6.

Graph 6. Main challenges faced by EU education systems in integrating children and adolescents from migrant background in schools.



Source: European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019, p.55.

Across all EU Member States, the main challenge refers to adequate language and/or learning support. This is comprehensible as the knowledge of the language of instruction is of vital importance for students' success. As a matter of fact, language barriers have been identified as one of the causes for low performance and early-school-leaving phenomena (UNHCR, UNICEF, & IOM, 2019). Adequate language support has been provided by establishing additional classes, either during school hours or extracurricular hours, or both. Among all EU Member States which have acted in this direction, in order to improve students' competence in the language of instruction, there is Italy, which represents the national context for our case study.

1.2 Migratory situation in Italy

As for European Union, the more recent data are relative to 2019 and were issued by Istat, the Italian National Institute of Statistics. Data show that the demographic situation in Italy with respect to Italian citizens is characterised by a negative trend. As a matter of fact, between 2011 and 2019, Italian population lost an estimated 800 thousand Italian citizens. Whereas, by considering the total population, including also foreign citizens, it can be noted that, between these eight years, the population slightly increased (+207.744 people). This small growth is due to the presence of people from migrant backgrounds living in the Italian territory, presence which grew by around 1 million during the considered time period. On 1 January 2019, there were an estimated 4.996.158 foreign

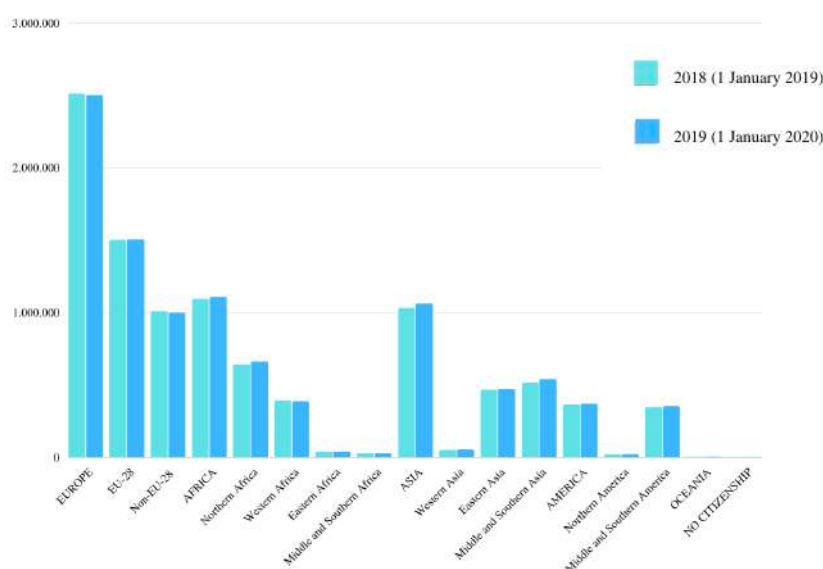
citizens living in Italy and by the end of the same year they became 5.039.637, representing 8,4% of the total population (Istat, 2020).

As far as migratory trends are concerned, Italy experienced a growth in the number of immigrants during the first decade of the new millennium, almost tripling between 2001 and 2011 (+2.692.738), and between 2015 and 2017, due to humanitarian crisis and migration flows from countries on the Mediterranean coast. Since 2018, migration flows have started decreasing. This trend continued in 2019, also as a consequence of the *Security Decree*¹³ (2018), which modified previous decrees on immigration, international protection and public security. In 2019, in fact, an estimated 265.000 foreign citizens immigrated to Italy, corresponding to a 7,3% loss with respect to 2018. (Istat, 2020). Data for 2020 will almost certainly show a decline in the number of immigrants, as a consequence of Covid-19 (Silvestrini, A., 2020).

1.2.1 Citizenship of migrant population

Between 2018 and 2019, in Italy there could be found around 195 nationalities (Istat, 2020). Graph 7 shows the continents and geopolitical areas of origin of the foreign citizens living in Italy on 1 January 2019 and 1 January 2020.

Graph 7. Continents and geopolitical areas of citizenship, 1 January 2019 and 1 January 2020.



Source: Data extrapolated from Istat (n.d.). *Stranieri residenti al 1° gennaio – Cittadinanza: Italia, regioni, province – Area geopolitica di cittadinanza.*

¹³ Decreto Sicurezza (Ddl 840/2018).

As can be seen from the graph, in both years, almost a half of all migrants living in Italy were European citizens (50,2% in 2018, 49,6% in 2019). Africa and Asia were areas of citizenship of around 43% of all foreign people (respectively 22% and 21% in both years). Lower percentages were registered for America and Oceania, respectively 7,3% and 0,04%. People with no citizenship represented only 0,01% of all migrants. By considering the geopolitical areas, it can be noted that some areas were more represented than others. This was the case of the European Union (around 60% of all European citizens in both years), Northern Africa (around 59% of all African citizens in both years), Middle and Southern Asia (around 50% of all Asian citizens in both years), Eastern Asia (around 45% of all Asian citizens in both years), and Middle and Southern America (around 95% of all American citizens in both years) (Istat, n.d.)¹⁴.

Although in Italy 195 different nationalities could be found, in 2019 63,5% (62,7% in 2018) of all foreign citizens living in the Italian territory came from only ten countries. In 2019, Rumania was the only EU Member State in this classification and represented 22,7% of all foreign citizens in Italy (22,9% in 2018). It was followed by Albania and Morocco (respectively 8,4% and 8,2% in 2019; 8,5% and 8,1% in 2018). The fifth position was occupied by another European country, Ukraine, which, in 2019, represented 4,5% of all foreign citizens (4,6% in 2018). In 2019, five Asian countries belonged to this list, namely China (5,7% in both years), Philippines (3,1% in 2019; 3,2% in 2018), India (3% in 2019; 2,9% in 2018), Bangladesh (2,7% in 2019; 2,6% in 2018) and Pakistan (2,4% in 2019). Pakistan entered this classification only in 2019. On the contrary, in 2018 Moldova belonged to the list and represented 2,4% of all foreign citizens. In both years, Egypt could be found, representing 2,5% of all immigrants in 2019 and 2,4% in 2018 (Istat, n.d.)¹⁵.

It was previously mentioned that in 2019 an estimated 332.778 people immigrated to Italy (Eurostat, 2021). Among these, as reported by Istat (2021), an estimated 35-thousand migrants were from Rumania. Around 23-thousand migrants came from Albania, registering a 29% growth with respect to 2018. Other countries of citizenship were Ukraine (+7 thousand), Moldova (+6,5 thousand) and the UK (+4 thousand). Other people migrated from Africa, especially from Morocco (+19 thousand), Egypt (+9 thousand) and Tunisia (+4 thousand). Migration flows from Asia were on the growth, especially those

¹⁴ These percentages were calculated using the data extrapolated from Istat (n.d.). *Stranieri residenti al 1° gennaio – Cittadinanza: Italia, regioni, province – Area geopolitica di cittadinanza.*

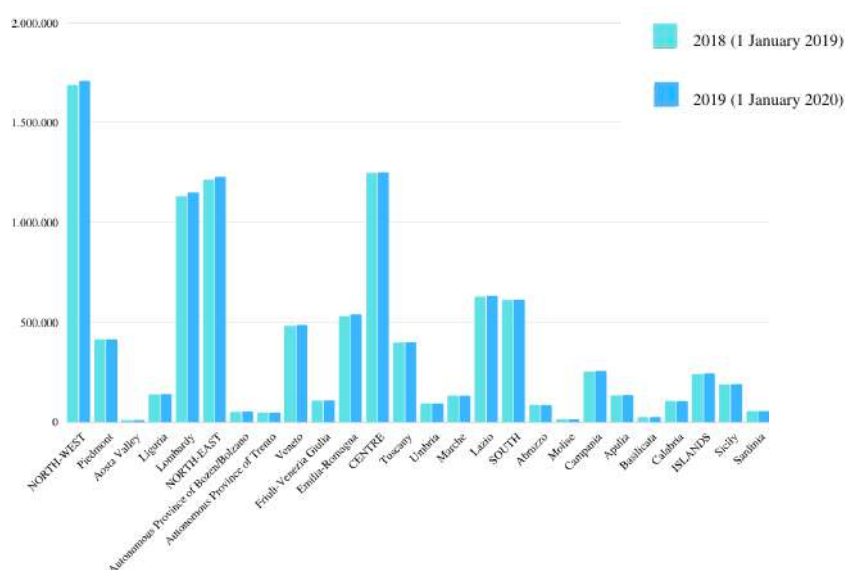
¹⁵ These percentages were calculated using the data extrapolated from Istat (n.d.). *Stranieri residenti al 1° gennaio – Cittadinanza.*

from India (+12 thousand), Bangladesh (+12 thousand), China (+10 thousand) and Pakistan (+10 thousand). Migration flows from Latin America grew as well, especially from Brazil (+22 thousand), Argentina (+5 thousand) and Venezuela (+2,4 thousand). On the contrary, migration flows due to humanitarian reasons decreased drastically with respect to previous years: only 5 thousand people came from Nigeria (18 thousand in 2018), less than 2 thousand from Gambia (6 thousand in 2018) and around a thousand from Mali and Côte d’Ivoire (around 5 thousand in 2018).

1.2.2 Territorial distribution of migrant population

The national distribution of migrants reflects the heterogeneous larger-scale distributions discussed above. Although migrant population, on average, has been growing in all Italian regions (Istat, 2020), its distribution is not homogeneous across the Italian territory, as shown in graph 8.

Graph 8. Territorial distribution of migrant population across Italian regions, 1 January 2019, 1 January 2020



Source: Data extrapolated from Istat (n.d.). *Stranieri residenti al 1° gennaio*.

The graph shows that, on 1 January of both years, the majority of foreign citizens were living in Northern Italy, more precisely around 58,3% in 2019 and 58% in 2018 (in 2019, 33,9% in the North-West and 24,8% in the North-East; in 2018, 33,7% in the North-West and 24,2% in the North-East). Around 24,8% (24,9% in 2018) of total foreign citizens were hosted in the Centre, 12,1% (12,2% in 2018) in the South and 4,8% (both in 2019 and 2018) in the two Italian islands.

In both years, more than a half of all foreign citizens (2.801.798, 55,6% of all foreign citizens living in Italy in 2019; 2.768.867, 55,4% in 2018) were hosted in only four regions, three in the North and one in the Centre: Lombardy (1.149.065, 22,8% in 2019; 1.130.587, 22,6% in 2018), Lazio (629.171, 12,5% in 2019; 626.748, 12,5% in 2018), Emilia-Romagna (537.590, 10,7%; 529.580, 10,6% in 2018) and Veneto (485.972, 9,6% in 2019; 481.918, 9,6% in 2018)¹⁶ (Istat, n.d.).

During 2019, the largest number of foreign citizens immigrated to Lombardy (+57 thousand immigrants, 22% of the total). Lombardy was followed by Lazio (+28 thousand), Emilia-Romagna (+26 thousand), Veneto (+25 thousand), Tuscany (+23 thousand) and Piedmont (+21 thousand). 11% of total foreign citizens immigrated to Southern Regions, such as Campania, Sicily, Apulia and Calabria (Istat, 2021).

As far as the number of migrants as a percentage of total regional population is concerned, the regions registering the highest percentages were Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, Autonomous Province of Bolzano and Lombardy (around 7 immigrants per 1.000 inhabitants). The lowest percentages were registered in Apulia, Sicily and Sardinia (around 2 immigrants per 1.000 inhabitants) (Istat, 2021).

The Provinces with the highest percentages of immigrants were Prato (Tuscany) and Gorizia (Friuli-Venezia Giulia) (around 9 immigrants per 1.000 inhabitants), followed by Imperia (Liguria) and Siena (Tuscany) (around 8 immigrants per 1.000 inhabitants).

All Metropolitan Cities in the North and Centre of Italy had a bigger percentage of immigrants if compared to the Italian average (4,4 immigrants per 1.000 inhabitants). Milan (Lombardy) hosted 7 immigrants per 1.000 inhabitants, Florence (Tuscany) and Bologna (Emilia-Romagna) 6 immigrants per 1.000 inhabitants. On the contrary, Southern Metropolitan Cities registered percentages below the Italian average: For instance, Palermo (Sicily) hosted only 1,3 immigrants per 1.000 inhabitants (Istat, 2021).

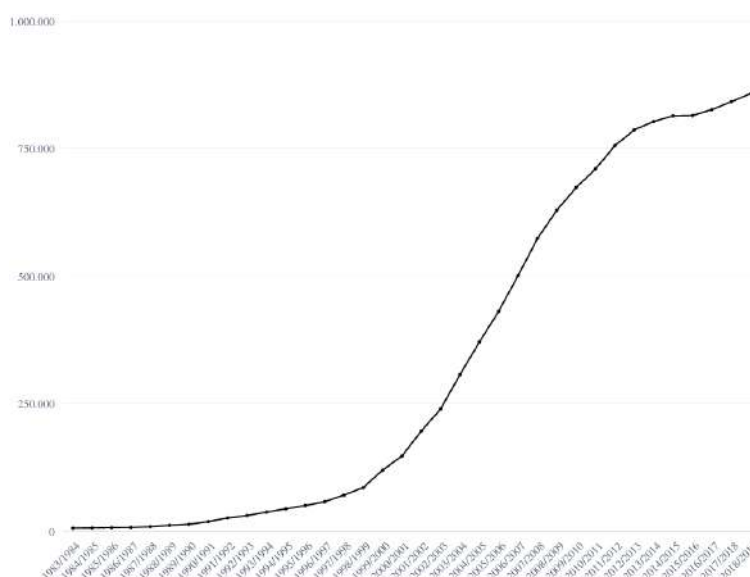
1.3 Students from migrant backgrounds: first generation and second generation

After having outlined the general migratory situation, it is important to focus our attention on school-age youngsters from migrant backgrounds, especially as the participants in our case study were first-generation students attending the third year of Middle School.

¹⁶ These percentages were calculated using the data extrapolated from Istat (n.d.). *Stranieri residenti al 1° gennaio*.

Among students from migrant backgrounds, there can be identified at least two groups, namely first-generation students and second-generation students. First-generation students are children and adolescents born in a foreign country by foreign parents (OECD, 2018); second-generation students are children and adolescents born in Italy by foreign parents, therefore, born by first-generation immigrants (Ministero dell’Istruzione, 2020). The more recent data concerning students from migrant backgrounds were issued by the Italian Ministry of Education in May 2020 and relate to the pre-pandemic school year 2018/2019.

Graph 9. Students from migrant backgrounds in the Italian school system, s.y. 1983/1984 – 2018/2019

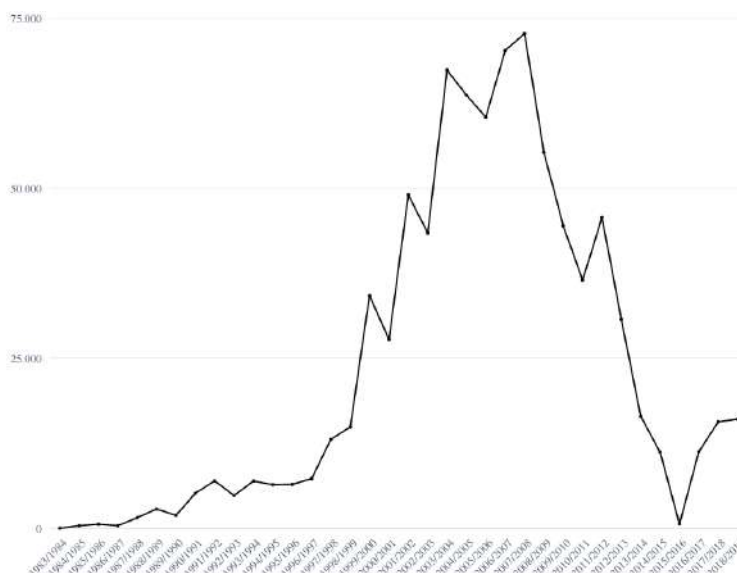


Source: Ministero dell’Istruzione – Ufficio Gestione Patrimonio Informativo e Statistica (2020). *Serie Storica 1 – Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana per ordine di scuola (valori assoluti e percentuali) – AA.SS. 1983/1984 – 2018/2019, p.59.*

The two ends of the line in the graph, relative to the 1983/1984 and 2018/2019 school years, show a very different scenario. If at the beginning of the Eighties there were around 6.104 foreign students enrolled in the Italian school system, during the last school year taken into account foreign students became 857.729 (Ministero dell’Istruzione, 2020). Between these 36 school years the foreign population grew by around 851 thousand units, showing periods of acceleration and deceleration. According to data collected by the Italian Ministry of Education, in the first half of the Eighties, during the 1985/1986 school year, when immigration to Italy was starting, the Italian school system hosted an estimated 7.050 students from migrant backgrounds. Three school years later

(1988/1989), those students became 11.791. From the turn of the millennium, reflecting the larger-scale trends discussed above, the foreign school population started increasing drastically and in Italian schools there could be found more than 100 thousand foreign students (119.679 in s.y. 1999/2000). By the 2008/2009 school year, there could be counted an estimated 629.360 students from migrant backgrounds enrolled in Italian schools. Since the second decade of the twenty-first century, the growth experienced a deceleration. Graph 10 represents more clearly the accelerating and decelerating growing trends by showing the number of foreign students entering the Italian school system each year.

Graph 10. Annual variation with respect to the previous school year, s.y. 1983/1984 – 2018/2019



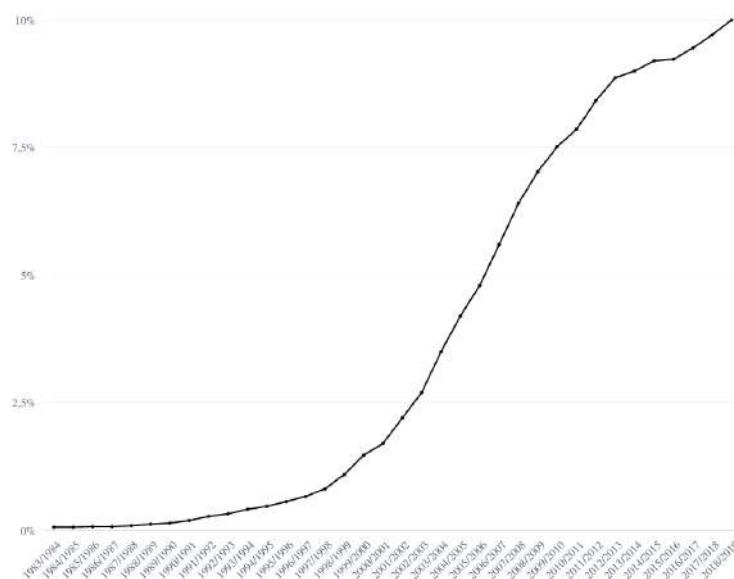
Source: Ministero dell’Istruzione – Ufficio Gestione Patrimonio Informativo e Statistica (2020). Serie Storica 1 – Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana per ordine di scuola (valori assoluti e percentuali) – AA.SS. 1983/1984 – 2018/2019, p.59.

From the first decade of the Nineties, the presence of students from migrant backgrounds started increasing and the first significant peak can be located at the turn of the millennium, when students grew by around 34-thousand units with respect to the previous school year. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, the growth of students from migrant backgrounds was numerically significant. The 2007/2008 school year registered the highest peak, with 72.713 new foreign students entering the Italian school system. From then on, rates of growth started decelerating. In the 2015/2016 school year, only 643 new foreign students entered the Italian school system. Data for the last three

school years of this time series show a slow growth resumption (s.y. 2016/2017 +11.240; s.y. 2017/2018 +15.628; s.y. 2018/2019 +16.010).

Although students from migrant backgrounds have not increased numerically as in the past, the percentage of foreign students out of total school population has grown steadily and reached 10% during the last school year taken into account. This is a consequence of the decreasing presence of Italian students. The following graph, which reflects the same trend presented in graph 9, shows this clearly.

Graph 11. Percentage of students from migrant backgrounds out of total school population, s.y. 1983/1984 – 2018/2019



Source: Ministero dell’Istruzione – Ufficio Gestione Patrimonio Informativo e Statistica (2020). *Serie Storica I – Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana per ordine di scuola (valori assoluti e percentuali) – AA.SS. 1983/1984 – 2018/2019, p.59.*

The data presented above could be divided into three different groups, as, according to Colombo (2019), in the migratory history experienced by the Italian school system there could be identified three phases:

1 – Starting phase: the growth of foreign students was slow and progressive, between the 1985/1986 and 1997/1998 school years the number of students from migrant backgrounds increased tenfold, reaching an estimated 70.657 students in the 1997/1998 school year (7.050 in 1985/1986 s.y.).

2 – Second acceleration phase: Between the 1997/1998 and 2011/2012 school years, the number of students from migrant backgrounds increased again tenfold, reaching an estimated 755.939 students.

3 – Stasis: Between 2012/2013 and 2016/2017, there was a deceleration trend, in four years the foreign population grew only by 5%. Since 2013/2014, it started decreasing and registered, a 0,10% growth in the 2015/2016 school year. Since 2016/2017 it started increasing again¹⁷. In this last phase, the 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 school years, which were not part of Colombo's analysis, may be included, as they are in line with the trends initiated in 2016/2017, registering a small growth in the number of foreign students.

Some of the causes for this stasis were identified by Colombo (2019) and Santagati (2021)¹⁸: Birth rates among migrant families aligning with those of Italian families (Colombo, 2019); decreasing migration flows to Italy (Santagati, 2021; Colombi, 2019); increasing acquisitions of citizenship (Santagati, 2021; Colombi, 2019); low enrolment in schools for 3-to-5-year-old children and 17-to-18 adolescents (Santagati, 2021); difficult access to education for unaccompanied foreign minors, asylum seekers and refugees (Santagati, 2021).

Since the 2007/2008 school year, the Italian Ministry of the Interior started monitoring the number of first- and second-generation students in the Italian school system. Between 2007/2008 and 2018/2019, the presence of first-generation students was not steady. During the 2007/2008 school year, there were 46.154 first-generation students and they represented 10% of total students from migrant backgrounds. Ten school years later, first-generation students were 22.984 and represented only 2,7% of all students from migrant backgrounds (Santagati, M., 2021). With respect to 2017/2018, in the school year taken into account, they decreased by around 3 thousand (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

In 2018/2019, the majority of students from migrant backgrounds were represented by second generations. Second-generation students were 553.155 and represented 64,5% of all students from migrant backgrounds. Between 2014/2015 and 2018/2019 they increased by around 103 thousand (+23%). Between 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 they increased by around 22 thousand (+4,1%). They seem to be the only component in the school population following growth trends (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

¹⁷ Colombo, C. (2019). *Vulnerabili e perseveranti. Presenze e percorsi degli alunni non italiani.* (p. 36).

¹⁸ Santagati, M. (2021). *La scuola.* (p. 144).

1.3.1 Citizenship of students from migrant backgrounds

Around 200 nationalities were present in the Italian schools all over Italy, being some more represented than others.

Table 2. Continent of origin of students from migrant backgrounds in Italian schools, s.y. 2018/2019

Continent	Absolute Value	%
Europe	396.970	46,28
Africa	220.585	25,72
Asia	172.128	20,07
America	67.674	7,89
Oceania	258	0,03
No citizenship	114	0,01
Total	857.729	100,00

Source: Ministero dell'Istruzione – Ufficio Gestione Patrimonio Informativo e Statistica (2020, May). *Gli alunni con cittadinanza non italiana, A.S. 2018/2019*, p.29.

The majority of students came from Europe (46,3%), of whom 24,54% from non-EU Member States. Africa and Asia represented another large share, respectively 25,72% and 20,07%. The least represented continents were America (7,89%) and Oceania (0,03%).

In the 2018/2019 school year, more than a half of all students from migrant backgrounds present in the Italian school system, 67,8%, came from only ten countries. With just one exception, Bangladesh, the classification concerning migrant students reflected the aforementioned classification concerning the overall migrant population in Italy.

The first country was Rumania and represented around 157.470 migrant students. It was followed by Albania (116.085). According to the Italian Ministry of Education, between the 2008/2009 and 2018/2019 school years, Rumanian students increased by 1,6%, whereas Albanian students decreased by 1,1%. Two other European countries in the list were Moldova (25.722) and Ukraine (20.116). The most represented African country was Morocco (105.057), followed by Egypt (26.139). The other countries in the classification belonged to Asia. The most represented Asian country was China (55.070). Between 2008/2009 and 2018/2019, Chinese students increased by 78,9%. India and Philippines represented respectively 27.897 and 26.792 students. The last country in the classification was Pakistan (21.321) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

The most represented countries of citizenship of second-generation students, in terms of absolute values, reflected the aforementioned classification¹⁹. However, this classification changes by considering the amount of second-generations out of total conational students. In this respect, no longer was Rumania the first country but China. In the 2018/2019 school year, among all Chinese students, 83,1% were second generations. Other countries with high percentages of second generations were Morocco (76,4%), Albania (75,7%), Philippines (68,2%), Rumania (62,3%), India (58,0%), Egypt (53,4%) and Moldavia (51,7%). Second generations represented less than a half of all conational students for countries such as Pakistan (42,4%) and Ukraine (42,3%) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

1.3.2 *Grade distribution of students from migrant backgrounds*

According to the Italian Ministry of Education, during the school year taken into account, students from migrant backgrounds could be found in all school grades²⁰, even though being heterogeneously distributed. The highest percentage of foreign students was registered in Primary Schools (36,5%), lower percentages in High Schools (23,2%), Middle Schools (21%) and Preschools (19,3%) (Demaio, G., & Di Lecce, F., 2020).

It was previously mentioned that the 2018/2019 school year registered a growth by around 16.010 foreign students. However, their growth did not have the same impact on all school grades. As a matter of fact, in Preschools, only 94 new children from migrant backgrounds entered the Italian school system, reaching an estimated 165.209 children. Despite this low numerical growth, they grew from a percentual point of view: As a matter of fact, if in the 2017/2018 school year they represented 11,1% of total Preschool population, in the

¹⁹ Rumania (96.393), Albania (86.100), Morocco (78.168), China (45.208), Philippines (17.792), India (15.893), Egypt (13.786), Moldova (13.072), Pakistan (8.489) and Ukraine (8.427) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

²⁰ The Italian school systems is organised as follows:

- Integrated system for educating and teaching zero-to-six year-olds (*sistema integrato zero-sei anni*): not compulsory
 - Nursery school (*servizi educativi per l'infanzia*, commonly known as *asilo nido*): 3 to 36 months old
 - Preschool (*scuola dell'infanzia*): 3 to 6 years old
- First cycle of education (*primo ciclo di istruzione*): it lasts 8 years
 - Primary school (*scuola primaria*): 5 years, 6 to 11 years old
 - Middle school (*scuola secondaria di primo grado*): 3 years, 11 to 14 years old
- Second cycle of education (*secondo ciclo di istruzione*): there are two different types
 - High school (*scuola secondaria di secondo grado*): 5 years, 14 to 19 years old
 - Professional institute (*istruzione e formazione professionale (IeFP)*)

School is compulsory for 10 years (6 to 16 years old). (MIUR, n.d.).

school year taken into account they represented 11,4%, as a consequence of the decreasing presence of Italian children (-40.591 children).

An estimated 5.386 new pupils from migrant backgrounds enrolled in Primary Schools (+1,7%), reaching 313.204 pupils. Their presence is on the wane, as a matter of fact, in the 1995/1996 school year 47,7% foreign pupils were enrolled in Primary School whereas in the 2009/2010 school year they were only 36,3%, 36,5% in 2018/2019. However, in 2018/2019 they represented 11,5% of total Primary-School population, the highest percentage registered across all school grades. In Middle Schools there was the highest number of new enrolments, with an estimated 6.481 new foreign students (+3,7%), reaching around 180.296 students. In High Schools there were around 199.020 students from migrant backgrounds (+4.049 students with respect to the 2017/2018 school year, +2,1%). In a decade, between the 2009/2010 and 2018/2019 school years, children and adolescents from migrant backgrounds grew by 22% in Preschools, by 28% in Primary Schools, by 20% in Middle Schools and by 39% in High Schools (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020). However, in High Schools, students from migrant backgrounds represented only 7,4% of total population, the lowest percentage if compared to other school grades, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Grade distribution of total students and students from migrant backgrounds, s.y. 2018/2019

School grade	Students enrolled (total)	Students from migrant backgrounds enrolled	Students from migrant backgrounds born in Italy	% of students from migrant backgrounds out of total school population	% of students from migrant backgrounds born in Italy out of total foreign students
Preschool	1.450.793	165.209	137.575	11,4	83,3
Primary School	2.713.373	313.204	235.877	11,5	75,3
Middle School	1.725.037	180.296	107.312	10,5	59,5
High School	2.690.676	199.020	72.391	7,4	36,4
Total	8.579.879	857.729	553.155	10,0	64,5

Source: Demaio, G., & Di Lecce, F. (2020). Dimensioni e strategie di integrazione scolastica degli alunni di cittadinanza straniera. (p. 220).

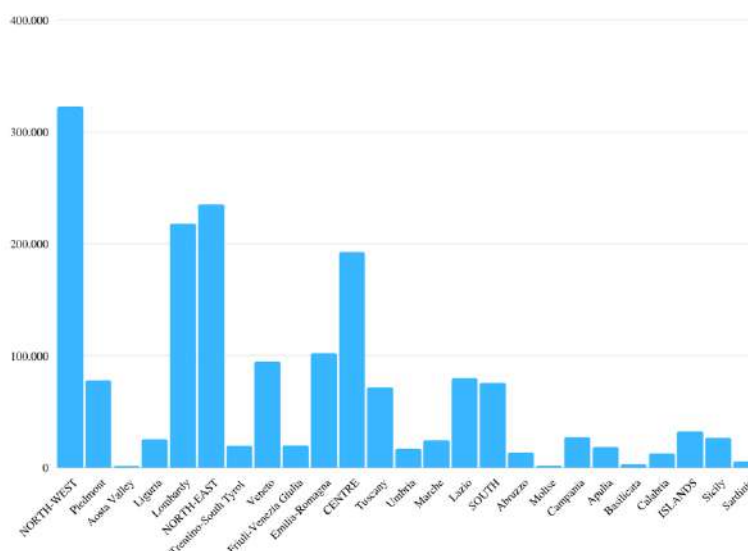
As far as first-generation students are concerned, in 2018/2019, they were 22.984, not equally distributed across all school grades. The majority of first-generation students could be found in Middle Schools (8.773 first-generation students), then in High Schools (8.278 first-generation students) and Primary Schools (5.933 first-generation students) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020). However, in these three grades, by taking into account the period between the 2014/2015 and 2018/2019 school years, two different scenarios could be identified. The first concerns Middle Schools, where first-generation students grew by 750 units. The second concerns Primary Schools and High Schools, where they decreased respectively by 10.360 units and 460 units. On the whole, during these five school years, Italian school system registered a loss by around 10-thousand first-generation students. During the last two school years, on average, they grew by 6,6%: They increased in Middle Schools (+549 students) and also in High Schools (+934 students), whereas they slightly decreased in Primary Schools (- 53 students). (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

The majority of students from migrant backgrounds were represented, since the 2013/2014 school year, by second generations (Santagati, M., 2021). Between 2014/2015 and 2018/2019, the number of second-generation children enrolled in Preschools decreased by around 5 thousand, reaching an estimated 137.596 children, yet still representing the great majority of all students from migrant backgrounds (83,3%). In the 2018/2019 school year, there were 235.877 (75,3%) second-generation children in Primary Schools and 107.312 (59,5%) in Middle Schools. Only in High Schools did they still represent the minority of all students from migrant backgrounds (72.391, 36,4%) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

1.3.3 Territorial distribution of students from migrant backgrounds

The territorial distribution of students from migrant backgrounds represents the general distribution of migrants across Italy.

Graph 12. Territorial distribution of students from migrant backgrounds, s.y. 2018/2019.



Source: Ministero dell'Istruzione – Ufficio Gestione Patrimonio Informativo e Statistica (2020). *Tavola 4 – Alunni con cittadinanza italiana e non italiana per regione (valori assoluti e percentuali) – AA.SS. 2016/2017 e 2018/2019*, p.15.

As maintained by Ministry of Education's data (2020), 65% of all foreign students lived in the North (37,6% in the North-West and 27,4% in the North-East), 22,4% in the Centre, 8,8% in the South and 3,6% in the two Italian Islands. Lombardy was the region hosting the highest number of students from migrant backgrounds (217.933, 25,4% of total foreign students). It was followed by Emilia-Romagna (101.869, 11,9%), Veneto (94.486, 11%), Lazio (79.841, 9,3%) and Piedmont (77.882, 9%). Between 2016 and 2019, students from migrant backgrounds increased also in the South. Campania, for instance, registered a growth by an estimated 3.603 foreign students and Apulia by around 1.209 students.

By considering students from migrant backgrounds as a percentage of total school population, in the 2018/2019 school year, Emilia-Romagna registered the highest percentage, 16,4%. It was followed by Lombardy (15,5%), Tuscany (14,1%), Umbria (13,8%), Veneto (13,6%) and Piedmont (13,5%). In the South, percentages were below national average (10%), between 7,5% (in Abruzzo) and 2,6% (in Sardinia).

By combining grade distribution and territorial distribution, it can be noted that in Preschools and Primary Schools the highest percentages of foreign pupils out of total population could be found in Emilia-Romagna (19% in Preschools and 18,6% in Primary Schools), Lombardy (17,3% in Preschools and 17,9% in Primary Schools) and Veneto (16,3% in both Preschools and Primary Schools). The regions registering the highest percentages of middle-school students from migrant backgrounds out of total population were, again, Emilia-Romagna and Lombardy, followed by Tuscany and Umbria (14,8%). These regions, together with Liguria, registered the highest percentages of high-school students out of total population, between 12,6% in Emilia-Romagna and 11% in Liguria (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

41,4% of all students from migrant backgrounds lived in just 10 Provinces, distributed especially in Northern Italy, with the exception of Rome (Lazio) and Florence (Tuscany). The first two Provinces hosting the largest number of students from migrant backgrounds were Milan, in Lombardy (92.104, 10,7% of all students from migrant backgrounds), and Rome, in Lazio (63.488, 7,4%)²¹ (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

It was previously reported that, in the 2018/2019 school year, students from migrant backgrounds, on average, represented 10% of all school population. However, there were Provinces where the percentage of students from migrant backgrounds was greatly above national average. This was the case of Prato in Tuscany, where students from migrant background represented 26,8% of all students enrolled. It was followed by Piacenza (Emilia-Romagna, 22,7%), Mantova (Lombardy, 18,5%), Asti (Piedmont, 18,4%), Parma (Emilia-Romagna, 18,3%), Cremona (Lombardy, 18,3%), Brescia (Lombardy, 18,9%), Lodi (Lombardy, 17,6%), Modena (Emilia-Romagna, 17,5%) and Alessandria (Piedmont, 17,0%) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020). Once again, it can be noted that the majority of these Provinces, with the exception of Prato, are in the North of Italy.

By looking at the territorial distribution of first- and second-generation students, it can be observed that in 2018/2019 first generations were especially present in the North and Centre of Italy. Only five regions hosted around 65% of all first-generation students: Lombardy was the region hosting the highest number of first-generation students (6.122), followed by Emilia-Romagna (2.605), Tuscany (2.147), Lazio (2.110) and Veneto (1.955) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020). However, as far as the percentage of first-generation students out of total foreign students is concerned, the highest percentages could be found in Southern Regions, regions close to the Mediterranean Sea, where they represented

²¹ Milan and Rome were followed by Turin in Piedmont (39.405, 4,6%), Brescia in Lombardy (33.053, 3,9%), Bergamo in Lombardy (25.757, 3,0%), Florence in Tuscany (22.311, 2,6%), Bologna in Emilia-Romagna (22.013, 2,6%), Verona in Veneto (20.718, 2,4%), Modena in Emilia-Romagna (18.541, 2,2%) and Padova in Veneto (17.880, 2,1%) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

more than a half of all foreign students. Calabria was the region registering the highest percentage: In the 2018/2019 school year, there were 63,8% first-generation students (Santagati, M., 2021).

Second generations represented the majority of all students from migrant backgrounds in 13 regions. The first five regions hosting the highest number of second-generation students were Lombardy (148.000), Emilia-Romagna (68.114), Veneto (67.411), Piedmont (54.028) and Lazio (49.759). By considering the percentage of second generations out of total foreign students, the highest percentages, above national average, could be found in Veneto (71,3%), Piedmont (69,4), Umbria (69,2%), Lombardy (67,9%), Tuscany (67,6%) and Emilia-Romagna (66,9%) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

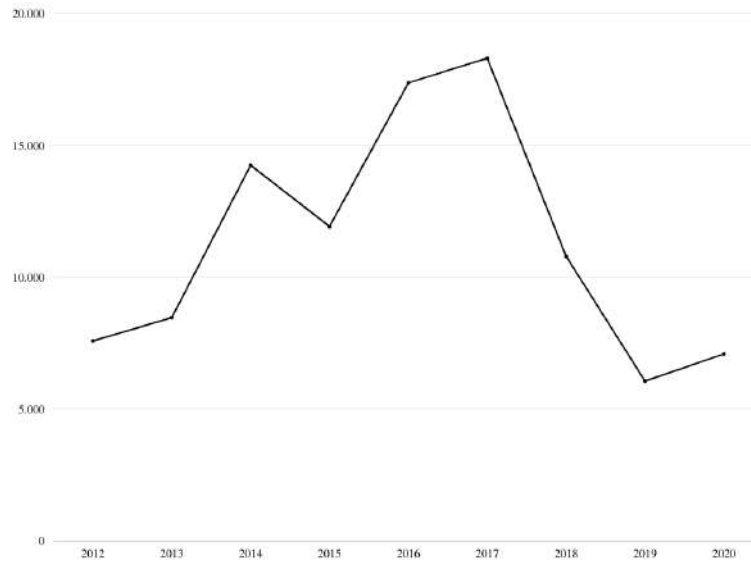
1.3.4 Unaccompanied foreign minors

According the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (2014), unaccompanied foreign minors are those students coming from foreign countries who, for any reasons, are in the Italian territory without any parental or adult assistance.

Migration flows to Italy involving these minors started around the 1980s, even though it was during the last years of the Nineties that their numerical growth started accelerating. This happened as a consequence of increasing migration flows from Eastern Europe. Other accelerating trends in more recent years could be found in the period between 2010 and 2012, as a consequence of Arab Spring, and between 2015 and 2016 (Valtolina, G. G., 2020).

The first statistics concerning unaccompanied foreign minors dates back to 2012 and were issued by the General Directorate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

Graph 12. Unaccompanied foreign minors, 2012-2020



Source: Data extrapolated from Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (n.d.). *Minori stranieri non accompagnati – Dati*

In 2012 there were an estimated 7.575 unaccompanied foreign minors, a number which almost doubled in 2014 (14.243). The highest number of unaccompanied foreign minors was registered in 2017 (18.303). In two years, the number almost halved, reaching 6.054 in 2019. In 2020 they increased and reached an estimated 7.080. The great majority of these minors were between 15 and 17 years old (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2012-2019).

In 2018, the first ten countries of origin of unaccompanied foreign minors were Albania (14,4%), Egypt (8,6%), Gambia (8,3%), Guinea (7,4%), Eritrea (7,1%), Côte d'Ivoire (7,1%), Mali (5,5%), Nigeria (5,2), Pakistan (5,1%) and Senegal (4,7%). In 2019, they were Albania (27,7%), Egypt (8,8%), Pakistan (8,3%), Bangladesh (8,0%), Kosovo (5,4%), Côte d'Ivoire (4,7%), Tunisia (4,6%), Gambia (4,3%), Senegal (4,0%) and Guinea (3,6%) (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2018; Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2019).

A large number of unaccompanied foreign minors came to Italy by crossing the Mediterranean Sea. During 2019, there arrived around 1.680 unaccompanied foreign minors and, during 2018, 3.536. By comparing these data with data concerning the years 2016 and 2017, it can be seen how Mediterranean migration flows decreased: During 2016, an estimated 25.846 unaccompanied foreign minors arrived and, during 2017, 15.779 (Ministero dell'Interno, 2017; Ministero dell'Interno, 2018; Ministero

dell'Interno, 2019). In the last few years, the decrease in migration flows across the Mediterranean Sea was compensated by migration flows from the Balkans. This led to a slightly change in the major minors' nationalities present in Italy (Valtolina, G. G., 2020). In 2018, the regions hosting the majority of unaccompanied foreign minors were Sicily (38,0%), Lombardy (8,1%), Emilia-Romagna (7,3%), Friuli-Venezia Giulia (7,3%) and Lazio (7,1%). In 2019, the scenario slightly changed, the first region remained Sicily, hosting 19,2% of all unaccompanied foreign minors, followed by Lombardy (13,6%), Friuli-Venezia Giulia (11,0%), Emilia-Romagna (10,0%) and Tuscany (7,6%) (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2018; Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2019).

The first Law concerning Unaccompanied foreign minors dates back to 7 April 2017. It states that unaccompanied foreign minors have the same protection rights as other Italian or EU minors. Prior to this law, there existed no national protection system for this category of vulnerable immigrants. Moreover, the norms used to have guardianship of these minors did not take into consideration their specific needs (Valtolina, G. G., 2020). What happens with this vulnerable category is that, after a first reception phase, these minors start to be included in the host society's life. This process starts with their access to the local school system, something which requires great attention. As a matter of fact, they come from very different countries and cultures and from difficult social contexts. They do not know Italian and very often they are either low scholarised or completely illiterate (Save the Children, 2017).

As far as school is concerned, there are no national statistics concerning unaccompanied foreign minors enrolled in the Italian School System. However, according to the Law No. 47 of 2017, all educational institutions have to favour the fulfilment of compulsory schooling, also by preparing specific projects and, when possible, by collaborating with cultural mediators. Save the Children (2017) stresses the importance of elaborating personalised education plans and the need to collaborate with specific professional figures, who can support their learning and psychological and emotional needs.

1.4 Migratory situation in the Veneto Region and in Venice

A smaller-scale context will now be taken into account. Data concerning the presence of immigrants in Veneto and Venice will now be presented.

1.4.1 Total migrant population

As seen above, Veneto, both in 2018 and in 2019, was the fourth region hosting the largest number of foreign citizens. In 2018, the 481.916 foreign people living in Veneto represented 9,87% of total population. In 2019, the migrant population increased by around 4 thousand and reached 485.972 foreign citizens, who represented 9,96% of total population (Istat, 2021).

In 2019 and 2018, more than a half of all foreign citizens living in Veneto were from Europe (56% in 2019 and 56,5% in 2018) and, among them, more than a half from EU-28 Member States (30,7% in 2019 and 30,5% in 2018). In 2019, Africa and Asia represented around 20,1% of all migrant citizens living in Veneto. In 2018, these percentages were slightly different, Africa represented 20,3% of all migrant citizens and Asia 19,6%. In these two continents, the most represented geopolitical areas were Northern Africa (10,9% in 2019 and 10,8% in 2018), Eastern Asia (8,8% both in 2019 and 2018) and Middle and Southern Asia (10,8% in 2019 and 10,3% in 2018). In 2019, 3,7% people were from America (3,6% in 2018) and, among them, 3,5% from Middle and Southern America (3,4% in 2018). In both years, Oceania represented only 0,03% of all migrant citizens (Istat, n.d.).

By considering the citizenships of migrant people living in Veneto, the classification of the ten most represented countries does not entirely reflect the national classification presented above. In Veneto, in 2019, the most represented countries were Rumania (124.533), Morocco (44.837), People's Republic of China (34.777), Albania (32.376), Moldova (31.052), Bangladesh (17.517), Ukraine (16.207), India (15.634), Nigeria (14363) and Sri Lanka (13.031). The classification for 2018 is slightly different with respect to 2019 as far as the last three positions are concerned. As a matter of fact, on the seventh position there was Nigeria (14.909), followed by India (14.856) and Serbia (12.702) (Istat, n.d.).

Once again, data shows that the foreign population was not homogeneously distributed across all Provinces in Veneto. On 1 January 2020, the Province hosting the highest number of people from migrant backgrounds was Verona (106.692). It was followed by Padova (93.372), Treviso (90.293), Venice (86.215) and Vicenza (79.609). Lower

numbers could be found in Rovigo and Belluno, hosting respectively 17.752 and 12.039 people from migrant backgrounds (Istat, n.d.). Verona was also the Province with the highest percentage of migrant citizens out of total population (11,5%) and it was followed by Treviso, Venice and Padova (around 10%) (Istat, 2021). This classification reflects that concerning 2018. Between 2018 and 2019, the Province which registered the highest increase in the number of foreign citizens was Venice (+ 2.015), followed by Verona (+1.092) (Istat, n.d.).

By combining territorial distribution and area of origin, it can be noted that, in 2019, the Province of Venice hosted the lowest percentage of people immigrated from Africa (13,2%) and the highest percentage of people from Asia (24,5%). The presence of Europeans was especially registered in the Provinces of Belluno and Padova (Istat, 2021).

As far as the Metropolitan City of Venice is concerned, on 1 January 2019 there were 84.200 migrant people, who represented 9,9% of total population (Istat, n.d.). Data collected by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (2020) show that non-EU citizens represented 7,3% of all people living in the Metropolitan City of Venice. By 1 January 2020, the foreign population increased by around 2 thousand and reached 86.215 people, representing 10,16% of all population (Istat, n.d.).

As far as the younger population is concerned, in 2018 there were 14.567 non-EU minors in the Metropolitan City of Venice, representing 23% of all foreign people living in this area, a percentage which is above national average (22%). This may be a consequence of the high presence of families in this territory (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2020).

In the Province of Venice, the presence of people from migrant backgrounds is not homogeneous. On 1 January 2019, the first five Municipalities hosting the highest number of foreign citizens were Venice (37.744), San Donà di Piave (4.467), Mira (3.570), Spinea (2.985) and Jesolo (2.694). This classification reflects the one for 2018. Venice alone hosted almost a half (43,8%) of all people from migrant backgrounds living in the Province of Venice (Istat, n.d.).

In the Municipality of Venice, on 31 December 2018, there were 37.554 people from migrant backgrounds, representing 14,4% of total population. By 31 December 2019, they grew by 1 thousand and a half and reached 39.054, representing 15% of total population, a percentage which almost double the national average (Comune di Venezia, n.d.).

The data for the Province of Venice concerning areas of citizenship, on average, reflects the larger-scale data for Veneto, with a few exceptions. In both 2018 and 2019, more than

a half of all citizens from migrant backgrounds came from Europe (58,9% in 2019 and 59,3% in 2018). Differently from the aforementioned data, in the Province of Venice the majority of European citizens came from non-EU-28 countries (30,6% in 2019 and 31,3% in 2018). Asia was the second most representative continent, representing 24,5% in 2019 and 24,2% in 2018 of all foreign citizens. In line with data for Veneto, the most represented Asian geopolitical areas were Eastern Asia (10,2% in 2019 and 10,4% in 2018) and Middle and Southern Asia (13,4% in 2019 and 13% in 2018). Africa followed, representing 13,1% in 2019 and 13,2% in 2018 of all foreign citizens. The most represented geopolitical area was Northern Africa (7,3% in 2019 and 7% in 2018). Lower percentages were registered for America (3,3% in 2019 and 3,2% in 2018), being Middle and Southern America the most representative geopolitical area (3% in 2019 and 2,9% in 2018), and for Oceania (0,03% in both years) (Istat, n.d.).

The classification of the ten most represented countries of citizenship slightly changes if compared to the aforementioned one for Veneto. The classification for 2018 and 2019 does not change. The most represented country was Rumania (19.619 on 1 January 2020, +820 people with respect to 2018) and it was followed by Bangladesh (9.154, +582), Moldova (7.717, -107), People's Republic of China (6.674, +57), Albania (6.375, +153), Ukraine (4.878, -14), Morocco (4.562, +245), Macedonia (2.719, +36), Kosovo (2.076, +15) and Nigeria (1.936, -98) (Istat, n.d.).

As far as the Municipality of Venice is concerned, the ten most represented countries for the years 2018 and 2019 were Bangladesh (7.147 in 2019, +577 people with respect to 2018), Rumania (6.337, +397), Moldova (4.211, -71), People's Republic of China (3.698, +180), Ukraine (1.950, -601), Albania (1.695, +71), Macedonia (1.472, +13), Philippines (1.433, +7), Kosovo (831, +49) and Sri Lanka (746, -16). In 2018 and 2019, the three most represented African countries were Senegal (548 in 2019 and 541 in 2018), Morocco (485 in 2019 and 440 in 2018) and Nigeria (438 both in 2019 and 2018) (Comune di Venezia, n.d.).

It is important to note that in Venice, differently from the other classifications presented in this chapter, Rumania is no longer the most represented country. As a matter of fact, both in 2018 and 2019, it was the Bangladeshi community the most numerous, representing 18,3% of all foreign people living in the Municipality of Venice (17,5% in 2018) (Comune di Venezia, n.d.).

In 2019, almost a half (45,9%) of all Bangladeshis in Italy lived in the North. The largest Bangladeshi communities could be found in just three regions, namely Lazio, Lombardy and Veneto. In Veneto there could be found 14% of all Bangladeshis living in Italy (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2020). Among the Bangladeshi

communities, on 1 January 2019, almost a half were younger than 30 years old. In Italy, there were 30.395 Bangladeshi minors, representing 3,8% of all non-EU minors present in Italy (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2020).

1.4.2 Students from migrant backgrounds

According to the Ministry of Education (2020), in the 2018/2019 school year, Veneto was one of regions with the highest percentage of students from migrant backgrounds (11%), preceded only by Lombardy (25,4%) and Emilia-Romagna (11,9%). In the school year taken into account, students from migrant backgrounds increased by 1.428 and became 94.486, representing 13,6% of all students in Veneto. The school grade hosting the largest number of foreign students was Primary School (36.586), followed by Middle School (20.254), Preschool (19.188) and High School (18.458).

Veneto is also the third region hosting the largest number of first-generation students. In the 2018/2019 school year there were 1.955 first-generation students, among them 632 in Primary Schools, 839 in Middle Schools and 484 in High Schools. However, in the same school year, the majority of all students from migrant backgrounds were represented by second generation (71,3%, 67.411). Second generation represented the majority of all foreign students especially in Preschools (86,9%) and Primary Schools (80,5%). They represented lower percentages in Middle Schools (66,7%) and High Schools (42,2%).

As far as the Metropolitan City of Venice is concerned, in the 2018/2019 school year, there were an estimated 15.318 students from migrant background, representing 13,7% of all students. The highest number could be found in Primary Schools (5.849). As far as the other school grades are concerned, their distribution was more or less homogeneous: 3.292 in Preschools, 3.146 in Middle Schools and 3.031 in High Schools (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020). Among them, an estimated 12.299 students were non-EU citizens and their presence increased by 3,5%, a percentage which is above national average (+2,7%). This growth was registered especially in High Schools (+7,2%) and in Middle Schools (+6,8%). On the contrary, Preschools registered a decrease by 4,7% (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2020).

Also in the Metropolitan City of Venice, second generations represented the majority of all students from migrant background, even though the percentage was lower than that registered in Veneto (66%). Second generations represented 84,9% of all foreign students in Preschools and 76,7% in Primary Schools. Moreover, they represented 59% of all

foreign middle-school students and only 32,2% of all high-school students from migrant backgrounds (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2020).

1.5 The Covid-19 pandemic in Italy

Italy was one of the first EU Member States impacted by Covid-19. Since its outbreak, three different phases can be identified:

1. First wave, between end February and end May 2020 (lockdown)
2. Transition phase, between June and September 2020
3. Second wave, since September 2020. (Istat, 2021).

Due to Covid-19, in 2020, as well as in the first months of 2021, Italy, as well as many other countries around the world, closed its intra- and inter-national borders in order to face the pandemic crisis. This has had an enormous impact on migration flows.

Although during the pre-Covid phase, between January and February 2020, migration flows to Italy were already on the wane (-8,8%) if compared to the period between 2015 and 2019, during the first wave, migration flows drastically decreased by around 66,3%. During the other two phases, especially since June 2020, migration flows seemed to follow pre-lockdown trends, even though still showing a negative variation (-23,3% during the transition phase and -18,2% during the second wave) (Istat, 2021). On the whole, provisory statistics issued by Istat (2021) show that during the first eight months of 2020 migration flows decreased by 17,4%.

Moreover, Covid-19 impacted the countries involved in migration flows to Italy. Istat (2021), by comparing the first eight months of 2020 with the first eight months of the period between 2015 to 2019, observed a decrease in the migration flows from Africa, for instance from Gambia (-85%), Mali (-84%), Nigeria (-73%), Egypt (-47%) and Morocco (-40%). Other countries which registered a high decrease were China (-63%), Brazil (-49%) and Rumania (-48%) (Istat, 2021).

The regions which registered the highest percentual decrease were Umbria (-71,6%), Calabria (-68,2%) and Emilia-Romagna (-68%). By considering absolute values, Lombardy registered the greatest contraction in terms of residency permits (-14.655) (Istat, 2020).

As far as the Municipality of Venice is concerned, between 31 December 2019 and 31 December 2020, the migrant population resident in Venice increased only by 248 people, whereas during the previous year, between 31 December 2018 and 31 December 2019, it had increased by 1.500 people. The Bangladeshi community registered the greatest increase (+ 238), followed by the Rumanian community (+168). On the contrary, among

the most represented citizenship, countries such as Moldova, Ukraine, Albania, Philippines and Sri Lanka registered a decrease in the number of citizens (Comune di Venezia, n.d.).

Quantitative data concerning the 2019/2020 school year have not been issued yet. Nevertheless, few considerations might be made. 2020 introduced a new ordinariness in the lives of millions of students and teachers, due to the closure of all schools. This led to a change in the methodology used so far, as online learning, with the Law 41/2020, became compulsory. Among the most impacted by the closure of schools and this methodology change, which was employed periodically also during the 2020/2021 school year, there were disadvantaged students, who did not have appropriate devices and Internet connection, who could not count on their parents' support or who did not have appropriate rooms for concentrating and studying (Save the Children, 2020). In line with data collected by INDIRE (2020) through a survey which involved 3.700 teachers, other students which were thought to be excluded by online learning were those from migrant backgrounds. Save the Children (2020) hypothesised that Covid-19 would have a negative impact on those students born by foreign parents, also because, during lockdown, they probably stopped practicing Italian, the language of instruction. Covid-19 and lockdown during the first wave have impacted negatively especially newcomers, as stated by Cesareo (2021), as many projects had to be suspended or reformulated, for instance Italian-L2 courses had to be interrupted or done exclusively online. Therefore, Covid-19 and online learning seemed to have strengthened those differences and difficulties already present even before Covid-19. As a matter of fact, as reported by Save the Children (2020), PISA (2018) results showed a tendency among first-generation students to underperform in comparison to their native-born school mates.

1.6 Integration of students from migrant backgrounds in the Italian school system

“Full integration of immigrants into host societies is a fundamental goal and, in this respect, the role of school is of primary importance”²² (MIUR, 2006, p.1), as “school is the first place where younger generations confront themselves with the host society”²³ (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2020, p.16).

²² My translation.

²³ My translation.

One of the most noticeable differences between native-born people and immigrants is the linguistic and cultural background. The overview presented above has shown that students from migrant backgrounds, on average, increased annually, representing in the 2018/2019 school year 10% of all students in the Italian school system. As a consequence, since the beginning of such a phenomenon, which has changed the composition of classes, Italy has tried to cope with new arisen needs. In this respect, key concepts in the Italian legislation concerning students from migrant backgrounds have been full integration, also through learning the language of instruction and of host society, and intercultural education, defined as an education which “rejects the logic of assimilation, the construction and strengthening of ethnic communities” and which aims at “promoting discussion, dialogue, mutual enrichment” in a scenario where “differences live together”²⁴ (Miur, 2006, p.4).

The Ministry of Education issued the first memorandum concerning the integration of students from migrant backgrounds in 1989. This memorandum recognises the ever-growing dimension of migration and stresses the importance of safeguarding and guaranteeing school education to young immigrants.

The memorandum No. 205 of 1990, emphasise, in order to favour integration, the promotion in each Region of courses of Italian language and culture for all immigrants and to focus the attention on intercultural education, as “cultural diversity is a positive resource for societies and people’s complex processes of growth”²⁵.

According to Miur (2006), the normative source which safeguard foreign minors’ right to be enrolled in schools dates back to 1998. Law No. 40 of 1998, Article 36, and the Legislative Decree No. 286 of 1998, Article 38, recognise foreign minors’ right and duty to education, the importance of courses to learn Italian – being the acquisition of host society’s language one of the greatest obstacles – and of intercultural education, as cultural and linguistic differences should be valorised; moreover, they introduce the figure of cultural mediator. During the following years the right to education and these procedures were reconfirmed and integrated (e.g. Law No. 189 of 2002; Legislative Decree No. 76 of 2005).

On 1 March 2006, the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research issued *Linee guida per l’accoglienza e l’integrazione degli alunni stranieri*, some guidelines for the integration of students from migrant backgrounds into the Italian educational system. In this document, the guidelines concern the three macro-areas of administration (e.g. enrolment documents, residency permits, IDs, and so on), of communication with

²⁴ My translation.

²⁵ My translation.

families (e.g. making use of cultural mediators and interpreters) and of education and teaching methods. As a contextual framework for our case study, the most important macro-area is the latter and it will be briefly presented here.

As far as enrolment is concerned, these guidelines states that competence and ability levels should be ascertained in order to enrol students from migrant backgrounds in the right grade: Students should be enrolled according to their age, however, after a deep analysis, they could be placed in lower grades if this is perceived as beneficial. Moreover, vitally important is that students from migrant backgrounds spend the majority of their school time together with their class mates, with the exception of specific projects, such as Italian courses.

In order to ensure scholastic success and social inclusion, it is important for students from migrant backgrounds to learn Italian, which is both the language of communication in the host society and of instruction (the distinction between these two language dimensions will be discussed in the third chapter). Therefore, the strengthening of Italian as a second language should be one of the major goals. During the first phases of the learning process, language facilitation could be and should be used (the concept of linguistic facilitation and the figure of the linguistic facilitator will be presented in the second chapter). In this respect, these guidelines underline the importance of professional development in terms of Didactics of Italian Language L2.

In October 2007, the National observatory for the integration of foreign students and intercultural education issued *La via italiana per la scuola interculturale e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri*, a document which defines a possible Italian model of integration. Ten different guidelines were identified and grouped into three different macro-areas: Actions for integration, actions for intercultural interaction, people involved and resources. The first macro-area, which concerns integration, contains some guidelines about the learning of Italian as a second language. Again, the acquisition of Italian is considered vital in order for the process of integration to be effective. Some resources for achieving this goal are identified in Italian-L2 laboratories and linguistic facilitators. This model includes also the valorisation of plurilingualism – by teaching, among other foreign languages, the mother tongues of the most represented communities in schools – and, again, the importance of intercultural education.

In February 2014, the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research, following the changes in migration flows and the increasing number of students from migrant backgrounds in Italian schools, issued new guidelines concerning the integration of foreign students, *Linee guida per l'accoglienza e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri*. Among the various issues taken into account, there are some considerations about Italian

as a second language. It is recognised, especially for newcomers, the necessity of a linguistic intervention, in the form of courses of Italian L2, which should take place 8 or 10 hours per week and should last more or less 3 or 4 months. These courses could group non-Italian-speaking students belonging to different classes and could be organised thanks to the collaboration with local authorities and directed projects.

It is also important to highlight, as reported in *Indicazioni nazionali e nuovi scenari* (MIUR, 2018), that all teachers in the curriculum should be involved in students' linguistic education, by having the teaching of the language of instruction as a primary goal. In this new multilingual and multicultural scenario, all teachers should be prepared to teach Italian as a second language.

Despite all the Laws and Ministerial memoranda, despite the proposal of an Italian model of integration, despite the effort in finding the right methods to integrate students from migrant backgrounds, in 2020, according to the National observatory for the integration of foreign students and intercultural education (2020), the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the lack of organisational and professional resources for students from migrant backgrounds and has increased inequalities in “a school system which was already far from being solid in terms of social equity, which is often not capable of guaranteeing equal educational opportunities to everyone and of compensating for disparities arising from initial socio-cultural differences”²⁶ (p.1). In this respect, the Observatory, at the end of the 2019/2020 school year, tried to outline some operational proposals. First of all, the closure of schools and courses, which are the privileged places to practice Italian as a second language, determined an interruption in the process of learning and, in some cases, the risk for the linguistic schoolwork to be deteriorated. Therefore, some proposals were the launch of a national Italian-L2 plan, involving also RAI (the national public broadcasting company of Italy), the sharing of materials experimented during lockdown, the promotion of tandem projects involving tutor or older school mates and the promotion of Service-Learning projects involving class mates, also in an intercultural perspective. Again, the importance of Italian-L2 laboratories is underlined, especially with regard to a possible reclosure of schools, which has happened during the school year 2020/2021. The proposals concern the organisation of Italian-L2 laboratories both during school hours and extracurricular hours and the employment of specialised Italian-L2 teachers in schools, also by collaborating with external organisations. Other proposals concern the realisation of study-support projects and the employment of linguistic and cultural mediators to help and motivate foreign students, as

²⁶ My translation.

motivation may decrease during online learning. Finally, as far as online learning is concerned, proposals concern the elaboration of new guidelines which take into account also the foreign component and the elaboration of activities with facilitated language.

1.7 The FAMI VOCI Project

It is now clear how important are Italian-L2 laboratories for newcomers and, in general, for students from migrant backgrounds. An Italian-L2 laboratory in Mestre (Venice) was also the context where our research took place. This laboratory belongs to the Project *V.O.C.I. – Vivere Oggi Cittadini in Italia*²⁷ and is funded by *FAMI – Fondo Asilo Migrazione Integrazione 2014 – 2020* (in English AMIF – Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund). AMIF is an EU Fund, established for the period between 2014 and 2020, which aims at achieving four specific objectives concerning asylum, legal migration and integration, return, solidarity²⁸. The Project V.O.C.I., which is in partnership with the Municipality of Venice, started in 2019 and should end in 2021. The Project is directed to immigrants, especially to vulnerable people, such as pregnant women, victims of trafficking, minors risking scholastic exclusion and early school leaving, people with low levels of education or illiterate people. Since 2019, there have been organised Italian-L2 first-literacy courses, courses on Civic Education (such as finding work in Italy, health in Italy, etc.), Italian-L2 courses in Preschools for children and their parents, extracurricular laboratories for minors and teacher trainings concerning migrant minors' integration (Università Ca' Foscari, n.d.).

The Italian-L2 laboratory in which our research project took place was for students from migrant backgrounds attending the third year of Middle School and who had an exam at the end of the school year. This laboratory, which started in mid-February, lasted 84 hours and was divided into 4 months (2 hours per day and 4 days per week). The students were enrolled in different Middle Schools in the Municipality of Venice.

During the course, we helped students strengthen their communicative skills, both oral and written, and made them approach the language necessary to understand contents at

²⁷ Literal translation: Living today as citizens in Italy.

²⁸ The four different objectives are defined by the European Commission (n.d.) as follows:

- **“Asylum:** strengthening and developing the Common European Asylum System by ensuring that EU legislation in this field is efficiently and uniformly applied;
- **Legal migration and integration:** supporting legal migration to EU States in line with the labour market needs and promoting the effective integration of non-EU nationals;
- **Return:** enhancing fair and effective return strategies, which contribute to combating irregular migration, with an emphasis on sustainability and effectiveness of the return process;
- **Solidarity:** making sure that EU States which are most affected by migration and asylum flows can count on solidarity from other EU States.”

school. We proposed some activities to review some grammar and taught them to write descriptive texts. We helped them use study tools such as conceptual maps, historical timelines and map keys. We explored some topics of Geography and History. We helped them develop the integrated skill of note-taking, which we thought being extremely important as a preparation to High School. Finally, we supported them in the drafting of texts for their final essay²⁹, which would be presented during the final exam that indicates the end of the first cycle of education.

²⁹ Tesina.

2. Facilitating Italian L2 in a Mixed Abilities Class

Three key concepts may be isolated in this title: Italian as a second language (L2), Mixed Abilities Class and Linguistic facilitation. They act as theoretical framework for our research project and will be defined and presented in the following sub-chapters.

2.1 Italian as a Second Language (L2)

The concept of language education refers to all those activities carried out in order for the faculty of language to emerge: Everyone has the capability to acquire a mother tongue, the languages present in the environment, and also other languages during their lifetime (Balboni, P. E., 2018).

In the field of Language Teaching, languages are defined as follows (Balboni, P. E., 2015; 2018):

- First Language (L1): it is the mother tongue, present in the family environment, it is the language acquired since birth
- Second Language (L2): language that is found also outside school
- Foreign Language (FL): language studied at school, not present in the environment, the linguistic input is given only by teachers
- Ethnic Language: language of the community of origin
- Classical Language: such as Greek and Latin, they are the languages of literary, philosophical, juridic texts

For the purposes of our research, this chapter will take into consideration the concept of Italian as a Second Language.

Serragiotto (2009) reports the definition of Second Language which can be found in the *Dizionario di glottodidattica*, in the ITALS³⁰ website, and which, therefore, may act as a terminological reference, especially in the Venetian context.

Second language is not a synonym of foreign language, as only a second language is found in the environment outside school: Italian is a second language (ital2 in the Italian literature) for all those people from migrant backgrounds living in Italy. A lot of the linguistic input comes from students, and it may be used by teachers as a starting point for designing their didactic actions. Motivation is usually immediate and instrumental (Serragiotto, G., 2009, p.35).

³⁰ ITALS is one of the four laboratories which act in the field of language teaching and communication. ITALS concerns Italian as a Second and Foreign Language (Italiano Lingua Seconda e Straniera). Further information may be found in its website: <https://www.itals.it/chi-siamo>

The characteristics of a Second Language, which will now be presented, synthesises the works by Balboni (2000; 2014; 2015), Caon (2005) and Serragiotto (2009; 2016).

Table 1: Characteristics of Ital2

Characteristics of Ital2	
The nature of language	<p>Ital2 is necessary for communication both in scholastic and extra-scholastic environments. At school, it is the language used for studying and for transmitting disciplinary contents.</p> <p>In the extra-scholastic environment, students experience both regional varieties and dialects, and, in the case of mass media, standard Italian.</p>
Presence in the environment and nature of input	<p>Migrants are constantly immersed in the language. Ital2 is present both in scholastic and extra-scholastic environments.</p> <p>In scholastic environments the input may be both controlled (the language used by teachers) and uncontrolled (Ital2 spoken with peers); in extra-scholastic environments the input is uncontrolled.</p>
Input availability	<p>Outside school, language exposition is unique, in ordinary communication utterances are usually not repeated and analysed.</p>
Motivation	<p>Motivation comes from communication and integration needs and will.</p> <p>Students' motivation is instrumental and psychological. From an instrumental point of view, students need to learn ital2 in order to be included in the host society, in order not to have communication problems, and in order to be able to study in an L2, which is fundamental for scholastic success. From a psychological point of view, knowing the language is fundamental in terms of integration and not to feel an outsider.</p>
Learning process	<p>Learning rhythms are variable, as they depend on people's personal characteristics. Ital2 can be learnt</p>

	<p>both in scholastic and extra-scholastic settings; the learning process may be guided by teachers, but also happen spontaneously outside school.</p> <p>The development of basic communicative competences is generally quick, whereas the development of competences for studying is slow.</p>
Learning strategies	Inductive strategies prevail: students listen, read, create hypothesis, check their hypothesis, both autonomously or asking for help to teachers or native speakers.
Students' knowledge	Each student knows one or more languages, sometimes belonging to different alphabets: This interferes in the learning process.
Teacher's role	Teachers are not linguistic models, they are guides. Sometimes students perceive the language used by teachers as too perfect and too formal with respect to the language heard and used in extra-scholastic situations.
Teacher's didactic plan	Teachers have a didactic plan, however, they have to take into consideration inputs and problems brought in class by students. Therefore, teachers cannot control the input, as well as what students learn autonomously outside school.
Types of activities	There can be activities based on pragmatic fallacies; however, in the majority of cases, they can involve authentic communication. In plurilingual contexts, the use of ital2 is a communicative necessity, as it probably is the only shared language among people.
Implicit cultural references	They are always implicitly present in the environment, they could be misinterpreted.
Testing and evaluation	<p>Although students learn ital2 spontaneously in the extra-scholastic environment, testing should include only those aspects learnt at school.</p> <p>Moreover, a continuous analysis of errors and continuous feedback is necessary.</p>

Use of technology	The use of movies and tv programmes is important for acquisition and reflection, however, not necessary for showing students the Italian culture, as it is present in the environment.
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Source: Balboni (2000; 2014; 2015), Caon (2005) and Serragiotto (2009; 2016). Personal elaboration.

2.2 Mixed Abilities Class

In the first chapter it was highlighted how classes, especially from the turn of the millennium, started changing in their composition, hosting more and more students from migrant backgrounds, coming from different countries, speaking different languages, and belonging to different cultures.

As stated by Balboni and Serragiotto (2006), such heterogenous contexts, characterised by the presence of different languages, different linguistic capabilities and different learning rhythms, shed a new light on the difficulty to use the old models employed in the Italian language-teaching scenario (i.e. rigid didactic units and frontal lessons).

Such heterogeneity is at the basis of the Mixed Abilities Class concept. In the Venetian background, the first group working on this was born in 2004 inside the aforementioned ITALS Laboratory at Università Ca' Foscari of Venice.

The definition of *Mixed Abilities Class*³¹ can be found in Caon (2006; 2008; 2016; 2020). This concept does not refer to the reality within a class, yet to a mode of observing the reality within a class. It focuses its attention on students' personal characteristics as sources of people's differentiation from one another. In this dimension, students' identity, which arises from the integration of innate biological factors and external socio-cultural factors, such as education, socio-cultural context, personal experiences, is taken into account. The factors that construct one's identity are considered as they influence students' learning capabilities and potentialities. Therefore, classes should no longer be conceived as a mere sum of different people, but rather as systems arising from the contribution of each person's differences. This means that heterogeneity is not a problem, but a resource, which needs to be valorised. Within this logic, differences are the parameter that should be used to guide students efficaciously along their linguistic-learning path.

The concept of Mixed Abilities Class can be found not only in the Italian reality but also in the international literature. Tonioli (2016) provided a review of some international

³¹ In the Italian literature: *Classe ad Abilità Differenziate (CAD)*.

studies and found out that their focus is mainly twofold: On the one hand, they focussed on the theoretical dimension, aiming at identifying the characteristics of Mixed Abilities Classes and at finding strategies and solutions for their management; on the other hand, they focussed on a theoretical-practical dimension, aiming at finding some operational proposals to be applied in class.

2.2.1 Characteristics of a Mixed Abilities Class

The concept of Mixed Abilities Class takes into consideration students' personal characteristics. Caon (2006) summarised the main personal factors that contribute to differentiation. They are personality, types of intelligences, which refer to Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, aptitude, motivation, cognitive development, cognitive styles, learning styles, and socio-cultural context.

Balboni (2014), by incorporating these factors with studies on hemispheric dominance, provided a distinction between two macro-categories that can be found in every class: Holistic students and analytic students. The former face problems globally, in a top-down logic, favouring a multisensorial approach; the latter start from details to reconstruct the global image, in a bottom-up logic, stopping in front of every unknown word. Teachers as well might be either holistic or analytical, what they should not do is favouring just the part of the class which is similar to them.

Alongside with personal characteristics, another key concept for Mixed Abilities Class is that of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), theorised by Vygotskij in 1934. It is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, L. S., 1978, p.86). Students are characterised by their own ZPDs, which, therefore, should be taken into consideration in class. According to Caon (2016), the guidance and collaboration with peers refer to teachers' or students' functions of scaffolding and tutoring.

By looking at these characteristics, it is easy to understand Balboni's (2018) statement that every class is a Mixed Abilities Class.

For the purposes of our research project, it is now important to outline the characteristics of multi-ethnic and plurilingual Mixed Abilities Classes in the Ital2 context, where, according to Balboni (2018), the maximum degree of differentiation may be found. These characteristics were outlined by Caon (2006, pp.17-22). When observing the reality inside classes, the elements that should be taken into account are:

1. Linguistic distance between students' mother tongue and Italian, which influences students' cognitive effort to learn Italian and, thus, their learning rhythms;
2. Cultural origin, as culture and language are strictly bound together; therefore, culture influences students' conceptualisations and categorisations;
3. Students' possibilities to learn Italian outside school;
4. Motivation, which should be at the basis of every learning process, and expectations connected to the migration flow; for instance, studying in Italy may be perceived as a possibility to better socio-economic and cultural conditions;
5. Influence of past knowledge and experiences: school-systems differences and values may impact on students' learning process in the host society;
6. Idea of educational relationship between teacher and students, which may be misinterpreted due to school-system differences (e.g. use of physical violence);
7. Psychological "problems" connected to the migrant condition, as the migrant condition leads very often to question one's own identity.

2.2.2 Management of a Mixed Abilities Class

In such a heterogeneous scenario, characterised by different variables and by different combinations of those variables, the traditional frontal lesson, intended as a transmission of information from teacher to passive students, no longer suits. Therefore, the didactic action should be reconceptualised: Language teaching should be conceived in terms of linguistic facilitation. This concept will be presented in the following sub-chapter.

2.3 The concept of Linguistic Facilitation

Linguistic facilitation means using different strategies that aim at creating contexts rich in diversified and motivational stimuli, and at creating meaningful relationships (Caon, 2010). These strategies, which can be communicative and didactic, are called by Luise (2006) "facilitating actions" and are employed by teachers to make oral and written inputs comprehensible (Cambiaghi and Bosisio, 2010).

The comprehensibility of input is one of the five hypotheses elaborated by Krashen in his Second Language Acquisition Theory (SLAT). Understanding an input means "that the acquirer is focussed on the meaning and not the form of the message" (Krashen, S. D., 2009, p.21). Only when the input is made comprehensible by teachers or peers (Bruner's *Language Acquisition Support System*), can each person's *Language Acquisition Device*

(LAD, theorised by Chomsky) proceed towards acquisition. We comprehend, and, therefore, acquire, inputs “that contain structure a bit beyond our current level of competence ($i + 1$)”, following a natural order of acquisition (Krashen, S. D., 2009, p. 21). The $i + 1$ concept is strictly connected to the aforementioned ZPD concept.

Comprehensibility of input is one of the characteristics of linguistic facilitation. Other features were identified by Caon (2010) and will now be presented. Within a logic of linguistic facilitation, inputs should be recursive yet diversified, in order for students to deepen a content by doing different mental operations. This is fundamental in order not to favour some students at the expense of others. Therefore, it is important to propose multisensorial activities, based on both linguistic and extra-linguistic codes. Real communication should be the goal of language teaching, and this can be achieved through the use of information-gap, problem-solving, or task-based activities. In line with this, interaction among peers and socialisation are key aspects, and one of their goals is building quality relationships. Interactions may be developed also through the employment of the web, which is also important for searching new contents. Other important features are interdisciplinarity, which is at the basis of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), and the valorisation of the metacognitive dimension, in order for students to become autonomous, to develop learning strategies, to retrieve knowledge acquired in the motherland and to be able to use their linguistic repertoire as a facilitating tool.

The humanistic-affective approach is the philosophy at the basis of linguistic facilitation. Five elements have to be remembered (Balboni, P. E., 2015):

1. The concepts of bimodality and directionality: differential, yet complementary, modalities are associated with each hemisphere (Danesi, M., 1988). The left modality is analytical, connected to analytical, sequential, logic tasks, whereas the right modality is global, connected to holistic, simultaneous, analogic tasks. Directionality refers to the fact that the bimodal use of the brain follows a specific direction, from the right hemisphere to the left hemisphere;
2. The emotional dimension, which is fundamentally important especially with children and adolescents;
3. The natural order of acquisition;
4. Meaningful learning: Novak (2010) explained that “meaningful learning results when the learner chooses to relate new information to ideas the learner already knows” (p. 23);
5. Idea that knowledge is constructed by students in their minds, construction will be quicker and more solid when students work with their peers.

We will see how all these aspects are fundamental for linguistic facilitation.

Favaro (2002, in Caon, F., 2009) shows how linguistic facilitation is multidimensional, as it involves the dimensions of relationship, methods, contents, written and oral language. It is important to remember that facilitating actions, tools and resources, used in each dimension, should not be employed statically: Observing and analysing the class are fundamental prerequisites in order to personalise the didactic action according to each context. Some facilitating actions will now be presented.

2.3.1 Social Mediation Methodology

It was previously mentioned that the traditional frontal lessons, based on transmission of knowledge, cannot be employed within multi-cultural and plurilingual Mixed Abilities Classes. According to Minello (2006), in order for transmission of knowledge to take place, it is necessary that teachers and students possess the same mental structures, that students possess knowledge on what is being taught, that students have the ability to organise autonomously new contents. According to research, these conditions do not take place within Mixed Abilities Classes. Therefore, teacher mediation, based on the centrality of teachers and not of students and of learning, should be substituted by Social Mediation Methodologies, in which learning is the result of students' active actions (Minello, R., 2006). Students become the protagonists of their learning process, they are actively involved in the construction of knowledge, also through interaction with their peers (Caon, F., 2008; 2010; 2016; 2020).

Teachers should become learning facilitators, who motivate students' interest, recall students' past knowledge, create connections with new contents, and make the reorganisation of students' mental schemes possible (Caon, F., 2008). Moreover, teachers should focus their attention on facilitating the creation of quality relationships, as they impact linguistic learning; on making inputs comprehensible, as this is fundamental for the construction of knowledge and the development of strategies; on potentiating the metacognitive dimension, in order for students to become autonomous and conscious of their learning styles; and on making cultural references clear, as they may determine conflicts (Caon, F., 2006).

Two important Social Mediation Methods are Cooperative Learning and Peer Tutoring.

Cooperative Learning

This method, presented by Rutka (2006), is particularly important within multi-cultural and plurilingual Mixed Abilities Classes, as it valorises heterogeneity and aims at including all students, despite their personal, linguistic, cultural, cognitive differences.

Students cooperate in small groups in order to achieve a shared goal: The contribution of all students is necessary for the completion of a given task. Thanks to Cooperative Learning, students become the real protagonists of their learning process; they develop interpersonal relationships, which become a fundamental resource for learning; they learn how to construct knowledge and negotiate meanings; they develop critical thought and are immersed in meaningful learning.

As far as Ital2 learning is concerned, Cooperative Learning increase students' possibility to communicate and to confront with their peers, in a setting where anxiety is considerably reduced.

Rutka (2006) summarises the five key elements of Cooperative Learning:

1. Positive interdependence: the contribution of all students is necessary for reaching a goal;
2. Face-to-face promotive interaction: it refers to the emotional climate in the group, which should be positive;
3. Interpersonal and group skills: pre-requisites for working efficaciously in group;
4. Individual and group accountability: accountability towards the group, in order for it not to fail in reaching a goal; towards the task, which has to be carried out in the best possible way; towards the teacher, who has expectations on each student;
5. Group processing: groups evaluate their work efficacy.

Peer tutoring

This method is important as students are considered a source of knowledge. Each student's expertise and competences contribute to the group's collective knowledge, every student can teach something to their peers. In a multi-cultural and plurilingual context, Caon (2006) noticed that students from migrant backgrounds could recall and teach their linguistic, cultural, but also psychomotor knowledge and competences.

Caon (2006) identified the benefits of peer tutoring: The tutor, by explaining something to their peers, develops cognitive and metacognitive strategies. This method promotes personal confidence and self-esteem; it involves different intelligences; it gives the possibility to everyone to become linguistic tutor. Moreover, students who are tutored

learn in a non-anxiogenic setting, as they confront and socialise with their peers (Caon, F., 2008).

2.3.2 Ludic language teaching

This methodology involves the employment of games for the achievement of educational goals and for the development of communicative skills. The ludic dimension is really important as it involves many competences at a time, linguistic, cognitive, affective, social, psychical, emotional, cultural (Caon, F., 2006). Especially with plurilingual Mixed Abilities Classes, it enables the valorisation of different intelligences, as it involves different sensory channels at a time, a fundamental feature for complete acquisition (Freddi, G., 1990; in Caon, F., 2009). Games employ different codes, both linguistic and extralinguistic, for instance they may involve the use of language and movement. This is a key element for learning. As a matter of fact, studies by Ekwall and Shaker, reported in Caon (2009, p.63), showed that “People remember 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they see and hear, 70% of what they say, 90% of what they do and say”. One of the methods that are based on both language and movement is Asher’s T.P.R. (Total Physical Response, 1977). It is useful especially during the first phases of Ital2 learning, as, by not forcing language production, it respects students’ silent period and learning rhythms. At the same time, it checks students’ comprehension of a given input (Caon, F., 2009).

Another key element of ludic methodology is the role covered by language: Italian becomes significant as it transmits necessary information, such as game procedures (Balboni, P. E., 2015). Moreover, games are motivating as they absorb students, therefore, they favour Krashen’s *rule of forgetting*, which states that people acquire a language better when they forget that they are learning it (Caon, F., 2006, p.47).

2.3.3 Plurilingualism and pluriculturalism

This facilitation resource was explored by Cambiagli and Bosisio (2010). Within a plurilingual and pluricultural logic, linguistic and cultural heterogeneity are no longer perceived as a problem but as a positive resource. Linguistic variety, together with students’ needs, previous knowledge and personal characteristics, should be employed to construct a personalised didactic action. Therefore, linguistic and cultural variety should not be repressed yet taken advantage of.

If teachers know their students' mother tongue, they could use contrastive analysis and foresee both possible difficulties and those linguistic and cultural contents which are more comprehensible for their class. In the Ital2 context, however, there is a low possibility to know all the class' linguistic repertoire. Therefore, the teacher should employ other facilitating strategies based on students' plurilingualism, for instance intercomprehension among related languages. It refers to the possibility to understand people who possess another, but related, mother tongue, without particular effort. It implies learning receptive strategies which are "quicker to acquire and less 'intimidating' to use than producing discourse in a foreign language" (European Union, n.d. p.3).

However, there are cases in which students' mother tongues are not related to Italian, the target language. Therefore, Cambiagli and Bosisio (2010) suggest that in those cases a reconceptualisation of the general and universal notions (e.g. notions of time and space) is necessary. In order to make them comprehensible, they need to be reconstructed in the students' mind³². The two authors mentioned other important facilitation resources, such as intercultural dimension, knowledge of typological distance among languages, and the use of bridge languages, such as English, French and Spanish, which students might have learnt in their countries. This is supported also by Balboni (2010), who suggests that students' mother tongues or bridge languages may be occasionally employed in order for key words and key concepts to be made comprehensible.

To sum up, Cambiagli and Bosisio (2010) state that the real resource for linguistic facilitation is the interdependence of communicative competences. This recalls Cummins' developmental interdependence hypothesis (1979), which "proposes that the development of competence in a second language is partially a function of the type of competence already developed in L1 at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins" (p.222).

2.3.4 CLIL – Content and Language Integrated Learning

It is a methodology which strictly connects disciplinary content and language, having as a main goal content learning. However, at the same time, this methodology potentiates the use of a foreign or second language (Serragiotto, G., 2014). CLIL can be considered as a facilitation tools for students from migrant backgrounds in Ital2 contexts, as, by learning contents in Ital2, students also learn the language. Balboni (2014) underlined

³² E.g. during our case study, it was necessary to teach students how we count time in Italy, using a.C. (avanti Cristo, before Christ) and d.C. (dopo Cristo, after Christ / Anno Domini).

how the CLIL methodology develops student's global-comprehension ability and compensation mechanisms which can be activated in front of unknown words.

Serragiotto (2014) highlighted that, within CLIL lessons, the teacher can employ other facilitation strategies in order to make input comprehensible, such as repetitions, reformulations, explanations. Teachers may use graphs, photos and images, conscious use of intonation and gestures. In addition to this, teachers may simplify authentic texts (textual simplification will be discussed in the third chapter).

2.3.5 Facilitation of contents

D'Annunzio (2014) suggested that also the choice of contents is important in terms of facilitation, at least during first phases and in line with Ministerial dispositions. Those contents, in order to be comprehended, should be concrete and in part connected to students' past knowledge and experiences. Again, the intercultural dimension is a fundamental facilitation aspect: D'Annunzio (2014) stated that the intercultural dimension should play a key role during the planning of a curriculum.

Moreover, it is important to remember that learning contents is not a mere transmission of notions from teacher to passive students. Therefore, what teachers should do, in order to facilitate, is assigning tasks which respect students' linguistic level (Balboni, 2010) and guiding students in the development of strategies which support the reading of complex texts. For instance, teachers could focus on cognitive operator, namely those key terms and structures useful for different disciplines. Bortolon Guidolin (2016) highlighted the strategic importance of cognitive operators: They can facilitate the acquisition of Ital2 used for studying and can be used in Mixed Abilities Classes. The author provided some examples of cognitive operators. One is *Griglia delle sei domande*, a scheme where students organise information present in texts according to six questions: Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?. Another is *Linea del tempo* (timeline), which is greatly employed in school settings.

2.3.6 Facilitation of language

Balboni (2010), who focussed his attention on the ethic side of facilitation, provided some examples of strategies, useful for facilitating language, yet which do not give the illusion of a simplified version of Italian employed in every-day life. He argued that the complexity of Italian might be simplified and textual simplification will be discussed in

the third chapter. Especially during first phases, a simpler language might be employed. Moreover, he stated that students' interlanguage should be respected.

The concept of interlanguage, introduced by Selinker in 1972, was deeply explored by Pallotti (1998): Interlanguage is not a jumble of utterances and sentences full of errors, it is a system governed by precise linguistic rules, even though those rules represent only a portion (p. 21).

In addition to simplification, another facilitation strategy concerns the employment of extralinguistic codes, which accompany linguistic communication; especially in those cases when communication requires a difficult input, language could be made more comprehensible with, for instance, gestures, drawings, images.

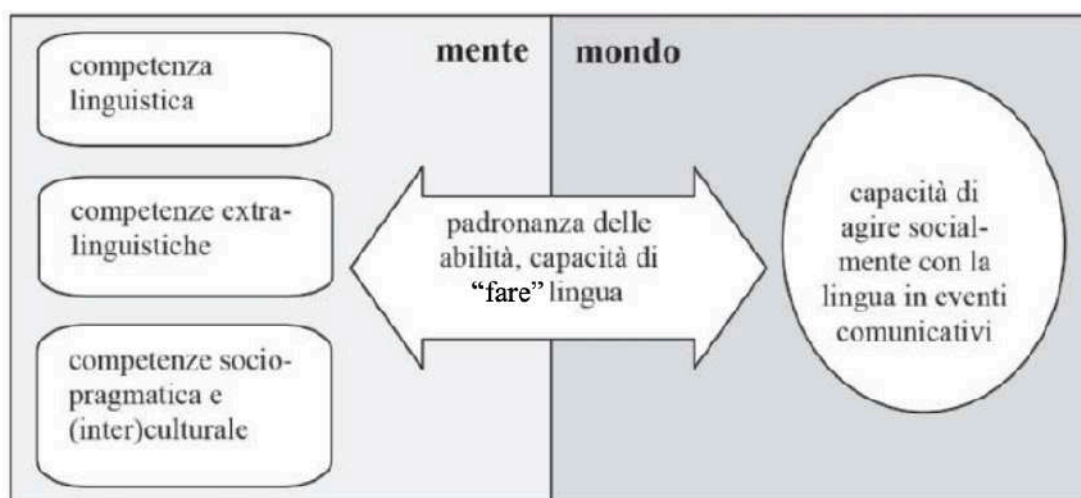
Balboni (2010) also underlined the importance of guiding students discover inductively the mechanisms of language, this will help students construct their own grammar little by little.

2.3.7 Facilitating the development of communication skills

The objective of linguistic education is the development of communicative competence, a concept which was introduced by Dell Hymes in 1967, who realised that linguistic competence is not sufficient and does not guarantee the ability to communicate.

A possible model of communicative competence is proposed by Balboni (2015) and showed in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1. Communicative competence model



Source: Balboni, P.E., 2015, p. 34

Balboni (2015) stated that the communicative competence is a mental reality and it is executed in the world, in communicative events, in social contexts, where using language corresponds to doing an action.

In this model, the mental reality is composed by three different nuclei of competence, which are linguistic competence, extralinguistic competence, socio-pragmatic and (inter)cultural competences. Only by mastering communication skills could mental competences become actions. In this model, communication skills are placed in the central arrow that connects mind to world. Communicative competence executed in the world is perceived as the ability of acting socially with language in communicative events (Balboni, P. E., 2015, pp.34-35).

Communicative skills could be grouped into primary and integrated skills.

The four primary skills used in communication are listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Listening and reading are defined receptive skills, speaking and writing are defined productive skills. An interactive skill also belongs to this group, namely dialogue, which concerns the co-construction of a text together with one or more interlocutors.

However, these skills are not sufficient, especially in school settings, where students are required to master also integrated skills, which concern text manipulation. They are called integrated as they combine different primary skills at a time. They are summarising, note-taking, paraphrasing, writing by dictation, translating, and transposing from one variety to another (Balboni, P. E., 2020).

In Italy contexts, especially in school settings, migrant students are asked to develop these skills in a short period of time, which might not reflect their learning rhythms. At the same time, students' interlanguage should be respected, and, for learning process to take place, it is necessary that student comprehend teachers' inputs. Therefore, how could teachers facilitate students' development of communicative skills? Bricchese (2020) dealt with this aspect and some proposals will be summarised here.

Listening and reading

As far as listening is concerned, teachers, during their explanations, should control their speech, by slowing down speed, by articulating words accurately, by employing different tones of voice in a functional manner, for instance for emphasising key terms, and by increasing their use of pauses. Moreover, their sentences should be short, not syntactically complex and following Subject-Verb-Object order. Teachers should reduce lexical variety and prefer common words; the meaning of fundamental microlinguistic terms should not be taken for granted and explicated. Moreover, they should employ more

nouns than pronouns, and reduce idiomatic expression which may be difficult, or even impossible, to be understood especially by students who do not master Italian yet.

Teachers could also ask questions to check students' comprehension. These may be answered either individually or by working in couples. Working with peers may also reduce anxiety. Teachers should also introduce contents by showing videos or other materials, in order to facilitate comprehension. Alternating explanations with moments of students' active work is also really important.

Written texts proposed by teachers should be accessible and, during the first phases, students should focus their attention on extensive comprehension. Moreover, creation of hypothesis about content should be stimulated, for instance by analysing the paratext. After activities focussed on global comprehension, students may be asked to scan the text and search a few details.

Speaking and writing

Although speaking, in the form of monologues, is employed in school settings a lot, teachers do not spend much time for training.

The production of both oral and written texts follows three phases, which are conceptualisation, i.e. looking for ideas, planning, i.e. organisation of ideas, and realisation, i.e. production of a text. During the conceptualisation phase, students may be shown an input and helped in the creation of associations, for instance by using spidergrams, and they could exchange ideas with their peers. During planning students could design a text outline or flowchart, which may be followed during production of a text. During oral presentations, students may use a visual support created by themselves, for instance an outline, a conceptual map, or a PowerPoint. Rehearsal with peers may also be a good strategy, as it may help soothe anxiety.

As far as written productions are concerned, students, especially during the first phases, should be asked to write short texts, on familiar topics. Also transcriptions of what was discussed orally may be a helpful strategy. Moreover, students should be given prompts, for instance a general scheme to be completed, or, as proposed by Daloso (2015; in Bricese, A., 2020), they could be given some incomplete sentences along the text that the student have to complete.

Dialogue

Collaboration with Italian native speakers is fundamental, especially during revision phases. The Italian peer may reformulate what was said by the foreign peer in a correct manner and add some information on the topic that is being discussed. Both students

develop this skill according to their zone of proximal development and in a safe place, where there should not be space for judgment.

Mazzotta (2010) proposes that with children dialogue may be facilitated by using didactic formats which imitate interaction between mother and child, and which are characterised by a high degree of contextualisation. These formats should be proposed in a ludic way and have the advantage of presenting grammatical forms in terms of lexical chunks, which facilitate memorisation. With adolescents and adults, teachers may propose task-based group works, where dialogue becomes meaningful.

Integrated skills

They are complex for foreign students, especially for newcomers, due to their high linguistic and cognitive demand.

Summaries should not be made only at the end of a chapter, but after each significant portion of a text. Thus proceeding, students develop summarising skill and, at the same time, both students and teachers check comprehension.

As far as paraphrasing is concerned, an important pre-requisite is the choice of an appropriate text, which should be linguistically accessible. Teachers may give pieces of paraphrase and ask students to match each piece with the correct sequence of the original text. Students may also be given pieces of paraphrase which have to be completed or boxes containing the meanings of more difficult words.

Writing by dictation may be preceded by activities which activate students' expectancy grammar. The text should be read in order to be comprehended. Moreover, teachers should read significative portions of a text, and not word for word.

As far as translation is concerned, teachers may ask students to translate certain words in their mother tongue. In those cases when a student's mother tongue is unknown, the teacher may observe student's self-confidence and rapidity in answering.

During the first phases, transcodification may be employed. Transcodification refers to the translation of a verbal text into another code.

Note-taking skill will be discussed in the third chapter.

One of the figures who act within linguistic-facilitation contexts is that of linguistic facilitator, who will be presented in the following sub-chapter.

2.4 *The figure of the Linguistic Facilitator in L2 Laboratories*

Students from migrant backgrounds enrolled in the Italian school system may be assisted by a lot of figures, whose roles and competences, however, are not always clear. Luise (2006) identified some of those figures. They are class teachers and support teachers, who probably are not trained in language teaching and, therefore, do not possess language-teaching competences; other teachers in the school, who may manage Ital2 laboratories despite not being trained in L2 teaching; cultural and linguistic mediators, who are native speakers of students' mother tongue and who facilitate relations between migrants and administrations (e.g. schools). The last figure is that of linguistic and cultural facilitators. According to Caon (2017), the term facilitator has two meanings. On the one hand, it is a way of conceiving one's role as a teacher, educator or mediator. On the other hand, it refers to an expert specialised in teaching Italian as a second language and who usually manages ital2 laboratories.

From a general point of view, teachers, in the role of facilitators, should employ a linguistic-facilitation logic. Therefore, they should favour students' active role during lessons, which is fundamental in terms of knowledge construction. They should favour interaction and cooperation among peers, and help students develop strategies for negotiating meanings. They should promote the development of social competence and relational skills, which are vital for the development of cognitive competence and emotional dimension. They should employ various types of activities, in order to involve and favour all students, who are characterised by different cognitive and learning styles, and by different types of intelligences. Moreover, they should help students develop metacognitive competence, which is fundamental in terms of autonomy.

In this chapter, we are particularly interested in the second meaning. The figure of the linguistic facilitator was first introduced in 2007 by the National observatory for the integration of foreign students and intercultural education, in the document *La via italiana per la scuola interculturale e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri*, already mentioned in the first chapter. Mazzocato (2017) underlined the lack of specific regulations concerning linguistic facilitators, therefore, their role and competences are not precisely delineated. They are considered extra-scholastic experts who may be employed in those cases when schools do not possess (sufficient) resources to face the high presence of students from migrant backgrounds.

However, within the language-teaching field, their role and competences were defined. Linguistic facilitators are figures who teach Italian as a second language in ital2 laboratories, within a logic of intercultural education. Intercultural education aims at

providing strategies and instruments useful for personal and relational growth, it aims at developing curiosity, tolerance, empathy, cultural and linguistic consciousness, critical thought, observation and listening ability in multi-cultural environments, where different cultures coexist (Caon, F., Battaglia, S., 2020). Linguistic facilitators facilitate the introduction of migrants to school, work and social contexts, as well as facilitate integration. As far as the scholastic context is concerned, their competences concern students' integration, didactic planning aimed at the development of students' Italian L2 competence, management of plurilingual and multicultural Mixed Abilities Classes and evaluation of students' learning process. They should possess linguistic, language-teaching, pedagogical, and intercultural competences (D'Annunzio, 2009; Caon, 2017; Mazzocato, 2017).

Some specific competences were outlined by D'Annunzio (2009) and Serragiotto (2009; 2017) and will be presented here:

- Knowledge of didactic of Italian L2;
- Knowledge of the principles of intercultural education and communication;
- Ability to manage foreign students' introduction to school;
- Ability to plan objectives and didactic actions, in synergy with schools: Linguistic facilitators should help teachers identify didactic resources and methods necessary especially during the first phases of students' introduction to school; they should support teachers in identifying students' prior linguistic competences, and in designing personalised learning plans for foreign students;
- Ability to select didactic materials as well as to develop teaching materials;
- Ability to employ simplification and facilitation strategies in order to make materials comprehensible; comprehensibility is fundamental for the development of students' interlanguage;
- Ability to employ differentiation and stratification;
- Ability to design specific curriculums;
- Ability to employ class-management techniques, in order to manage group dynamics, especially in multicultural, plurilingual mixed abilities classes;
- Ability to employ social mediation methodologies;
- Ability to analyse students' interlanguage;
- Ability to favour students' development of learning strategies and transversal abilities, such as employing maps and cognitive operators, as well as to help students recall prior knowledge and strategies learnt during their L1 acquisition;
- Knowledge of scholastic and work legislation;

- Ability to design appropriate testing and to evaluate students' performances and learning path.

This last competence is fundamental, especially in school settings. Evaluation is school teachers' role, however, linguistic facilitators should support them in observing the development of foreign students' linguistic and communicative competence in Ital2. Mazzocato (2017) observed that facilitators' intervention is useful especially during three phases of the evaluation process. First, during the introduction of foreign students to school, when the reconstruction of possessed linguistic competence is necessary. Second, during the learning process, when they observe the development of students' interlanguage, highlighting progresses and difficulties. According to students' needs, it may be necessary to modify and perfectionate the original didactic plan. And third, at the end of the linguistic facilitation path, in order to document the achieved communicative and linguistic progresses and objectives.

It was previously mentioned that linguistic facilitators manage Ital2 laboratories. Laboratories may take place either during school or after-school time, or during both. L2 laboratories are characterised by heterogeneity, in terms of cultures, languages, ages, and linguistic levels (D'Annunzio, 2009). Their goal is the acquisition of Italian for communicating and for studying (the distinction between these two dimensions will be presented in the third chapter). Caon (2016, pp.162-163) identified some key features of Ital2 laboratories. They are fundamental for the development of linguistic and cognitive competences, as well as of personal, social, cultural, and intercultural competences. They should promote construction of knowledge and construction of a "new" personal identity. They should consider each student as a whole, thus taking into account not only their linguistic needs (no aspect of Italian should be taken for granted), but also their motivational, affective, and emotional components. Moreover, especially within Ital2 laboratories, students' prior knowledge and linguistic competence should be valorised. The recall of certain cultural and linguistic aspects was demonstrated to have important advantages from a linguistic, cognitive, and psychological point of view. Within Ital2 laboratories, students' linguistic differences are not as important as at school, they are all learning Italian, therefore, they are not linguistically inferior to their classmates.

A key aspect is the methodology employed. In a multilevel context the frontal lesson cannot be the operative model, as there could be the risk for the input not to be comprehended (D'Annunzio, 2009), for this reason Ital2 laboratories employ social mediation and playful methodologies. In this respect, Italian gains a significant role, as it is used by students, who may possess different mother tongues, to communicate and to

negotiate meanings, and it is used, for instance, for the explanation of games (Balboni, P. E., 2015).

The objectives of Ital2 laboratories are manifold and concern the development of socialisation among peers, the promotion of collaboration, help, and respect, the employment of activities whose success is not entirely conditioned by linguistic knowledge, as they involve also extralinguistic codes, the acquisition of extralinguistic and socio-pragmatic competences of Italian, and the facilitation of disciplinary contents together with the development of academic proficiency (Mazzocato, G., 2017).

In line with their specific objectives, Ital2 laboratories may be defined either ItalBase or ItalStudio laboratories. ItalBase laboratories are useful for the development of the language for every-day communication. ItalStudio laboratories are useful for the development of those skills required at school, for the development of academic proficiency (Caon, F., 2008).

3. *BICS and CALP*

In the previous chapter it was mentioned that L2 laboratories may focus on the language used for communicating or on the language used for studying. The distinction between these two dimensions was introduced by Cummins in 1979.

Cummins elaborated the concepts of *BICS* (*Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills*) and *CALP* (*Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency*), which refer “to the very different time periods typically required by immigrant students to acquire conversational fluency in their second language (L2) as compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in that language (Cummins, J., 2013, p. 10).

Translated into the Ital2 context, these two dimensions, which are called ItalBase and ItalStudio, refer to the linguistic-learning process faced by students from migrant backgrounds once they are enrolled in the Italian school system.

Italbase refers to those communicative skills necessary for interacting with people in everyday-life situations, such as greeting, chatting with peers, asking for easy information, manifesting concrete needs. This language dimension is mainly oral, referred to the *hic et nunc*, and aims at overcoming students’ silent period (Favaro, G., 2000). These skills are context-dependent and not very cognitively demanding. Their acquisition requires around two years of exposition and study (Luise, M. C., 2003; D’Annunzio, B., 2014).

Italstudio refers to those academic skills required at school, to those transversal competences necessary for scholastic success. They refer, for instance, to the capability of comprehending disciplinary texts, making summaries, comprehending and producing argumentative texts (D’Annunzio, B., 2014). They are context-independent, abstract, and cognitively demanding. Acquisition of academic proficiency requires around five years of study (Luise, M. C., 2003). According to Ferrari and Pallotti (2005; in Luise, M. C., 2014), some pre-requisites are fundamental for academic tasks to be carried out. Students should be literate and possess general linguistic skills, at the same time, they should be able to comprehend precise scholastic lexicon and complex syntactic structures; they should possess textual, cognitive, and metacognitive competences; they should possess both general and scholastic encyclopaedia (p.31).

According to Luise (2003), although Cummins’ distinction is too rigid – and the author himself tried to overcome this rigid dichotomy – it is fundamental as very often teachers are convinced that students who possess BICS have no problems in carrying out linguistically-and-cognitively-demanding tasks. As a matter of fact, both Italian and foreign students who possess BICS not necessarily possess also academic proficiency.

This means that students' ability to study, especially in Ital2, to comprehend teachers' explanations, to read and comprehend disciplinary texts should not be taken for granted. A pre-requisite for studying and learning contents, and for carrying out cognitively-demanding tasks, is a deep work on language, which reduces the possibility of comprehension obstacles.

Cummins (1984) elaborated a matrix which shows the direction taken by L2 learning. In this schema, language proficiency is represented by the intersection of two continua, one horizontal and one vertical, as shown in figure 2.

Fig. 2. Cummins' matrix.



Source: Luise, M.C., 2003, p. 105

The horizontal continuum goes from context-dependent communication (on the left), such as chatting with a friend, to context-independent communication (on the right), such as reading an academic article. Therefore, this continuum goes from communication employed in everyday-life (on the left) to communication employed at school (on the right).

The vertical continuum concerns communication cognitive demand. It goes from low levels of cognitive demand (on top) to high levels of cognitive demands (at the bottom). The growth of communicative competence proceeds in a bottom-up logic: Linguistic tasks which, during the first learning phases, are cognitively demanding, once automatized and acquired, become easier, requiring low levels of cognitive demand.

These two axes create four different quadrants: Quadrant A in the top-left corner, quadrant B in the bottom-left corner, quadrant C in the top-right corner, and quadrant D in the bottom-right corner. Luise (2003) highlighted that this model may be used to identify some guidelines applicable in Ital2 contexts, as in these four quadrants there may be inserted examples of linguistic and communicative activities, which could be proposed to students according to their levels. The development of communicative competence follows a precise direction: From quadrant A, to B, to D. Linguistic and communicative learning should involve, during the first phases, activities which are context-dependent and that involve low cognitive demand. Caon (2005) underlines the importance of using didactic techniques based on students' primary needs and on direct experiences. The linguistic input should be connected to other codes, which facilitate comprehension and connections to students' prior knowledge. Little by little, the cognitive demand could be increased, and, only at a later stage, activities could be both cognitively demanding and context-independent. Therefore, during the first phases, teachers should focus on students' development of BICS, then propose activities slightly more cognitively demanding; only after these two passages could students be guided in their development of academic proficiency, necessary for facing scholastic activities. Menegaldo (2011; in Luise, M. C., 2014) identified the main skills that students should possess for studying. They should be able to comprehend teachers' oral explanations; be able to present studied contents in both oral and written forms; read and comprehend disciplinary texts; answer questions and interact with teachers and classmates; be able to read images and graphs; be able to paraphrase and to take notes.

These three phases of the Ital2 learning process, faced by students enrolled in the Italian school system, were studied by Favaro (2002; in Favaro, 2009, pp.292-293). During the initial phase, students start learning Ital2 for basic communication. The language learnt helps them satisfy their most urgent needs. The main objectives of this phase are the development of oral-message comprehension; the acquisition of Italian fundamental lexicon and grammatical structures; the development of basic reading and writing skills. In the end, students should be able to use Ital2 for communicating autonomously. During the second phase, called by Favaro *fase "ponte"* (bridge phase), students access the language useful for studying. According to Favaro (2009), it is probably the most complex phase, as it is directed to the strengthening of basic communicative skills, and, at the same time, to the development of cognitive and metacognitive competences useful for studying. During this phase, students should widen their lexicon and their knowledge of contents, they should learn to comprehend different texts, and be able to plan oral presentations. Students should be guided towards the acquisition of the language useful for studying. In

the bridge phase, teachers should act as learning facilitators and should employ strategies, such as textual simplification, facilitation, stratification, and diversification, in order to make disciplinary texts accessible. These strategies will be presented in the following sub-chapters. The last phase is that of common learning. The focus is no longer on the acquisition of Ital2, however, this does not mean that teachers should ignore the linguistic dimension, in fact, they should always intervene in case of difficulties. Peculiar is that foreign students' point of view may act as a catalyst for intercultural reflections.

In order to understand the complexity of ItalStudio, we will now outline its main characteristics (Caon, 2005; Luise, M. C., 2014; Cantani and Messina, 2002; in Luise, M. C., 2014 Serragiotto, G., 2014).

It can be both oral and written, used by teachers during their explanations, found in disciplinary texts and didactic materials. Whereas teacher may control their speech, as already mentioned in the second chapter, disciplinary texts employed in school settings cannot do this, and, therefore, they result too complex and hardly accessible, sometimes also to Italian students.

ItalStudio shares many features with microlanguages, i.e. the linguistic code used in scientific settings by experts of a specific area. A fundamental difference between disciplinary texts and microlinguistic texts is the recipient, not a group of experts, who master microlanguage, but a group of students, who are still developing their academic proficiency.

ItalStudio is abstract, decontextualised, with many cultural implicit references, whose decodification may be difficult especially for foreign students. Language may be used in a metaphorical manner and be full of idiomatic expressions. In the majority of cases, contents are not familiar and recall encyclopaedic knowledge which is not necessarily possessed by students. A peculiar feature of disciplinary texts is their information density. All this is expressed in a language which is both semantically and grammatically complex. The lexicon used is specific and syntax is characterised by subordination and uncommon conjunctions. Lots of anaphora, cataphora, and implicit elements may be employed. Moreover, in the majority of cases, register is formal.

Therefore, the necessity of creating accessibility, especially for foreign students, becomes clear. What can be done is, on the one hand, working on students themselves and on their capabilities, teaching learning strategies in order for them to become autonomous learners; on the other hand, teachers can use some strategies, such as simplification and facilitation, differentiation and stratification. These aspects will be discussed in the following sub-chapters.

3.1 Strategies for learning in a second language

Linguistic and disciplinary learning should not be an end in itself. Learning should include also the development of autonomy. This could be done by guiding students in a “learning to learn” process (Brown, 1978; in Bortolon Guidolin, G., 2016, p.181). For instance, students may be helped to identify the most suitable learning strategies according to their personal characteristics and to contexts.

O’Malley and Chamot (1990) defined learning strategies as “the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information” (p.1). Their research aimed at identifying the most-used strategies within second-language-learning contexts. Those strategies were then classified according to three macro-areas: Metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, social/affective strategies. The first are skills that plan for, monitor, and evaluate learning-activity success. Cognitive strategies concern all those operations addressed to incoming information in order for learning to be enhanced. The latter involve interaction with other people and mental control (O’Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U., 1990, pp. 44-45).

Starting from this classification, Chamot and Robbins (2005) developed a Model, named CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach), whose goal is students’ development of essential academic content and language. CALLA objectives are manifolds, they include the valorisation of past knowledge and experiences, and the creation of relations between these and academic learning in a new language and culture; the development of learning strategies and study skills; the development of interpersonal abilities also through the employment of cooperative-learning tasks (Chamot, A. U., & Robbins, J., 2005).

The two authors divide all strategies in two subgroups: Metacognitive strategies and task-based strategies. The first group comprehends four strategies, which have to be employed in different moments. Before beginning a task, students should organise and plan, set goals and identify proper strategies to carry out the tasks. During a task, students should monitor and identify problems. After the completion of a task, students should evaluate their work. The last strategy in this group concerns identifying and arranging conditions for better learning (manage your own learning).

Task-based strategies are divided in four sub-groups. Each group focusses its attention on the use of knowledge, senses, organisational skills, and variety of resources. The first sub-group comprehends strategies such as using background knowledge, making inference and predictions, personalising, transferring linguistic knowledge to other languages and using cognates, and paraphrasing. The second sub-group concerns the use of extra-

linguistic codes, such as audio-visual materials, and kinaesthetic sense. The third subgroup includes finding and applying patterns and rules, classifying and sequencing elements, taking notes, using graphs or charts to organise concepts, summarising, and using selective attention. The last group contains strategies such as the use of information sources, of cooperation, and of self-talk.

A clear and organised classification of all those strategies may be found in Chamot & Robbins' *The CALLA Model: Strategies for ELL Student Success* (2005), which is available online.

Making students aware of what has to be done, of what learning strategies should be activated in order to successfully carry out difficult tasks, has a positive effect on students' autonomy, strength, and competence (D'Annunzio, B., & Luise, M. C., 2008).

One of the strategies identified by Chamot and Robbins (2005) is of particular interest for our research project: Note-taking.

3.1.1 Note-taking

By taking into consideration what was previously said, it could be stated that note-taking has a dual nature. On the one hand, it may be perceived as an academic-proficiency skill that students should possess for studying, and which is hugely employed especially from High School onwards; on the other hand, it may be one of the learning strategies that students use, according to CALLA Model, to learn academic language and content. Moreover, Balboni (2018) highlighted that in the Italian tradition, this skill is basically ignored by teachers. Therefore, from our point of view, particular attention should be given to note-taking, especially in Ital2 contexts, where frontal teaching is still deeply rooted, leading foreign students to spend lessons staring into the void³³.

Note-taking belongs to a group of text-transformation skills, which contribute to the ability to do with language. Note-taking refers to the production of a written text, starting from the reception of either written or oral contents. Balboni (2014) highlighted a peculiar feature of note-taking, namely the addressee is the same person who produces those notes, therefore, the elements used, both linguistic and extralinguistic, can be decoded only by the author-addressee.

Note-taking is a hugely demanding activity as it requires not only linguistic transformation, from one input to another, but also cognitive reconceptualization. Three components may be identified in note-taking (Balboni, P. E., 2018):

³³ The majority of students in our case study confessed this to us.

1. A linguistic component, meaning that a text should be simultaneously comprehended and written down in a personal and clear way;
2. An extralinguistic component, composed by visual elements functional for signalling relations among concepts;
3. A cognitive component, meaning the ability to analyse information and decide what information is either relevant or only additional.

Two different formats were proposed by Balboni (2015) in order to develop this skill. One is guided note-taking, which employs a scheme given by the teacher. This format is based on the mechanism of scanning, namely on selective listening or reading in order to find only some details. The other is non-guided note-taking. Balboni (2014; 2015; 2018) suggested that teachers could propose a challenge to their students, that is taking notes on a small text, and only after sometime trying to reconstruct the original text.

Brichese (2020) highlighted the importance of facilitating foreign students' note-taking. According to students' linguistic level, teacher may give them sentences that have to be completed and which, in the end, will give a synthesis of the original explanation. Another possibility is giving them some schemes presenting key terms or key aspects and that have to be enriched with details. At higher levels, students could be given a schematic structure that has to be completed.

Yasemin Kirkgöz (2010) in a study with 32 learners of English as a second language, identified some task-based activities useful for the promotion of note-taking skills. One of the strategies was teaching students abbreviations and symbols, which are useful to take notes more quickly. This strategy was practiced by asking students to make necessary abbreviations on unabbreviated notes. Another key element identified in this study was that of presenting notes in a clear and logic way. To do so, numbers, for instance, might be employed. In line with Balboni (2018) and Brichese (2020), Yasemin Kirkgöz (2010) employed incomplete schemes of the lecture, with headings and main points, which students had to complete with main information. Guided note-taking proved useful in that experimental study. "A quick look at the incomplete outline of the lecture helped the students listen selectively and actively without attending to every word" (Yasemin Kirkgöz, 2010, p.4349). Another key element was a pre-lecture discussion, which helped students create hypothesis on the lecture content.

All these elements were taken into account in our research project.

3.2 Simplification and Facilitation

Two resources that teachers may use to support foreign students in the passage from bridge phase to common-learning phase are simplification and facilitation. These strategies are useful to make the transmission of contents in Ital2 comprehensible, a prerequisite for successful learning. The main difference between simplification and stratification lies in the fact that the former concerns actions on a text, whereas the latter concerns actions on students (D'Annunzio, B., & Luise, M. C., 2008).

3.2.1 Simplification

Simplification may be used both with oral and written texts.

It was previously mentioned that teachers may control their speech during explanations. Luise (2003) identified some key elements useful for the simplification of oral language. The language used by teachers should not be abstract but contextualised, and, when possible, favour connections between contents and students' experience. Language should be redundant, teachers may repeat key terms, may reformulate the most important contents, may use different codes to express the same content, they could support their explanations with audio-visual materials and gestures. All this enhances comprehension. Teachers should use various tones of voice in a functional way, be precise in articulating words, and slow down their speech rate. Simplification means also interaction between teachers and students, as negotiation of meanings becomes collective, and the elaboration of information is carried out in group.

Simplification of written language is more laborious. It refers to interventions on texts, which include rielaboration of lexicon, syntactic structures, contents, information structure, in order to make disciplinary texts more accessible (Lombardi, G., 2018). The outcome is what Piemontese called a controlled-writing text (1996; in Pallotti, 2000).

Simplified texts are a resource that may be employed to overcome temporary linguistic obstacles (D'Annunzio, B., & Luise, M. C., 2008). Simplification is very useful during the first phases of the learning process, as it reduces the frustration of not being able to understand a text which is too difficult. However, simplified texts are part of a language-learning process, therefore, they are not models for students, as they may result imprecise (Lombardi, G., 2018).

Disciplinary texts should be both readable and comprehensible. Readability depends on linguistic aspects, such as terms used, word length, sentence length. Comprehensibility depends on the logic and conceptual organisation of texts (Lombardi, G., 2018).

Simplification strategies are manifold (Pallotti, G., 2000; Luise, M. C., 2003; Serragiotto, G., 2011; Lombardi, G., 2018). From a lexical point of view, common words should be preferred, also in assignments. They might be chosen among those in the *Vocabolario di Base* by De Mauro (1980), which represents the portion of language used by the majority of Italian speakers. Being frequent words, they should be learnt since first contact phases with Ital2. All those specific words not belonging to *Vocabolario di Base* should be explained. In this respect, explanatory notes may be used. Nominalisations, personifications, abstract and idiomatic expressions should be avoided. Concrete references are more comprehensible. In line with this, acronyms, abbreviations, symbols, Latinisms, Graecisms should be avoided. When they are necessary, such as a.C. and d.C., they should be explained. Redundancy should be favoured, for instance by using nouns instead of pronouns. From a morpho-syntactic point of view, sentences should be short and prefer a Subject-Verb-Object order. Subjects should be expressed, and impersonal forms avoided. Verbs should be finite and active. Historical present is preferable to past forms. Double negatives should be avoided. Parataxis should be preferred to hypotaxis, embedded sentences should be avoided. From a pragmatic and textual point of view, information should be presented in a temporal and consequential way. Logic connections should be made explicit. Detailed information should follow general information. The division into paragraphs is functional: Each passage from one topic to another should be signalled by the start of a new paragraph and by the use of titles and subtitles. Imagines, schemes, videos are also important. Disciplinary texts may include implicit cultural references. They have to be made explicit, in order to be analysed, whereas racist and not respectful elements should be eliminated.

3.2.2 *Facilitation*

The second chapter outlined different facilitating strategies which can be employed in class. In this sub-chapter facilitation is conceived as a set of didactic activities employed during reading, to make authentic texts comprehensible, both in terms of language and content. Within such a logic, progressive activities should be designed and employed in order for students to comprehend all topics, information, connections, and terms present in the text (Lombardi, G., 2018). Those activities take place during four different reading phases (Grassi, R., 2003; Lombardi, G., 2018, pp.6-7). First, during the pre-didactic phase, the teacher analyses the text and tries to find all linguistic, logic, and content elements which may be difficult for students. The teacher identifies those elements but does not modify and simplify the text. Second, during the pre-reading phase, the text is

presented, students should be motivated, their interest and curiosity should be enhanced. Teachers' aim is the elicitation of encyclopaedic knowledge already possessed by students. For instance, spidergrams, brainstorming, lexicon elicitation techniques may be employed. Students should identify some key terms inductively. This, together with the exploration of the paratext, may help formulate hypotheses on the content of the text. Key terms, especially those belonging to the microlanguage, and which are necessary for comprehension, should be clarified, also through the use of word-picture or word-definition associations. The pre-reading phase should employ all sensory channels, in order to favour all cognitive and learning styles. Third, the reading phase is the most important part of the facilitation process. The text may be read many times, with different goals, and each time it should be accompanied by specific and gradual activities. Orientational reading (skimming) is useful to have a general overview. Students should focalise their attention on cohesion elements, key terms, starts of a paragraph. During explorative reading (scanning), students look for precise information, highlight key terms, search dates, formulas, numbers, specific data. During intensive reading, they may elaborate different titles for each paragraph, recognise and explain connectors. After the teacher has explained the general structure of the text, students could study it (study reading), they could underline the most important information or create conceptual maps. Synthesis reading is useful for a successive oral or written presentation. Finally, recreative reading refers to the mere pleasure of reading and can be done in different moments. The final phase, called post-reading phase, aims at checking global, inferential, and linguistic comprehension, by employing true-false activities, cloze, table completion, closed-ended or open-ended questions. It also aims at content memorisation, by the employment, for instance, of maps and diagrams to be completed.

Facilitation enables students to work on authentic texts, to develop strategies which help analyse lexicon and content, interiorise the different microlanguages present in school settings and feel autonomous during the learning process.

3.3 Differentiation and Stratification

Differentiation and stratification are two other strategies at disposal of linguistic facilitators. They are two modalities useful for heterogeneity management and, above all, for the valorisation of students' differences.

3.3.1 Differentiation

Differentiation refers to the possibility for each student to develop different learning abilities, both in advantage contexts and in disadvantage contexts (Caon, F., 2008; 2016; 2020). This is made possible by the creation of diversified inputs, both from a linguistic point of view and as far as the techniques employed are concerned. Lexicon, structures, concepts, procedures could be interiorised by using strategies that sometimes are in line with a student's learning style and sometimes they are not. The didactic activities that are proposed stimulate all sensory channels, therefore, sooner or later, all cognitive and learning styles and all intelligences will be valorised.

Balboni (2006; in Caon 2008; 2016; 2020) proposes that, in Ital2 contexts, from a common input may derive diversified activities. Italian and foreign students may focus on different aspects of that input according to their zones of proximal development. This allows teachers to propose activities that may be perceived as challenging yet accessible by all students, therefore, not advantaging and not disadvantaging one part of the group. Caon (2008; 2016; 2020) identified some elements that can be differentiated. Teachers may employ different methodologies and techniques. For instance, although Social Mediation Methodologies were said to be important within plurilingual Mixed Abilities Classes, there may be students who are not inclined to work with their peers. Therefore, for them, being forced in doing cooperative-learning and peer-tutoring activities may result harmful. Couple- or group-work may be alternated with moments of individual work. Also rhythms of lesson management may be differentiated. The class may be divided into groups and each group works on differentiated worksheets, whose activities could be carried out according to students' rhythms. Input may be differentiated. According to Pienemann (1998; in Caon, 2008; 2016; 2020), input may be functional for comprehension, therefore, it may contain forms which cannot be processed by student; or it may be functional for production, therefore, it has to contain comprehensible forms, which can be reemployed by students. Finally, differentiation may concern didactic tasks. This takes into account the presence of multiple intelligences and of different cognitive and learning styles within a single class.

3.3.2 Stratification

Stratification is a strategy that takes into consideration each student's linguistic level, each student's zone of proximal development. It may be employed both with foreign students and with Italian native speakers.

Students should be divided into two or more groups, according to their level. However, stratification allows teachers to work on the same content. Each group approaches that content in a personalised way, according to its linguistic level.

A peculiarity of this strategy is that students proceed along the worksheet and carry out those tasks which are accessible according to their ZPDs. This is possible as worksheets are composed of different strata, designed ad hoc by teachers. Each stratum refers to a different degree of accessibility. Strata are organised according to an increasing degree of difficulty. Students could reach the stratum which is in line with their ZPDs (Caon, F., 2008; 2016; 2020).

Stratification may regard different elements, such as techniques, linguistic contents, disciplinary texts, activities on those texts, linguistic objectives to be achieved (D'Annunzio, B., & Luise, M. C., 2008).

Troiano (2019) defines stratification as a "sophisticated seriation activity" (p.7), as it involves a progressive complexification of tasks, contents, and language. Stratification takes into consideration Cummins' matrix presented above. In fact, stratification refers to a modulation of the cognitive and linguistic demand.

From a procedural point of view, stratification means identifying fundamental learning objectives according to *Indicazioni nazionali per il curricolo dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo d'istruzione* (2012). Such objectives should concern disciplinary content, language, and communicative skills. Then teachers should design accessible yet challenging didactic activities for each linguistic level. Moreover, teachers have to select the most appropriate techniques (Troiano, G., 2019).

Stratification respects students, their linguistic levels. It helps them follow the natural order of acquisition, which is fundamental for acquisition to take place. In line with this, Rastelli (2009; in Troiano, G., 2019) highlighted that scholastic failures can be avoided if universal sequences of acquisition are respected.

Part two: From Theory to Practice

4. The case study

In this chapter, our case study will be presented. We will describe the method employed, namely action research, and our hypotheses and research questions. We will delineate our participants' profile and present the tools employed for collecting data.

The case-study approach was chosen as it is suitable to be employed for studying diverse phenomena in diverse contexts with diverse participants, including adolescent immigrants, as reported by Dörnyei (2007). Case studies are defined by Stake (1995, in Dörnyei, Z., 2007) as the studies of the “particularity and complexity of a single case” (p.151), which could be people, a programme, an institution, an organisation, a community. They are the study of a phenomenon in context. Although this feature recalls ethnographic research, Nunan (1992) argues that the two approaches are different, as case studies are more limited in scope, they do not necessarily focus on context and cultural interpretation, and data can be collected through the employment of different methods, both qualitative and quantitative, as highlighted also by Verschuren (2003, in Dörnyei, Z., 2007). Case studies aim at the maximisation of “our understanding of the unitary character of the social being or object studied” (Dörnyei, Z., 2007, p.152).

Dörnyei (2007) reported Stake's (1995, 2005) classification of the types of case studies. They can be *intrinsic*, *instrumental*, or *multiple or collective*. This distinction depends on the degree of interest towards a particular case. We would argue that our case study is in between the first two categories, as it wants to understand “the intriguing nature of a particular case” (Dörnyei, Z., 2007, p.152), namely observing the development of our students in note-taking, and, at the same time, it aims at proving “insight into a wider issue” (Dörnyei, Z., 2007, p.152), namely at finding some strategies that could be applied also with other students and in other similar contexts. Stenhouse (1983, in Nunan, D., 1992) identified four different types of case studies: *neo-ethnographic*, *evaluative*, *multi-site*, and *action*. This last type is of particular importance for our research, as it refers to “an investigation carried out by a classroom practitioner in his or her professional context” (p. 78). This brings us to action research, which will be discussed in the following sub-chapter.

4.1 Method: action research

Action research is a form of qualitative research. Therefore, from a general point of view, it concerns open-ended and non-numerical data collected for instance through interviews, field notes, research journals, and diaries (Dörnyei, Z., 2007).

Action research started being employed in language education since the Eighties, by academics such as Kemmis (1958; 1987) and Easen (1985). A decade later, its employment started being significant also in Italy, especially as a consequence of the scholastic autonomy given to single schools and their teaching staff (Coonan, C. M., 2003). Its peculiarity is that it is carried out by teachers in natural settings, such as in schools, and especially within classes. As defined by Coonan (2003), it is “research carried out by teachers for teachers”³⁴ (p.8).

One of the situations which schools and teachers have to face nowadays is the management of plurilingual and multicultural classes. In the first chapter, we have seen that the presence of students from migrant backgrounds enrolled in the Italian school system has been growing annually. As already mentioned, during the 2018/2019 school year, there were 857.729 students from migrant backgrounds enrolled in the Italian school system, representing 10% of all students. The presence of diverse linguistic repertoires and of different cultures requires a reflection on topics such as students’ introduction to school, students’ learning, teaching modalities. According to Coonan (2003), action research may play a significant role in such reflections, and may help identify some possible paths of action.

In order to explore the main features that define action research, Coonan (2003) isolated some key concepts in Ebbutts’ definition (1985), which are “participants’ own practical actions”, “own critical reflection on effects of action”, “systematic study” (pp. 10-11). The first concept refers to the fact that research is carried out by teachers involved in the didactic action and not by external researchers. Therefore, the research object belongs to the real class or school setting and is identified and investigated by teachers. The second concept refers to a critical auto-analysis made by teachers on their didactic action, which may help introduce some changes in education. This is referred to as “reflection in action” and “self-reflective enquiry” (Coonan, C. M., 2003, p. 10). Self-reflection is fundamental in order for changes and improvements to take place. Finally, action research can be considered a systematic study as it requires the definition of phases, duration, and objectives.

³⁴ My translation.

By taking into consideration the features of action research identified by Coonan (2003), we will now present our research project.

Action research is situational, namely it concerns a specific class or school. One precise aspect of that class is taken into consideration and researched. Therefore, the solutions that may arise are specific for that context. Our case study took place during my university internship done in Mestre, in the Metropolitan City of Venice. It consisted in an Ital2 after-school laboratory for migrant students enrolled in the third year of Middle School. This laboratory, as mentioned in the first chapter, belonged to the Project *V.O.C.I. – Vivere Oggi Cittadini in Italia* and was funded by the EU Fund *FAMI – Fondo Asilo Migrazione Integrazione 2014 – 2020 (AMIF – Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund)*. This laboratory started on 19th October 2021 and ended on 19th May 2021. It took place four times a week, every Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, in the afternoon, from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm, in Mestre, Via Andrea Costa 38/d. The laboratory was managed by a group composed of a linguistic facilitator, two trainees³⁵, and a civil service volunteer.

The research that will be presented here originated and was carried out in class by the aforementioned group, under the supervision of Professor Graziano Serragiotto and postdoctoral research fellow Valeria Tonioli.

Another important feature of action research identified by Coonan (2003) is that it may have a double purpose. On the one hand, it may be used to solve problems; on the other hand, it can be used for other scopes, such as applying a new technique or an innovative methodology. Our research aimed at helping students learn note-taking in L2, also by applying stratification, and at finding some facilitating actions. Our findings were class-specific, in fact, generally, action research does not aim at giving generalisable data. However, our data might be informative in similar contexts, and some of the strategies we identified might be employed by other teachers in similar contexts.

In action research, control groups and the selection of a representative sample are not required. In our research, we did not have a control group and participants were not chosen from a wider sample³⁶. However, a possible follow-up study could include a control group, with whom strategies and stratification would not be employed. The comparison of data on the two different groups may shed light on the efficacy of those strategies and of the use of stratification in such a context.

³⁵ I was one of the two trainees.

³⁶ Even though we will see that one of our students had to be ruled out.

Another feature is that action research is empirical research, namely it is based on observation and on the collection of behavioural data. In our research project, observation data were collected through a research diary at the end of each lesson.

Although action research is not as rigorous as applied research, it follows three fundamental phases, which are action, observation, and evaluation. The planification of action is of primary importance. It is divided into three subphases, which concern the decision of the field of investigation, the decision of the research objective, and the preparation of the action plan (Coonan, C. M., 2003). Dörnyei (2007) highlighted that every research starts from a general topic, which needs to be developed into a research purpose.

According to this, our research started with a general topic, a general area of interest, namely note-taking in Italian as a second language. This topic was then developed into a purpose. Participants who attended our L2 laboratory showed some difficulties in studying in Ital2. On the one hand, this was due to their low proficiency in Italian as a second language. As a matter of fact, as mentioned in the third chapter, in order to develop cognitive academic proficiency, students should possess basic interpersonal communicative skills. On the other hand, we hypothesised that this may also be due to the fact that, especially in the new scholastic setting, they are not used to employing certain learning strategies, such as note taking. For this reason, by employing action research, we wanted to observe whether teaching them some strategies would help them improve. Above all, we wanted to focus on note taking, being this, from our point of view, a fundamental skill and strategy to develop, especially with students who are going to be enrolled in High School. Being our class a Mixed Abilities Class, we hypothesised that stratification, by respecting all students' ZPDs, would facilitate the development of such a skill and strategy. Moreover, we wanted to identify some facilitating actions which could be adopted by teachers in similar contexts, with students who are still developing and strengthening their basic communicative competences.

In order to fully understand the motivation underneath our research project, we will now understand why we chose to investigate specifically note-taking, why we focussed on Geography, and why we employed stratification.

First of all, we will try to explain why we chose note taking. In the previous chapter, it was mentioned that note taking is included in that group of skills reported by Menegaldo (2011; in Luise, M. C., 2014) that students should possess for studying. It was also mentioned that, according to Chamot and Robbins' (2005) CALLA Model, note-taking may be one of the learning strategies employed by students to learn academic language and content. Therefore, from our point of view, note-taking is a fundamental skill to

possess, especially from High School onwards. Although note taking requires a high linguistic and cognitive demand, and, as reported by Bricchese (2020), integrated skills are normally required to students with a B1 level, we are aware of two peculiar aspects of Italian school settings. First, as mentioned also in the previous chapter, only little attention is given to the development of such a skill; second, the tradition of frontal lessons, which in the majority of cases implies note taking, is still very rooted. Research, such as that presented in the previous chapter, has highlighted that the frontal-lesson method is incompatible with the heterogeneous nature of Mixed Abilities Classes. Moreover, our students confessed that they do not get involved during lessons and that they just sit in class passively. Therefore, we wanted to give them some tools to become more active and get more involved during lessons. Given the importance of note taking, we believed that investigating this aspect would be relevant. Above all, we believed that making our students develop this skill would be meaningful for them.

Second, we knew that some of our students, who we got to know some during a previous course held from October to December 2020, at that time were not studying Geography at school. Moreover, we will see that some of them did not study Geography even in their countries of birth. We believed that teaching them some key elements of Geography would be important for them.

Finally, stratification was chosen as it is a facilitation strategy that gives the possibility to work on a common input and, at the same time, to respect students' ZPDs is stratification. A common and synchronous input is at the basis of note taking, especially when the source of information is oral.

Having presented the purpose and the motivations for this study, what follows, according to Dörnyei (2007), is the formulation of specific research questions and research hypotheses. Our research questions will now be presented:

- **RQ 1:** What learning strategies do our students already know? Were they taught those strategies in their countries of birth and/or in Italy? Do they already know to take notes?
- **RQ 2:** What facilitating actions may be employed in order for students to learn and develop note taking in Ital2?
- **RQ:** Can stratification be useful in order for students to learn and develop note taking in Ital2?

Our action plan (Coonan, C. M., 2003), which is the third subphase of planification, will now be presented.

First of all, we wanted to collect some information on our students and their note-taking levels. Therefore, we designed a questionnaire and a placement test, which will be presented respectively in 4.3.1 and 4.3.4.1. In order to observe their development, two other tests were designed. One was done in the middle of the laboratory, while the other at the end. These two tests will be presented in 4.3.4.2 and in 4.3.4.3. In order to teach some strategies and identify some facilitating actions, once a week, we proposed some Geography learning units.

All these steps took place throughout the entire duration of the Ital2 laboratory, therefore, we can state that our case study has a longitudinal nature. More precisely, the laboratory started on 19th February 2021 and ended on 19th May 2021. The following table shows the schedule and the corresponding topics covered in class.

Table 1. Research schedule and topics.

Date	Lesson	Topics
Tuesday, 2 March 2021	1	Placement Test: Asia
Wednesday, 10 March 2021	2	Learning Unit 1: Climatic regions
Wednesday, 24 March 2021	3	Learning Unit 1 (end): Climatic regions
Wednesday, 31 March 2021	4	Learning Unit 2: Africa
Wednesday, 7 April 2021	5	Learning Unit 2 (end): Africa
Friday, 9 April 2021	6	Intermediate-period Test: Content Review
Wednesday, 14 April 2021	7	Learning Unit 3: United States of America
Wednesday, 21 April 2021	8	Learning Unit 4: European Union
Wednesday, 27 April 2021	9	Simulation: Asia
Wednesday, 5 May 2021	10	Final Test: Some Countries involved in the Second World War

We chose these topics as they usually belong to the syllabus covered during the third year of middle school. These learning units were designed to practice note-taking, to teach some strategies, to identify some facilitating actions, to develop students' lexicon of Geography and to teach them some elements of Italstudio, such as map keys.

In the following sub-chapters, our participants and data collection tools will be presented.

4.2 Participants

Participants in our case study were 10 first-generation migrant students enrolled in the third year of Middle School and living in the Municipality of Venice. They were all attending our Ital2 laboratory called *Italiano in gioco: corso laboratoriale extrascolastico di alfabetizzazione rivolto a ragazzi neoarrivati*. Although our original class was composed by 11 students, one student was ruled out from the study due to linguistic difficulties, especially as far as writing is concerned.

Five students were 13 years old, four born in 2007 and one born in 2008; five students were 14 years old, four born in 2006 and one born in 2007. The majority were from Bangladesh, whereas two students were from Senegal. Among the Bangladeshi students, six were born in Dhaka, the Capital of Bangladesh, one in Shariatpur, and one in Brahmanbaria. Among the Senegalese students, only one indicated the city of birth, Touba.

Six students arrived in Italy in 2019 and four students in 2020. The first student arriving in Italy was S1³⁷, in January 2019, whereas the last student arriving was S10, in June 2020.

As far as their linguistic level is concerned, four students were A1 whereas six students were between A1 and A2.

4.3 Data collection Tools

Data collection is fundamental in order to consider a research project as such. Coonan (2003) underlined that in action research it may be useful to employ different tools in order to have a more complete vision of the researched phenomenon, and she refers to this in terms of “triangulation” (p.22).

In this research project, we employed four different tools. First, a questionnaire, in order to collect data on students and on their scholastic background. Second, a research diary, in order to collect our points of view and observations on what was done in class. Third, students’ evaluation sheets at the end of each lesson which involved note-taking, in order to collect data on students’ point of view. Fourth, three tests in order to collect objective data on our students’ progress.

These data collection tools will now be presented in the following sub-chapters.

³⁷ For privacy reasons, we will refer to our students by using the combination of capital S and a number.

4.3.1 Questionnaire

According to Coonan (2003), questionnaires are one of the most employed tools in action research. They might be considered objective tools, as they give data which are not manipulated by the researcher and, therefore, represent reality. We employed this tool as we wanted to collect data on our students' profile and scholastic background. The questions were presented in Italian, however, in order to facilitate the compilation of the questionnaire, they were also translated into Bangla. The two Senegalese students were helped by the other trainee, who speaks French, one of the languages known by them.

These questions may be divided into three different categories:

1. Personal information
2. School in your country
3. School in Italy

Apart from a few pieces of personal information, we were interested in knowing whether our students were taught to take notes, to use maps and schemes, and whether they were taught some study techniques, both in their countries of origin and in Italy. The questions will now be presented according to these three sub-categories³⁸.

Personal information

- How old are you?
- Which country do you come from?
- Where are you born? In what city?
- In what city did you live?
- When did you arrive in Italy?
- In what city do you live?

School in your country:

- Did you go to school in your country?
- How long?
- What school or schools did you attend?
- What kind of school (public or private? Religious or non-religious?)
- How many hours did you spend at school?
- What subjects did you study?
- What language or languages did you use at school?

³⁸ The Italian-Bangla version of the questionnaire could be found in the Appendix C.

- Were you taught to take notes?
- Were you taught to underline the most important words?
- Were you to taught to write summaries?
- Were you taught to do schemes or maps?
- Were you taught other study strategies? What strategies?

School in Italy:

- How many schoolyears have you attended here in Italy?
- What schools have you attended?
- In what school are you enrolled in now in Italy?
- In what class are you enrolled?
- What subjects do you study?
- Do you use Italian at school?
- Do your teachers use many difficult words at school?
- Have you been taught to take notes?
- Have you been taught to underline the most important words?
- Have you been taught to write summaries?
- Have you been taught to do schemes or maps?
- Have you been taught other study strategies? What strategies?

4.3.2 Research diary

Together with questionnaires, Coonan (2003) observed that another among the most employed data collection tools in action research is diary. Nunan (1989) uses the term diary interchangeably with “field notes” and “journal” (p. 55). This latter term is also employed by Dörnyei (2007), who defines a research journal as a diary “kept by the researchers themselves during the course of a research project” (p.159). Kemmis & McTaggart (1982, in Coonan, C. M., 2003) defined a diary as a personal account regularly written on a precise argument of interest. Silverman (2005; in Dörnyei, Z., 2007) observed that keeping a research journal may also be useful to show the researcher’s teaching process. According to Nunan (1989), data are collected regularly in a first-person form and then analysed in terms of recurrent patterns and events.

Differently from the questionnaire, data collected through a research diary are subjective, as they are influenced by the researcher’s point of view. However, as highlighted by

Altrichter and Holly (2005; in Dörnyei, Z., 2007), research journals may also include “descriptive sequences” (p.161), which are, therefore, more objective.

Coonan (2003) underlined the importance of specifying when research diary is compiled. During our research, diary entries were personally written throughout the duration of the entire laboratory, soon after every Geography lesson, as temporal proximity is fundamental for collecting honest and precise data. Entries may include observations, ideas, feelings, reactions, interpretations, reflections, hypotheses, explanations, convictions, and perceptions concerning the area of interest. In our diary, we collected both what was observed in class and in students’ notes taken in class.

To collect our data, we employed the Teacher Diary elaborated by Coonan and Gruppo Venezia for the Progetto Socrates / Lingua ‘Eveil aux Langues’, which can be found in Coonan (2003, p.43).

Teacher diary			
Geography lesson n°:			
Date:			
Lesson aims:			
Activities:			
Instructions: Write up your diary entry on the basis of the notes that you have taken down during the lesson. You can focus your attention on anything you feel to be important in some way (discussion, activity, comment, materials being used, difficulty, ...) that you have come across during the lesson.			
Keep in mind that a diary refers to YOU and YOUR:			
Observations	Feelings	Reactions	Interpretations
Reflections	Hypothesis	Explanations	Ideas/Intuitions
.....			
.....			
.....			
.....			
.....			
.....			

Source: Coonan, C. M., 2003, p. 43

4.3.3 Students' evaluation sheets

Qualitative-oriented research may collect data in the form of “subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and thus the explicit goal of research is to explore the participants' views of the situation being studied” (Dörnyei, Z., 2007, p.38). During our research project, we collected some data concerning students' points of view on what was done in class. This auto-evaluation is fundamental for teachers, according to Serragiotto (2016), as they could understand the efficacy of their didactic action. Moreover, in some cases, in line with students' replies, it could be necessary to adopt some changes along the way. At the same time, students have the possibility to reflect on their scholastic path.

This collecting tool helped us understand whether our proposals were felt useful and helpful. These sheets were compiled by students at the end of each lesson that employed note-taking. The majority of questions were close-ended, due to time availability and as our students did not enjoy answering open-ended questions.

After the Placement Test we asked the following questions:

Taking notes

Is note taking easy? (1 = very difficult; 2 = difficult; 3 = so and so; 4 = easy; 5 = very easy)

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Can I take notes when there are only a few words missing?	Yes	Not always	No
Has the scheme helped me?	Yes	Not always	No
Can I take notes alone?	Yes	Not always	No

We wanted to collect data on students' perceptions about the difficulty of note-taking. The other three questions were relative to the three different parts of the test. The placement test, as we will see, was composed of three different strata, gradually more difficult.

At the end of the other lessons, we proposed richer evaluation sheets. Some questions were proposed after every lesson, whereas others only after a precise strategy was employed in class.

First of all, we wanted to collect general data on students' understanding and students' cooperation with other classmates. These questions were taken from Serragiotto (2016, p. 142).

Have I understood?	Yes	Not always	No
Have I succeeded in speaking Italian?	Yes	Not always	No
Were activities easy?	Yes	Not always	No
Have my classmates helped me?	Yes	Not always	No
Have I helped my classmates?	Yes	Not always	No

Source: Serragiotto, G., 2016, p.142.

Other questions focussed on note taking and on the strategies employed in class.

Taking notes

Is taking notes easy? (1 = not easy, 3 = so and so, 5 = very easy)

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Have I succeeded in taking notes today?	Yes	Not always	No
Has the scheme helped me?	Yes	Not always	No
Do I feel more confident with respect to last week?	Yes	Not always	No
Did I try to take notes at school?	Yes	Not always	No
Did I use the scheme at school?	Yes	Not always	No
Did I use the map at school?	Yes	Not always	No
Is the scheme useful?	Yes	Not always	No
Is the map useful?	Yes	Not always	No
Does using symbols make note taking easier?	Yes	Not always	No
Am I quicker when I use symbols?	Yes	Not always	No
Do colours help me?	Yes	Not always	No
Does it help me when the teacher uses numbers?	Yes	Not always	No

Think about the first time that you took notes: has it been easier today?	Yes	Not always	No
---	-----	------------	----

Would I like to take notes in another way?

Yes	No
-----	----

How? Give your teacher an idea.

Did I choose the scheme or the map?

Why?

Has it helped me?	Yes	Not always	No
Does taking notes with my classmates help me when I do not have a map or a scheme?	Yes	Not always	No
Is taking notes easier when my teacher gives me a scheme or a map?	Yes	Not always	No

4.3.4. Tests

In action research, according to Coonan (2003), other tools that may be employed to collect data are tests done by students. In our research project, in order to collect more objective data which could shed some light on students' progress in note taking, we employed three different tests, according to the three fundamental moments within the educational process identified by Serragiotto (2016). These moments take place at the beginning of the process, in the middle, and at the end. They involve beginning, intermediate-period, and final evaluation. Therefore, a placement test was done at the beginning of the laboratory, on 2nd March; an intermediate-period test was done in the middle, about a month later, on 9th April; a final test was done at the end of our Geography lessons, on 5th May.

These three tests will be presented in the following sub-sections. They were stratified according to Bricese's (2020) and Serragiotto's (2020) indications. In the first stratum, some key terms were missing and students had to write them. In the second stratum, students were given some key concepts to be detailed. In the last stratum, they were freer.

4.3.4.1 Placement Test

The Placement Test was done on 2nd March, at the beginning of the laboratory. Before starting the test, students were told that during the course, once a week, they would learn and practice note taking during Geography lessons. They were told that learning how to take notes would be very useful for them, especially during High School, even though it would not be easy. We tried to motivate them and make them feel comfortable. The test was carried out in a frontal-lesson logic. This is the method, as far as school settings are concerned, our students are used to, and we wanted to observe their starting level. However, before giving our students the sheets, we reassured them and explained that during the course the frontal-lesson logic would be limited.

The topic chosen was Asia, as it was familiar to the majority of our students. The explanation was accompanied by some slides which reported images of the topics covered and the most important and probably unknown words.

In line with Serragiotto (2016), this test was designed in order to observe students' starting level. This was useful to adapt the educational process and to give us further suggestions about how stratifying further note-taking sheets.

First stratum

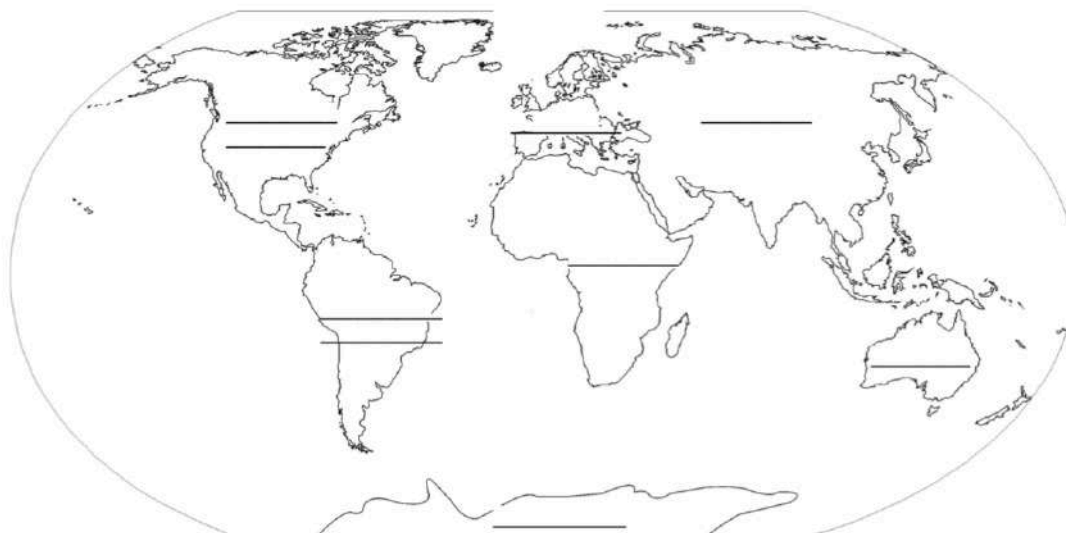
Apart from writing some missing words, students were asked to find Asia in the geographical map, to colour it, and to write the names of the continents. This was done as we wanted to observe their basic Geographical knowledge.

L'ASIA

Che cos'è l'Asia? L'Asia è un _____.

I CONTINENTI:

Quanti sono? _____.



È grande 44 804 194 _____.

L'**EQUATORE** è una linea e divide la Terra a metà.

L'equatore divide la Terra in due emisferi:

- L'**EMISFERO SETTENTRIONALE** o _____
- L'**EMISFERO MERIDIONALE** o _____

L'Asia si trova quasi del tutto nell' _____.

Intorno all'Asia ci sono _____:

- A _____ c'è il **MAR GLACIALE ARTICO**
- A _____ c'è l'**OCEANO PACIFICO**
- A _____ c'è l'**OCEANO INDIANO**
- A _____ c'è il **MAR MEDITERRANEO**

A _____ ci sono i **MONTI URALI**: i Monti Urali _____

la _____ in _____:

- Una parte è in _____
- Una parte è in _____

In Asia ci sono _____, ci sono parti dove c'è molto caldo e ci sono parti dove c'è molto freddo.

Possiamo dividere l'Asia in _____:

1. l' _____: c'è un clima _____
2. l' _____: in questo luogo c'è un clima arido, cioè _____.
3. l' _____: i Monsoni sono un tipo di _____.

Second stratum

Students were given a scheme with some key terms which had to be detailed. The format employed is an application of the Cornell Note-Taking System (Cornell University, n.d.). In the right-hand-side column, students had to write what was said in class and what was written in the slides. The cue column, on the left-hand side, is useful for writing possible questions or key terms. In this test, key terms were already given to our students in order to facilitate note taking.

L'ASIA FREDDA

L'ASIA FREDDA è in SIBERIA.	
LA SIBERIA	_____ _____ _____
I FIUMI OB, ENISEJ, LENA	_____ _____
IL FIUME ENISEJ	_____ il Bassopiano Siberiano _____ e l'Altopiano della Siberia _____ .
PAROLE NUOVE	OCCIDENTALE = _____ ORIENTALE = _____ CENTRALE = _____ BASSOPIANO = _____ _____ ALTOPIANO = _____ _____
AMBIENTE	A NORD: _____ _____ VERSO SUD: 1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____

Third stratum

In this third stratum, we wanted to observe our students' ability to take notes freely, in order to observe possible strategies employed by them. Therefore, we just gave them three key concepts which had to be detailed.

L'ASIA DEI MONSONI

I MONSONI

IL PAESAGGIO DEI MONSONI

A SUD: CLIMA E AMBIENTE

4.3.4.2 Intermediate-period Test

The intermediate-period test was done a month later, on 9th April. Within the logic of formative evaluation (Serragiotto, G., 2016), this test was useful to observe students' progress and the efficacy of the strategies employed. This kind of evaluation helped us adapt our didactic action according to students' needs.

This test acted as a revision of what was covered during the previous learning units. The first part employed the scheme. The part concerning climatic regions belongs to the first stratum, as students had to underline the right word or write missing words. As we will see later, some students needed to take a step back and start their note-taking journey by underlying words.

The second part of the scheme, included the second and third stratum. Students were asked to complete some sentences, according to an increasing degree of difficulty.

- Sottolinea la **parola giusta** e scrivi le parole che mancano.

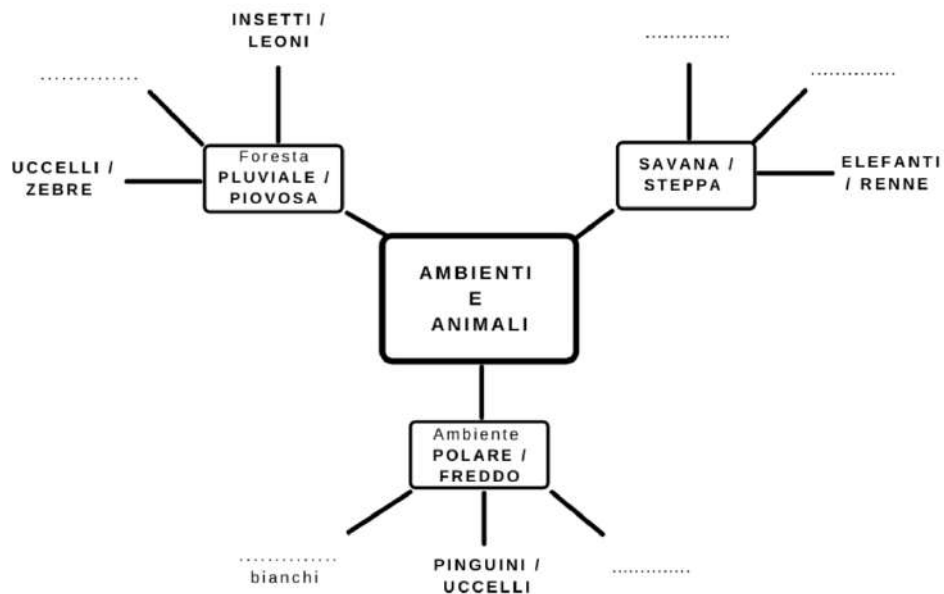
REGIONI CLIMATICHE	Possiamo dividere la Terra in alcune regioni climatiche / meteorologiche in base al tipo di clima / meteo . Le regioni più importanti sono: - regione tropicale / centrale - regioni temperate - regioni polari / fredde
TITOLO:	- e i paralleli. - paralleli importanti: 1. , divide la Terra 2. Il Circolo Polare Artico, intorno al 3. Il Circolo Polare Antartico, intorno al 4. Cancro, 5. Capricorno,

In this test, we employed also the concept map, familiar to the majority of our students. Moreover, also literature shows that maps may be useful study instruments. For instance, Novak (2010) considers concept maps facilitative tools in schools. What Novak and his group found out was that concept maps could help students who may face difficulties at school. They are “a good way for students to find the key concepts and principles in lectures, readings or other instructional material” (Novak, D. J., 1991; in Novak, D. J., 2010), something which is at the basis of note-taking.

First stratum

Students had to underline the right word or write a few missing words.

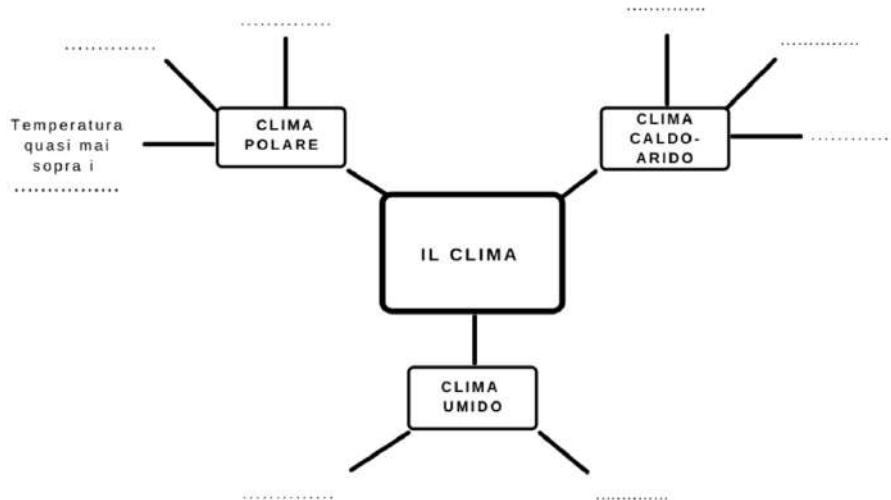
- Sottolinea le parole giuste e scrivi le parole che mancano.



Second stratum

Students had to write missing words.

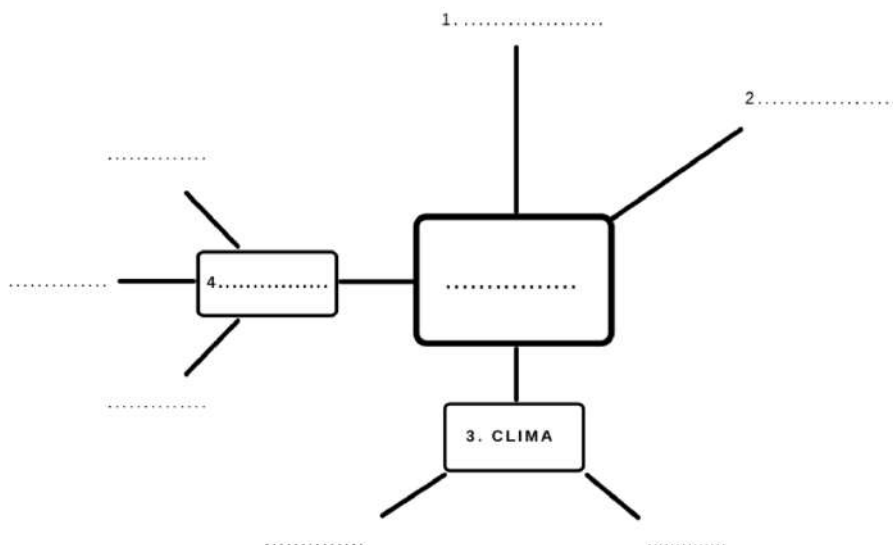
- Scrivi le parole che mancano.



Third stratum

Students had to complete the entire map.

- Scrivi le parole che mancano.



4.3.4.3 Final test

This test was done a month later, almost at the end of the laboratory, on 5th May. The topics chosen were in line with a history lesson on the Second World War designed by the civil service volunteer in our group. For this reason, we explored some of the countries who fought in that war.

This test aimed at observing the level reached by each student and possible changes that could be acted in a following study or didactic action (Serragiotto, G., 2016).

First stratum

Students had to write the missing words and complete the map with the countries that border Germany. We wanted to observe whether knowledge of cardinal points was reinforced³⁹.

³⁹ At the beginning of the laboratory, students faced difficulties in using cardinal points.

I PAESI DELLA SECONDA GUERRA MONDIALE

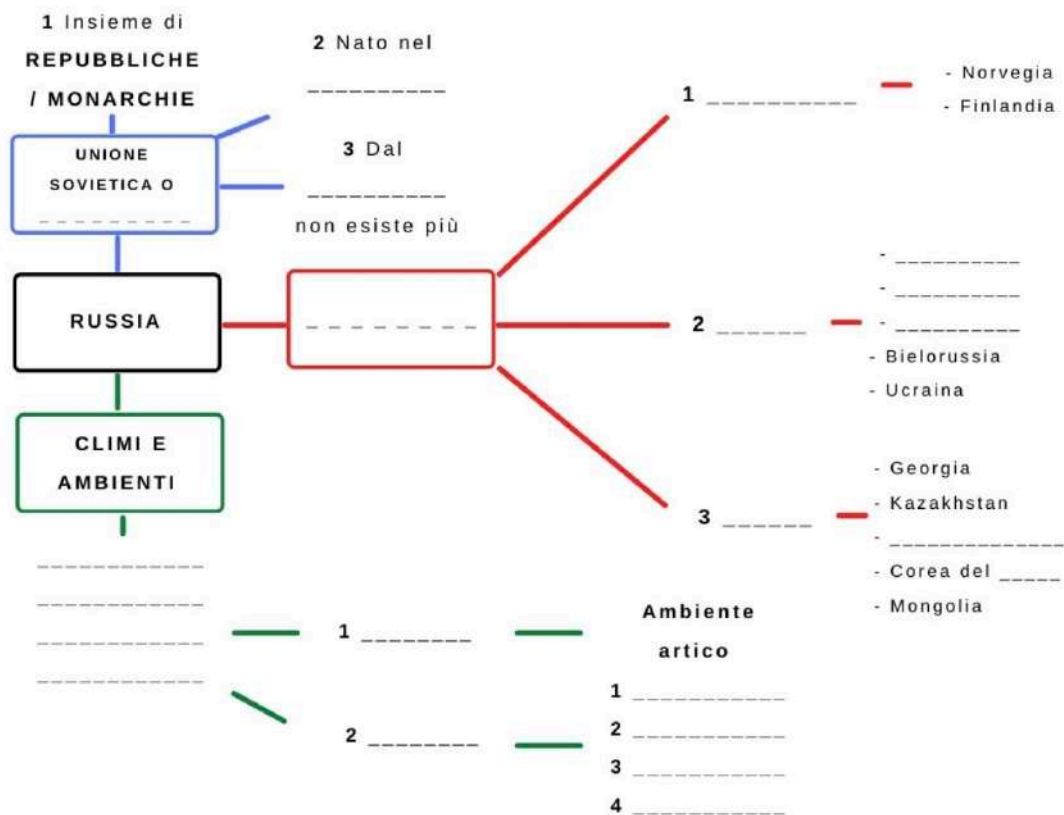
GERMANIA	
CONFINI	<p>1. Al centro dell'_____ :</p>
CLIMA	<p>In inverno:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. _____ 2. A gennaio: di solito _____ 3. _____ spesso <p>In _____ :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. _____ , ma non troppo (circa _____) 2. _____ <p>A nord:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Temperature _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Second and third strata

Students had to complete the scheme, according to an increasing degree of difficulty.

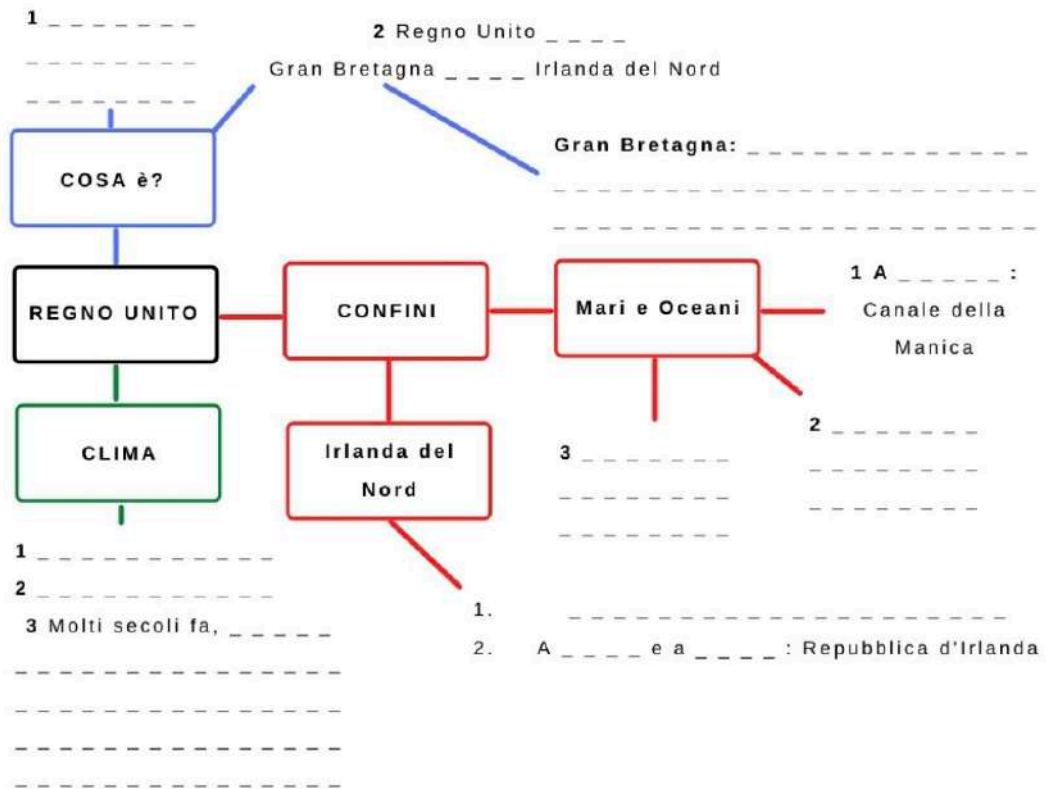
GIAPPONE	
CONFINI	<p>1. Giappone _____ arcipelago</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>1. Arcipelago _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>_____</p> </div> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. A _____ di _____, _____ e Corea.</p> <p>Mari e oceani:</p> <p>1. A _____ : Mare del _____</p> <p>2. A _____ : _____ di Ochtsk</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p>
CLIMA	<p>Molti climi diversi.</p> <p>Isole di Hokkaidō e Honshū:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Isole di Shikoku e Kyūshū:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

We then proposed to our students a concept map, which was stratified according to an increasing degree of difficulty.



In the last part of the test, students could choose either to use the scheme or the map, according to their preference. The content was identical and students were given only a few prompts. The design of this final part will be discussed in the sixth chapter.

REGNO UNITO	
COSA È?	<p>1. _____ _____</p> <p>2. Regno Unito _____ Gran Bretagna _____ Irlanda del Nord</p> <p>Gran Bretagna:</p> <p>_____ _____ _____</p>
CONFINI	<p>Mari e oceani:</p> <p>1. A _____ : Canale della Manica</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>Irlanda del Nord:</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. A _____ e a _____ : Repubblica d'Irlanda</p>
CLIMA	<p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. Molti secoli fa, _____ _____ _____ _____</p>



In the following chapter, we will present the data collected with the aforementioned tools.

5. Data analysis

Data analysis is defined by Stake (1995; in Dörnyei, Z., 2007, p.250) as a “matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations”. This is what we will try to do in the following two chapters, which concern the analysis and discussion of the data collected throughout our case study.

In the previous chapter it was mentioned that action research is a form of qualitative research, which collect data in a qualitative-oriented manner. Therefore, the analysis of data, according to Coonan (2000), employs an interpretative approach. However, always Coonan (2000) stated that action research may also collect quantitative data, whose analysis could employ descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics refers to those methods employed in order to synthesise the collected data. Synthesis generally consists in graphs and numbers such as media and percentages (Agresti, A., & Franklin C., 2016, p.7), as well as in frequency tables (Coonan, C. M., 2000). In line with this, Dörnyei (2007) reported the possibility of quantifying certain aspects of qualitative data.

Our analysis employed both textual data, as those collected with research diary, and quantifiable data, as those presented in frequency tables and in graphs. The analysis process will be explained in each sub-chapter, according to the data involved.

The first passage we did was coding our participants. As mentioned in the previous chapter, they were 10 first-generation migrant students, who attended our Ital2 laboratory. For privacy reasons, we will refer to our students by using a code made of capital S (= student) and a number, as reported in the following table.

Table 1. Participants

Participants
S1
S2
S3
S4
S5
S6
S7
S8
S9
S10

As we will see, some answers are missing, as some of these students were not always present. For this reason, we created a table (Table 2) which acts as an attendance register.

Table 2. Attendance register

Key:

P	Present
A	Absent

	STUDENTS									
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10
LESSONS										
1	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A
2	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
3	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
4	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
5	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
6	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
7	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
8	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
9	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P
10	P	P		P	P	P	P	P	P	P

5.1 Data collected from questionnaire

Data collected from questionnaire were subdivided into three categories:

4. Personal information
5. School in your country
6. School in Italy

The data collected were analysed through the employment of frequency tables. Frequency tables can be defined as the list of all possible values that a variable can represent. Frequency tables show also how many times a certain value was observed (Agresti, A., & Franklin C., 2016, p.21).

In our case study, for each question, a categorical variable was identified. In the following tables, the categorical variables are presented in the left columns, together with the different modalities that emerged from students' questionnaires. We then calculated the frequency for each modality and reported the respondents' code on the right column.

Categories 2 and 3 contain some equal questions. Therefore, at the end, we will present some graphs which aim at comparing the collected data. This was done in order to observe possible similarities or differences between schools in students' countries of origin and schools in Italy.

Personal information:

Personal information was collected in order to delineate the profile of our students.

1 – How old are you?

Age	Number of participants	Participants
13 years old, born in 2008	1	S5
13 years old, born in 2007	5	S3; S7; S8; S9; S10
14 years old, born in 2006	4	S1; S2; S4; S6

Ages reported in this table correspond to students' ages during the course.

2 – Which country do you come from?

Country	Number of participants	Participants
Bangladesh	8	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8
Senegal	2	S9; S10

3 – Where are you born? In what city?

City of birth	Number of participants	Participants
Shariatpur	1	S1
Dhaka	6	S2; S3; S5; S6; S7; S8
Brahmanbaria	1	S4
Touba	1	S9
Senegal (no city)	1	S10

4 – In what city did you live?

City	Number of participants	Participants
Shariatpur	2	S1; S7
Dhaka	6	S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S8
Touba	1	S9
Senegal (no city)	1	S10

17 – When did you arrive in Italy?

Date of arrival	Number of participants	Participants
January 2019	1	S1
June 2019	1	S2
August 2019	1	S3
October 2019	1	S4
December 2019	2	S5; S6
February 2020	3	S7; S8; S9
June 2020	1	S10

18 – In what city do you live?

City	Number of participants	Participants
Mestre	8	S1; S2; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9; S10
Gazzera (Mestre)	1	S3
Marghera (Mestre)	1	S4

School in your country:

We collected some information on our students' scholastic background in their country of origin.

5 – Did you go to school in your country?

School attendance	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	9	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9
No	1	S10

Only one Senegalese student answered to have not attended school in their countries of origin.

6 – How long?

Duration	Number of participants	Participants
6 years	3	S3; S7; S9
7 years	4	S1; S4; S5; S6
8 years	2	S2; S8

All students in this table are from Bangladesh, with the exception of S9, who is from Senegal.

7 – What school or schools did you attend?

Some students answered by reporting the classes attended, some students by reporting the name of the school. S3 reported only age. In this table all the modalities that emerged are reported.

School information	Participants
Primary level 1 – 6	S1
Primary level 1 – 8 Bank High School	S2

From 4 years old to 10 years old	S3
Primary level 1 – 7	S4
Primary level 1 – 7 Monipur High School and College	S5
Delpara Little Genius School and College	S6
Kedarpur High School	S7
English medium School	S8
Elementary school	S9

8 – What kind of school? Public or private? Religious or non-religious?

Kind of school	Number of participants	Participants
Public	1	S9
Private	7	S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8
Religious	1	S3
Non-religious	7	S2; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9

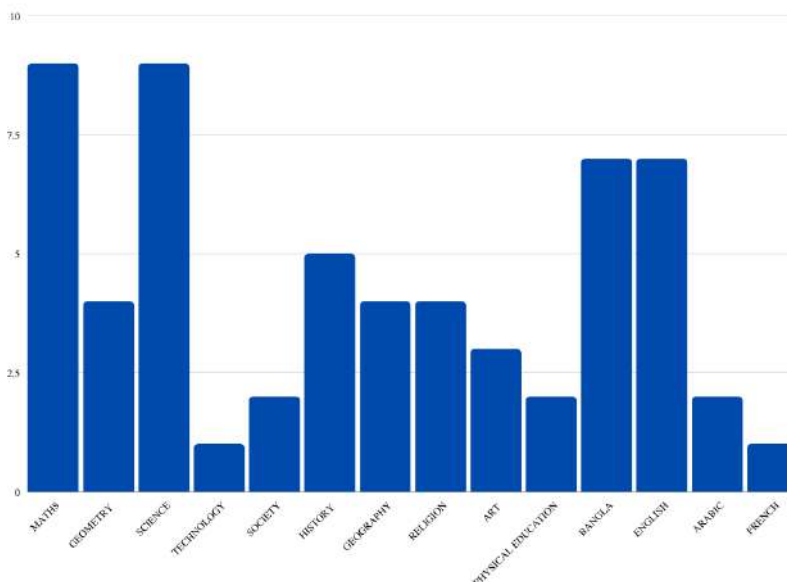
All our Bangladeshi students, with the exception of S1, who did not answer, attended a private school. On the contrary, our Senegalese student, S9, attended a public school.

9 – How many hours did you spend at school?

Number of hours	Number of participants	Participants
5 hours	4	S1; S7; S8; S9
6 hours	2	S4; S5
7 hours	2	S2; S3
9 hours	1	S6

10 – What subjects did you study?

We constructed this graph which shows the subjects studied by our students in their countries of origin, and their frequency.



What is important to highlight here is that only four students reported Geography among the subjects studied in their countries of origin. These students are S4, S6, S8 and S9. The subjects reported by our Senegalese student were Maths, Geometry, Science, History, Geography, Arabic, and French.

11 – What language or languages did you use at school?

Language(s) used	Number of participants	Participants
Bangla	8	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8
English	8	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8
Wolof	1	S9
French	1	S9

Students from Bangladesh all used Bangla and English, the student from Senegal used Wolof and French.

The following questions aim at investigating whether our students were taught some study skills, including note taking, in their countries of origin.

12 – Were you taught to take notes?

We were interested in investigating whether our students were taught to take notes, being note taking a skill which implies listening to teachers and writing down the most important pieces of information.

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	6	S2; S3; S5; S7; S8; S9
A little bit	3	S1; S4; S6

13 – Were you taught to underline the most important words?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	9	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9

14 – Were you taught to write summaries?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	3	S1; S5; S7
No	6	S2; S3; S4; S6; S8; S9

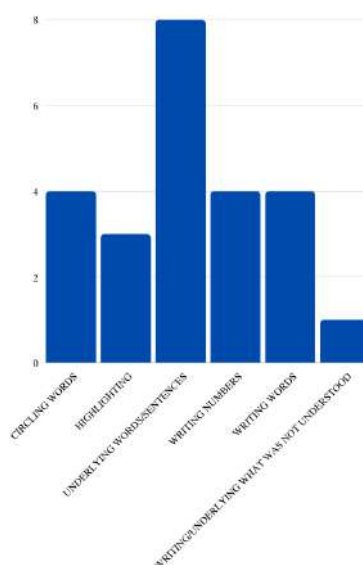
15 – Were you taught to do schemes or maps?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	4	S2; S5; S8; S9
Yes, only maps	2	S4; S6
No	3	S1; S3; S7

16 – Were you taught other study strategies? What strategies?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	9	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9

The six strategies reported by our students and their frequency will be presented in the following graph.



School in Italy:

We collected information on our students' scholastic situation here in Italy.

19 – How many schoolyears have you attended here in Italy?

Schoolyears / months	Number of participants	Participants
4 months	1	S7
5 months	1	S1
7 months	2	S8; S10
8 months	2	S4; S6
1 year	2	S2; S5; S9
2 years	2	S3

Many of them told us that, during lockdown in 2020, they did not attend online lessons.

20 – What schools have you attended?

School(s) attended	Number of participants	Participants
Middle School	10	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9; S10

S3, S4, S5 attended both second and third year of Middle School. Whereas the other participants attended only the third year of Middle School.

21 – In what school are you enrolled in now in Italy?

Current school	Number of participants	Participants
Middle School “Silvio Trentino”	2	S1; S10
Middle School “Francesco Querini”	2	S2; S5
Middle School “Enrico Fermi”	1	S3
Middle School “Einaudi”	1	S4
Middle School “A. Manuzio”	1	S6
Middle School “Giulio Cesare”	1	S7
Middle School “Giovanni Bellini”	1	S8
Middle School “Don L. Milani”	1	S9

All these Middle Schools are in Mestre, a borough of the Municipality of Venice.

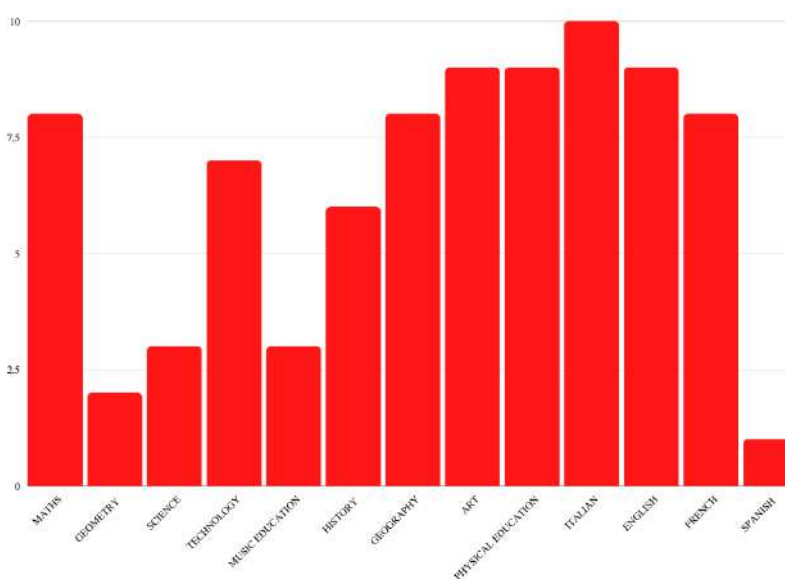
22 – In what class are you enrolled?

Current class	Number of participants	Participants
3 rd year of Middle School	10	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9; S10

This Ital2 laboratory was specific for students enrolled in the third year of Middle School, who would take a final exam at the end of the school year.

23 – What subjects do you study?

We constructed this graph which shows the subjects studied by our students in Italy and their frequency.



Eight students answered that they study Geography at school. However, they told us that they started studying it only in the middle of the 2020/2021 school year.

24 – Do you use Italian at school?

The original question was a yes/no question. However, some of our students reported also other languages used at school. For this reason, the modalities present in the following table are not “yes” and “not”, but all the languages signalled by our students.

Languages	Number of participants	Participants
Italian	10	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9; S10
English	7	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S9
French	7	S1; S2; S3; S5; S7; S9; S10
Spanish	1	S4

According to our students, foreign languages are used only during foreign-language lessons.

25 – Do your teachers use many difficult words at school?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	10	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9; S10

The following questions aim at investigating whether our students have been taught some study skills, including note taking, here in Italy.

26 – Have you been taught to take notes?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	4	S2; S3; S7; S8
A little bit	2	S9
No	4	S1; S4; S5; S6; S10

The majority of students answered that they were not taught to take notes.

27 – Have you been taught to underline the most important words?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	9	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S7; S8; S9; S10
No	1	S6

28 – Have you been taught to write summaries?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	1	S8
No	9	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S6; S7; S9; S10

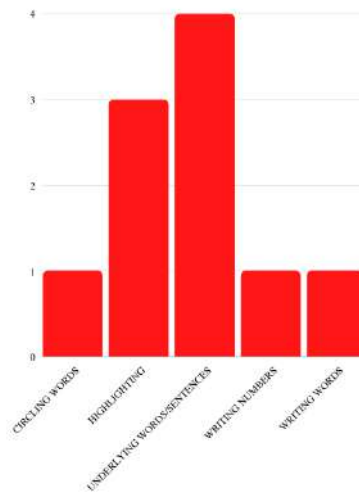
29 – Have you been taught to do schemes or maps?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	8	S1; S2; S3; S4; S5; S7; S8; S9
No	2	S6; S10

30 – Have you been taught other study strategies? What strategies?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	5	S1; S3; S4; S7; S9
No	5	S2; S5; S6; S8; S10

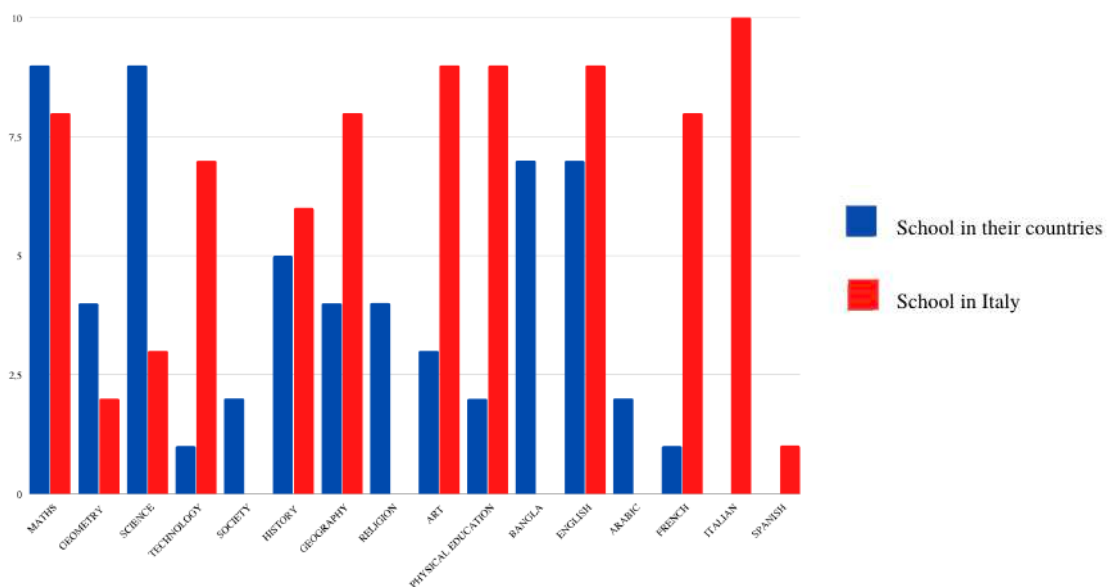
The five techniques reported by our students and their frequency will be presented in the following graph.



As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, we will now present some graphs which aim at comparing data concerning the school in our students' countries of origin and data concerning school in Italy. All the modalities that emerged from our questionnaire will be taken into consideration.

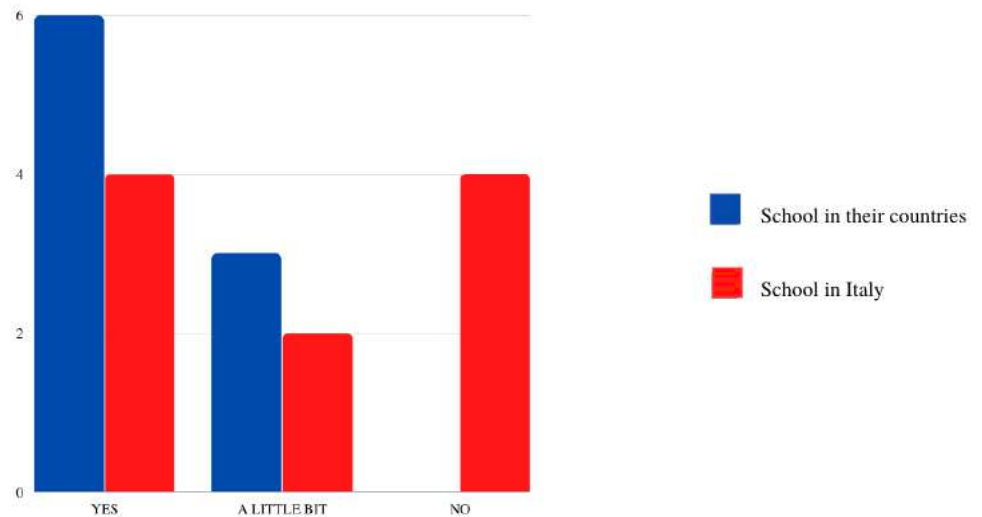
10 – What subjects did you study?

23 – What subjects do you study?



12 – Were you taught to take notes?

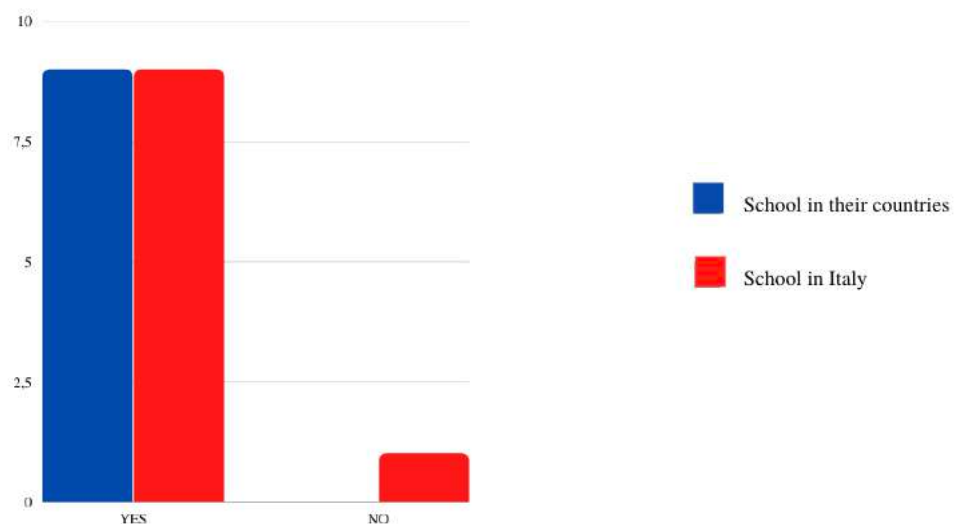
26 – Have you been taught to take notes?



The graph shows that all students were taught to take notes in their countries of birth. The data concerning school in Italy reflect a different situation.

13 – Were you taught to underline the most important words?

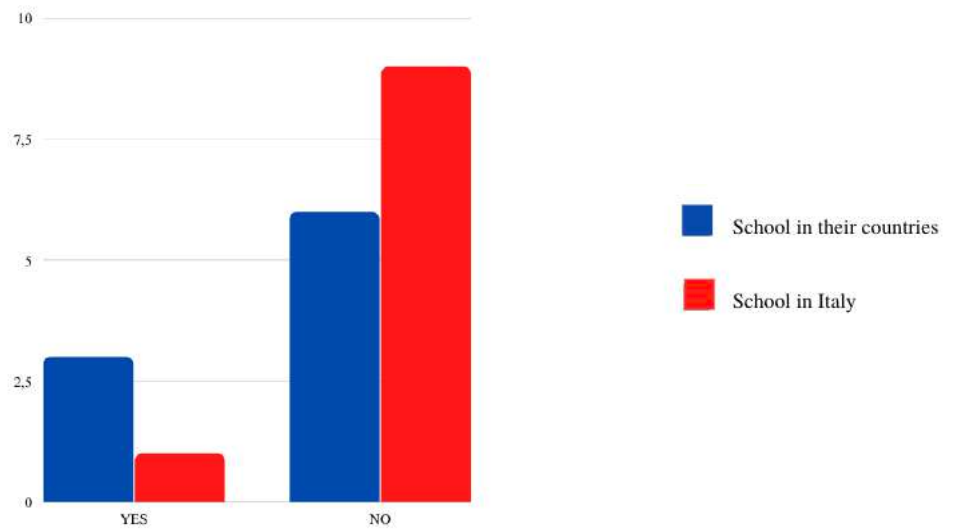
27 – Have you been taught to underline the most important words?



The development of this strategy is shared in both environments. Only S10 answered that they have not been taught to underline the most important words.

14 – Were you taught to write summaries?

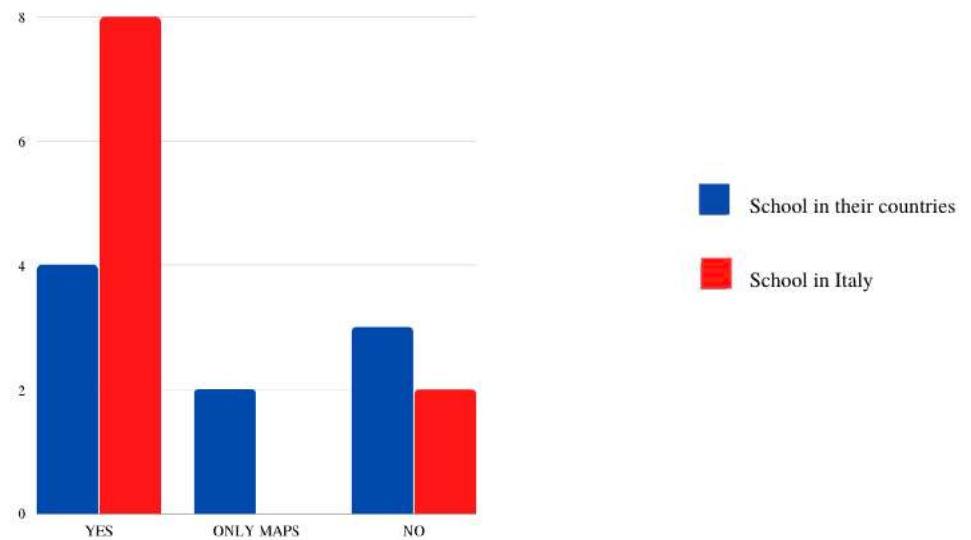
28 – Have you been taught to write summaries?



In the majority of cases, in both their countries of origin and in Italy, this skill is not really taken into consideration.

15 – Were you taught to do scheme or maps?

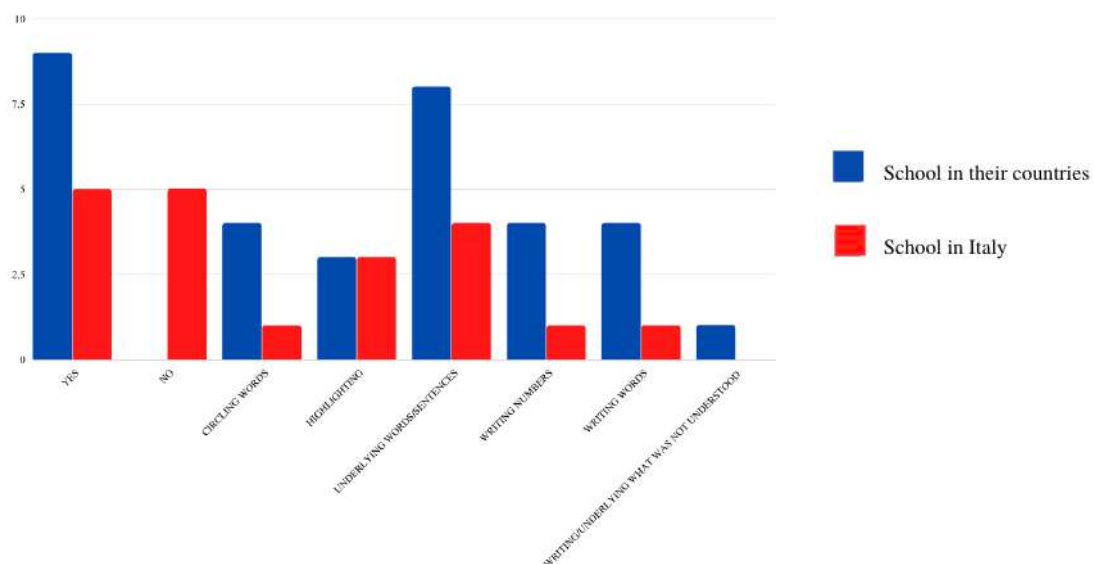
29 – Have you been taught to do schemes or maps?



The graph shows that schemes and maps are particularly employed in the Italian scholastic environment.

16 – Were you taught other study strategies? What strategies?

30 – Have you been taught other study strategies? What strategies?



The graph shows two different tendencies. On the one hand, all students were taught other study techniques in their countries of origin. On the other hand, only five students have been taught other techniques here in Italy.

5.2 Data collected from research diary

According to Coonan (2000), a research diary implies two different phases. The first one is private, whereas the second is public. At the end of each lesson, we wrote down all our impressions and observations, together with some descriptive sequences, in a personal manner. In order to transform the diary from private to public, revision and rewriting are necessary. In this phase, all the superfluous elements should be eliminated. Moreover, all the entries should be “analysed for recurring patterns or salient events” (Nunan, D., 1989, p.55).

In this sub-chapter, we will present data collected with our research diary. We used a hard copy to reread all the diary entries, identify and highlight the most salient events and elements for our case study. They will be presented here according to the lesson when they took place.

Lesson 1 (2 March 2021) – Placement test

In this first lesson, the placement test presented in chapter 4 was done. We will now see what emerged.

First, our students were a little bit lost and the different pieces of information had to be repeated many times. As a matter of fact, they told us that, at school, they do not take notes, the only thing they do is copying from the blackboard or the lim. Therefore, we can assume that they are not used to taking notes.

During the first part of the test, students seemed to be more confident with respect to the other two parts. However, at a certain point, we noticed that S9 was just staring at the test sheet, therefore, in order not to demotivate them, we gave some help.

We had the impression that the scheme was helpful. S7 understood that the scheme presented the different pieces of information in order. As a matter of fact, at a certain point, S7 said “Prof, adesso fiumi” (“Miss, now rivers”). However, in general, it was necessary to introduce the argument by using the key terms written in the left-hand side column. Bulleted lists and numbers were useful.

As expected, the third part of the test was a bit too complicated to some of them.

At the end of this test, we decided to move Geography lessons from Tuesdays to Wednesdays, as, on Wednesdays, the student who was ruled out from our case study would always be absent due to scholastic activities.

At the end of the lesson, we realised that some students would need to take a step back and start their note-taking journey by underlying words. As a matter of fact, some of them panicked during the test, did not know how to write the majority of words, therefore, we had to help them a lot.

Lesson 2 (10 March 2021) – Learning Unit 1

The objectives of this lesson were learning something on climate and climatic regions, constructing a concept map and a map key.

What emerged was students’ difficulties in using cardinal points. As a matter of fact, some of them thought that South Africa was in the North of Africa.

During this lesson, we worked on the meaning of *atmosphere* and *atmospheric conditions*. S2 explained the meaning of these two concepts in Bangla to the other Bengalese students. Then, all together they tried to explain in Italian what was said to the two Senegalese students and to us. S9 explained that *atmosphere* “è fuori dalla Terra” (it is outside earth). Starting from this, we gave a definition of atmosphere, which was written on the blackboard, together with a drawing. Some of our students found the drawing useful.

We then made them notice the box *PRENDIAMO APPUNTI!* (Let's take notes!). We signalled this as during the week they did not try to take notes autonomously. This helped them in getting ready for the task. We divided the class into two different groups, according to their level:

1. The lower-level group was composed by S1, S5 (who did not take the placement test), S6, S8 (who copied during the placement test), S9, and S10 (who did not take the placement test);
2. The higher-level group was composed by S2, S3, S4, and S7.

Our purpose was making them progress in note taking. At the same time, we wanted to give them the possibility to take all notes, and we did not want to demotivate them. For this reason, during normal lessons, we personally calibrated the linguistic and cognitive demand. Therefore, stratification was employed in a different manner. By doing so, all students were able to take notes and did not miss information. A mistake that I made in preparing the worksheets was that of eliminating the same number of words in both groups. I should have eliminated fewer words in the worksheets where students had to write missing words. As a matter of fact, after a first reading, group 1 was able to complete the definition of climate, whereas group 2 needed two more readings.

After that, we created a concept map on climates together. They made some hypothesis and had to write only the correct ones. Sometimes they needed an input.

Then we talked about climatic regions. They had to listen to indications and to colour the correct region on a map. They worked in couples so they were able to help each other. They enjoyed this activity and we had the impression that they all like to use colours. We asked them to look at the map and to tell us how many climatic regions there were, they all answered correctly. Finally, I asked the linguistic facilitator to say what she understood by simply looking at this coloured map, she said nothing. This helped students understand that it is necessary to have a map key to fully understand a map. Therefore, we constructed a map key together (a scan of this activity is attached in Appendix B).

During other lessons, we constructed other concept maps and made students exercise on writing key words according to a given text.

Lesson 3 (24 March 2021) – Learning Unit 1 (end)

The objectives of this lesson were learning some important words of Geography and using the scheme to take notes.

We missed some lessons due to Covid restrictions. Therefore, we asked our students if they remembered what we did. Some of them said climate, others climatic regions. We

told them to take their notes and to look at them. By doing so, we made them understand that notes are important in order to remember things.

We made them work in couples/groups with just one worksheet per couple/group. They had to glue the right definition next to the right word. Then, the words met in this activity, such as meridians, parallels, North Pole, South Pole, etc., were put on the big map we had in class. They enjoyed working with pieces of paper and glue.

In order to learn some new words of animals and environments, we did a relay. The two teams had to put the right name under the right picture. Students helped each other. For instance, S9 did not know the word *elefante* (elephant), so their peers described the elephant as an animal with a long nose. This was interesting as during previous lessons we focussed on describing people, things, places. They employed what they had learnt. Some of them really liked running, others were a bit lazier. We then gave each student a sheet and, while correcting the relay results, they could write the right name under the right picture.

The most important activity of that lesson was a cooperative learning activity. Each student had a scheme to complete (each scheme stratified according to student's level) and a piece of information. The different pieces of information were relative to climatic regions, environments and animals already met (for instance in the relay). Working on the lexicon before taking notes help them not to panic. In order to complete the scheme, each student had to ask for information to their other classmates. The source of information was not the teacher, but students' themselves, and this made note taking less anxious. We tried to make them understand that the key words on the left-hand side column were there to orient them. However, not everyone was quick in finding where to write each piece of information.

Lesson 4 (31 March 2021) – Learning Unit 2

The objective of this lesson was understanding the structure of the scheme.

They took notes on Africa. This time, they did not have key words on the left column. The first part of the scheme was divided into two different sections, and on the left we put some dots where a title had to be written according to the notes taken. To guide them, we labelled the two sections with A and B. An error I made was putting target words in italics instead of bold. They did not recognise the words in italics and, at the beginning, they underlined entire phrases instead of the target information. Before taking notes, we made them read what was written, in order to be prepared and not get lost.

- Section A: Borders had to be written on a map, so that they could strengthen their knowledge on cardinal points. We had to revise cardinal points again as some of our students still have difficulties in using them.
- Section B: They had to write only numbers. Some of them wrote everything that I said, wasting time. Therefore, we need to stress the importance of writing only the most important pieces of information.
- Sections C, D, E, F had only a title that had to be completed. We had to suggest copying from the first page, where the right words were already written.

Some of them already knew the symbol used for indicating degrees.

The True/False activity was based on their notes. Having to look for answers in their notes was meaningful for understanding that taking notes is important and not an end in itself. The analysis part concerned the analysis of the scheme. Students easily identified a possible title for the scheme, they proposed “Africa” and “la Geografia dell’Africa” (Geography of Africa). We then make them write a title next to the map in section A, and they proposed “mappa dell’Africa” (map of Africa), “mari e oceani dell’Africa” (seas and oceans of Africa). In the end we suggested “confini dell’Africa” (borders of Africa). We did the same for section B. In couples they tried to write a title and the majority of them wrote “le regioni climatiche” (climatic regions), which was in line with the content of their notes. Section C was the most difficult. We told them that that section could be divided into three different parts. We decided to try this activity as we did a similar one some days before, in which they had to subdivide a descriptive text into different parts, which proved successful. However, in this case, they had some difficulties, probably because the content was different. We had to suggest the first subdivision and the first title *dove?* (Where?). S4 was then able to identify the section *clima* (climate) and the last section *cosa c’è?* (What is there?). In general, the other students were a bit lost.

At the end of the lesson, we felt a bit demotivated and thought that what we were doing was too difficult for them. However, after that moment of despair, we hoped that they would feel more confident in finishing this activity the following week.

Lesson 5 (7 April 2021) – Learning Unit 2 (end)

The objectives of this lesson were finishing the analysis begun the previous week, grouping information according to some given key words, constructing a scheme on Senegal, completing a concept map using information written in students’ notes.

Our students completed the scheme begun the previous week in couples or groups. They had no problems in completing this task and we were very happy to see this. Then, in groups, they constructed the scheme of Senegal. The original idea was that of giving them

some pieces of information, which had to be grouped according to their content. Then students would have to find key words to label each group. However, having seen the difficulties faced the previous week, we decided to already give them some key words, which helped them a lot. They were all able to group the right pieces of information and labelling them with the right key word. The borders of Senegal were to be written on a map, so that, again, they could strengthen their knowledge of cardinal notes. This activity worked well, all students were involved, they all interacted, and they enjoyed using paper and glue. It was great seeing them spend some time reflecting on how to group and order the different pieces of information (in Appendix B there is a scan of the scheme completed by S1, S7, S10, the group who worked better).

Finally, we gave our students a concept map. They had to complete it with the notes taken on the scheme the previous week. We gave them another study tool and another note-taking tool. They had no difficulties in completing this task and they all immediately understood how to complete the map.

Lesson 6 (9 April 2021) – Intermediate-period Test

We wanted to have a look on students' note-taking development. A few elements were observed. S5 struggled when asked to both underline the right words and write the missing words. Again, we noticed that it is very important to guide them, for instance by using numbers, which show them where they have to write the different pieces of information. In this test, we employed also the map, which worked very well.

Lesson 7 (14 April 2021) – Learning Unit 3

The objectives of this lesson were practicing selective listening, constructing a map starting from a written text, writing a text starting from some given notes.

Our students were divided into groups, each group was given a map of the United States. They were given some photos of different environments present in the USA, which were already studied together. The activity consisted in listening and putting the right photo on the right State in the map. Therefore, our students had to focus their attention only on fundamental pieces of information. This activity worked well. Then, we gave them the text that was previously read, where they had to underline with two different colours the fundamental information required in the previous activity, namely the different types of environments and the States where these environments can be found. The underlined pieces of information were necessary to complete a blank map. Students could decide how to organise information on the map and were free to use colours or other elements (in Appendix B there is one example of map compiled by S4 and S6).

The last activity involved writing a text starting from some notes written in a concept map. We wanted to make our students understand that even though they write only the most important words, they can still reconstruct a text. Some students were facilitated by having added more prompts.

Lesson 8 (21 April 2021) – Learning Unit 4

The objectives of this lesson were revising the map key, and learning to use symbols to become quicker in note-taking.

They worked in couples. They were given the map of the European Union, where they had to circle with the same colour the countries which entered the EU in the same year, according to what was told them. This activity aimed at developing their geographical awareness, as they still struggled in finding countries on a map. When they could not find a country, we used cardinal points to guide them, this helped them strengthen their knowledge on cardinal points.

We then created a map key. They remembered that they had to colour the little squares in the key with the same colours used in the map. We then dictated the years, which had to be written next to the right colour. We decided to do this also in order to revise years, as we had planned to study the Second World War the following week.

We then focussed on symbols. First, they had to connect each symbol to its name (and possible meaning). Then, they were given a worksheet where there were some sentences written using a few words and symbols, as it could be done in note taking. What they had to do was searching the corresponding sentence in the text. We made them notice that “>” does not necessarily only mean major, but, in that case, it meant “it is better”. Therefore, we told them that symbols may be used in many occasions. A further exercise was given, where each symbol had to be connected to different possible meanings, which were explained before starting the activity.

In order to fix their use, we read some sentences and they had to try to take notes by using symbols. S1 and S6 were incredibly great. Using symbols facilitated a lot their note-taking. S7 and S8, on the contrary, faced more difficulties, probably because they had a higher linguistic level and were used to writing everything (in Appendix B there are the notes taken by S6).

Lesson 9 (27 April 2021) – Simulation

We imagined to be in High School. Our students had to take notes during the lesson.

We started the lesson with an activity in which our students had to write only the most important word(s). Spaces were given in order to facilitate this task. Then, they were given the possibility to choose between the scheme and the map. They all chose the scheme, stratified with the same modalities used in previous tests. We expected that some students would face less difficulties than others. S8 was very quick, S5 at times got a bit lost. Not being a test, we wanted our students to have the possibility to take all notes. For this reason, at the end we said that it is normal not to write always everything, therefore, we asked them what we can do if we miss some pieces of information. S7 suggested to ask the teacher to repeat, others suggested to ask other classmates for help. This is what we did, we made them confront with their peers and complete their notes.

We then tried to make them take notes freely. In order to make this “experiment” less anxious, we made them work in groups. S2, S5, S7 constructed a map. S3 and S6 wrote a text and used some arrows. S8 wrote everything in a text. S1 and S10 wrote only the most important words. They carried out this task well. What emerged was that in some cases connections among pieces of information were not really appropriate.

Lesson 10 (5 May 2021) – Final Test

All students were able to carry out this final test, they all were very quick. S6 used the worksheets with symbols to facilitate note taking. S10, despite their scholastic background, wrote the most important words and was incredible. Sometimes, during the lesson, they tried to help each other.

At the end, they were given the possibility to choose between a map or a scheme to take some notes more freely. This decision will be discussed in the following chapter.

5.3 Data collected from students’ evaluation sheets

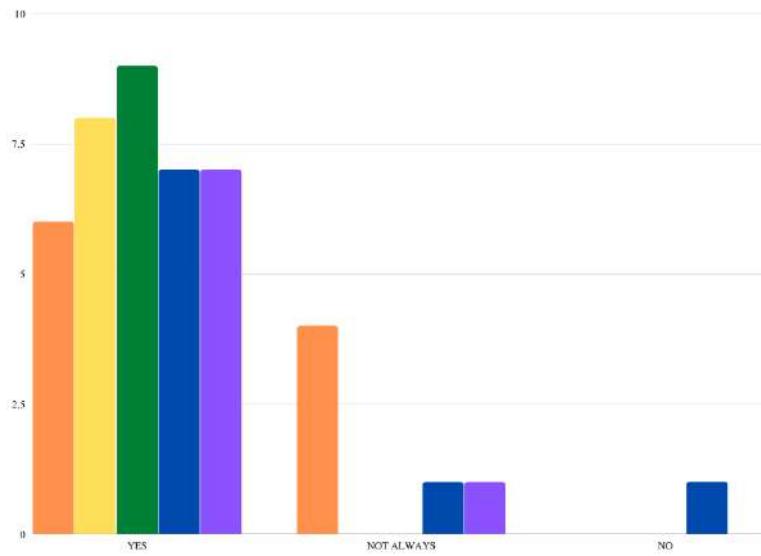
In order to analyse data collected from students’ evaluation sheets, we first tabulated the data in frequency tables and then created some graphs. Some of the graphs that will now be presented have a longitudinal nature, as they take into consideration the evolution of our students’ answers, lesson after lesson. On the contrary, other graphs will show the data collected only after precise lessons, where a specific strategy was employed.

In order to give also a temporal indication, we associated a colour to each lesson. The following key clarifies the colours employed in these graphs:

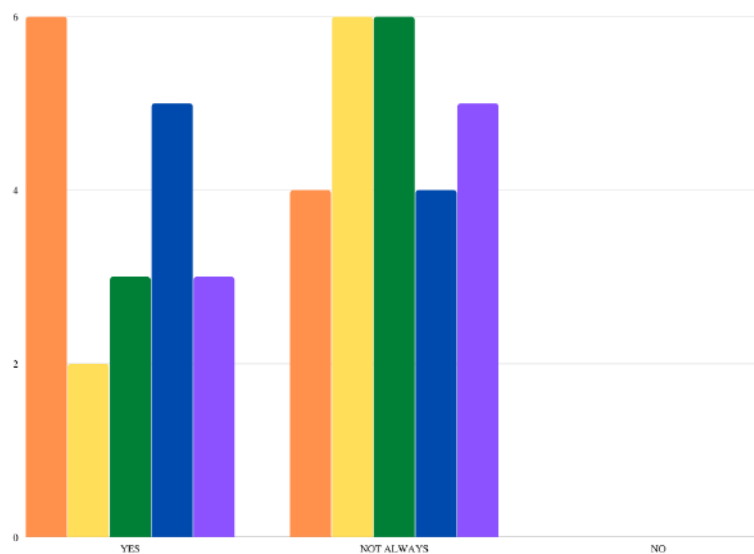


The first group of data concerns students' perceptions of their general understanding and of cooperation among peers.

Have I understood?

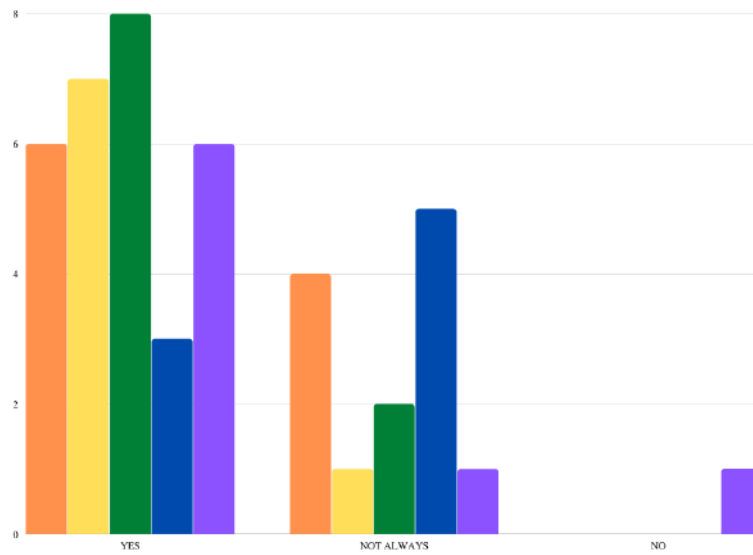


Have I succeeded in speaking Italian?

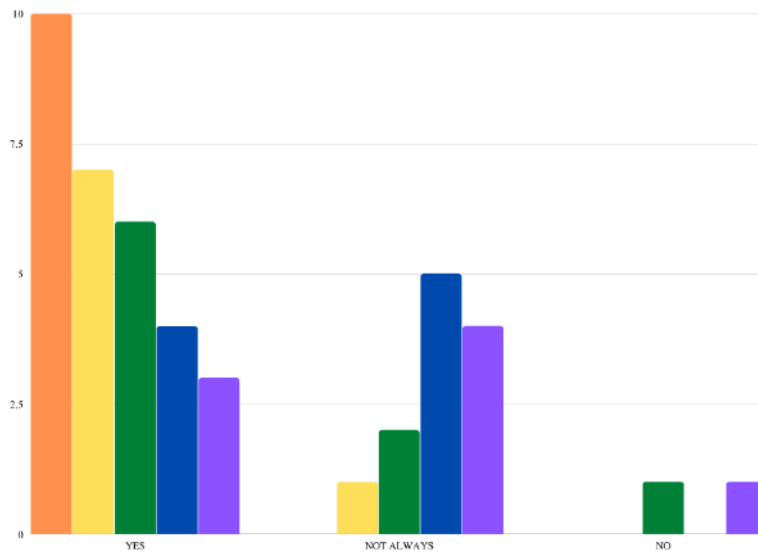


Our students were aware of the fact that sometimes they still have difficulties in communicating in Italian.

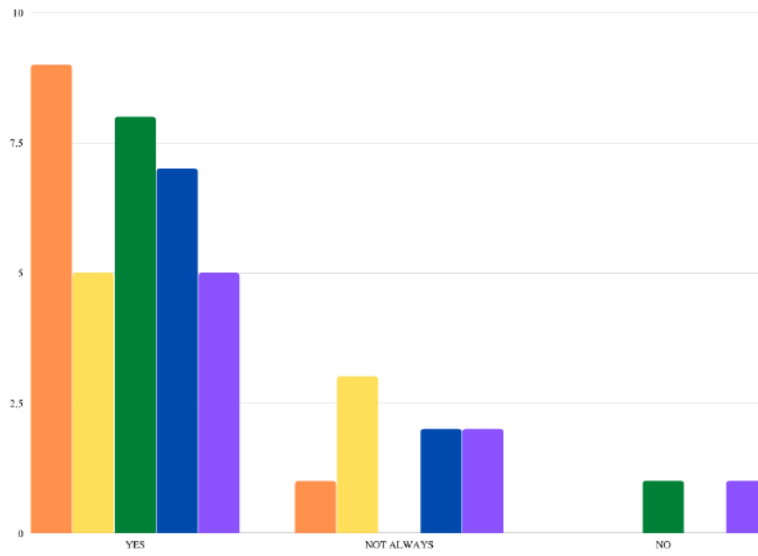
Were activities easy?



Have my classmates helped me?



Have I helped my classmates?



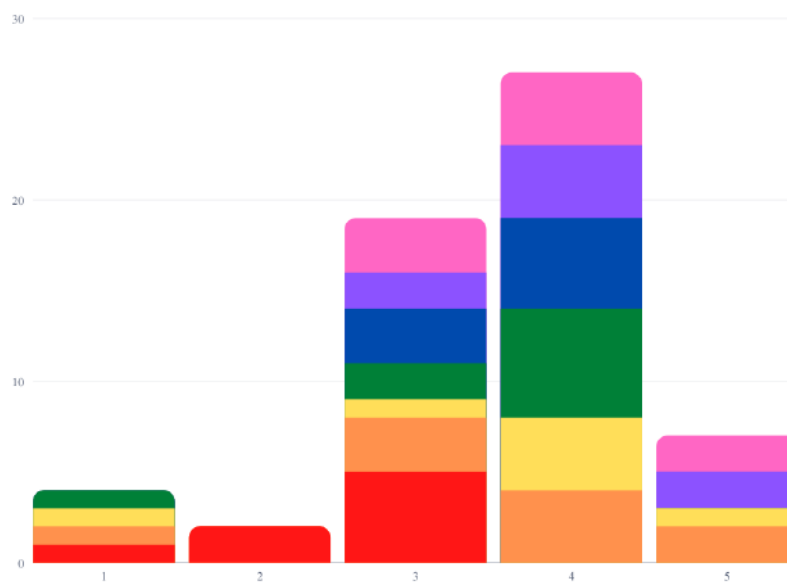
The answers given by our students reflect what we observed during the lessons. Some students were more willing to work with others, whereas some others preferred, when possible, to carry out tasks alone.

Note taking

The following group of data concerns note taking. We wanted to understand our students' feelings towards note taking and to investigate whether what we proposed was felt useful or not.

Is note taking easy? (1 = very difficult; 2 = difficult; 3 = so and so; 4 = easy; 5 = very easy)

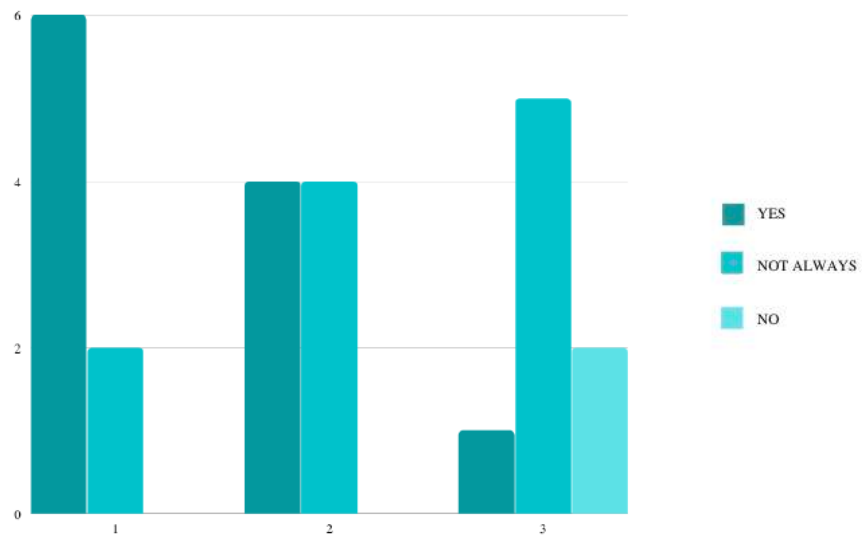
With Likert scales, such as this one, coding is linear, as the options are already assigned a number (Dörnyei, Z., 2007).



As can be seen from the graph, our students' perception after the first and the last lessons were completely different. As a matter of fact, after lesson 1, students' answers were concentrated in the first part of the graph, between "very difficult" and "so and so", whereas, after the last lesson, they were concentrated in the second part of the graph, between "so and so" and "very easy". On the whole, note taking is perceived as easy (option 4).

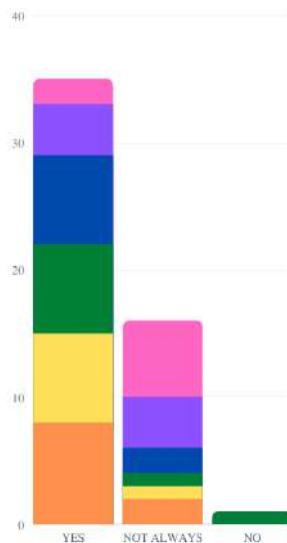
After the placement test, we asked our students whether they could take notes with only a few words missing, whether the scheme had helped them, and whether they could take notes alone. These three questions were grouped into one graph. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 on the graph refer to one of the three following questions:

1. **Can I take notes when there are only a few words missing?**
2. **Has the scheme helped me?**
3. **Can I take notes alone?**

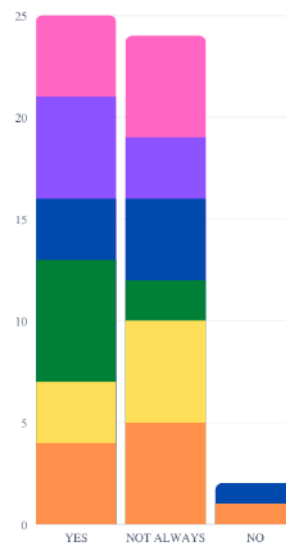


As can be seen from the graph, the majority of students could take notes with a few words missing, but could not (always) take notes alone. Question 2 was reposed in two further lessons. In those occasions, the scheme was perceived as helpful by all students.

Have I succeeded in taking notes today?

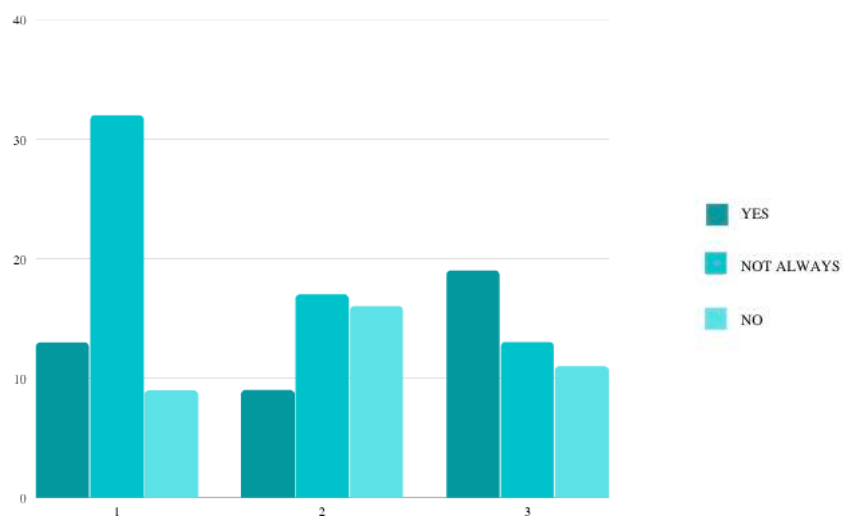


Do I feel more confident with respect to last week?



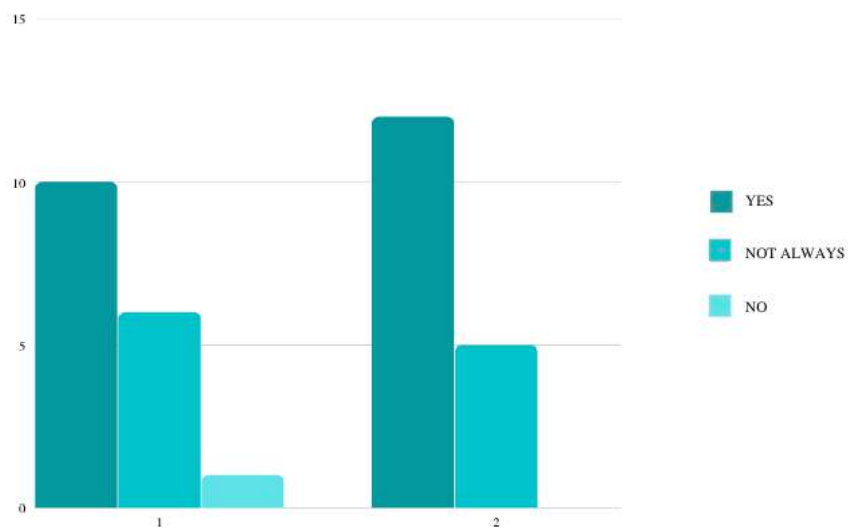
We wanted to see whether our students tried to take notes at school and whether they tried to employ the scheme and the map. These data were grouped into one graph. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 refer to one of the three following questions. This graph is a synthesis of all the data collected after different lessons. These questions were all proposed the same number of times.

1. Did I try to take notes at school?
2. Did I use the scheme at school?
3. Did I use the map at school?



We wanted to investigate students' perceptions of the usefulness of the scheme and the map. These data were grouped into one graph. The numbers 1 and 2 refer to one of the two following questions. This graph is a synthesis of all the data collected after different lessons. These questions were proposed the same number of times.

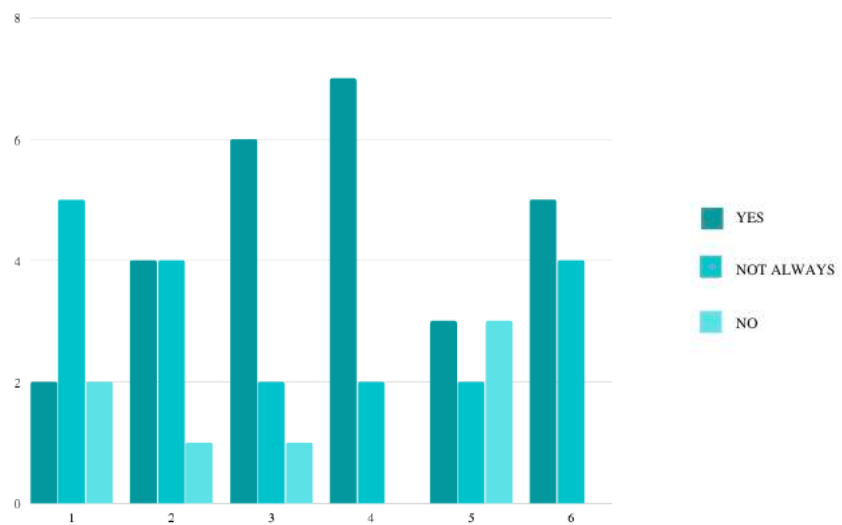
- 1. Is the scheme useful?**
- 2. Is the map useful?**



According to this graph, the map seems to be perceived a little more useful than the scheme.

We then wanted to investigate students' perceptions of the efficacy of certain strategies. These data were grouped into one graph. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 refer to one of the six following questions:

- 1. Does using symbols make note taking easier?**
- 2. Am I quicker when I use symbols?**
- 3. Do colours help me?**
- 4. Does it help me when the teacher uses numbers?**
- 5. Does taking notes with my classmates help me when I do not have a map or a scheme?**
- 6. Is taking notes easier when my teacher gives me a scheme or a map?**



The majority of students perceived colours and numbers as helpful. The same cannot be said for taking notes with classmates, which was felt helpful by only 3 students.

Although symbols were not always perceived as easy, some students admitted to be quicker when using them.

All students agree on the fact that having a structure makes note taking easier, even though not always.

Think about the first time that you took notes: Has it been easier today?

Answers	Number of participants	Participants
Yes	2	S4; S10
Not always	7	S1; S2; S5; S6; S7; S8; S9
No	0	

In some cases, we gave students the possibility to choose between a map or a scheme.

The majority of students chose the scheme, only S4, S9, and S10 preferred the map.

The reasons for their choices are reported in the following table.

Reasons	Number of participants	Participants
(Very) easy	4	S1; S2; S3; S5
I like it	5	S2; S6; S7; S8; S10
Scheme is easier than map	3	S7; S6; S5
Map is easier than scheme	1	S9

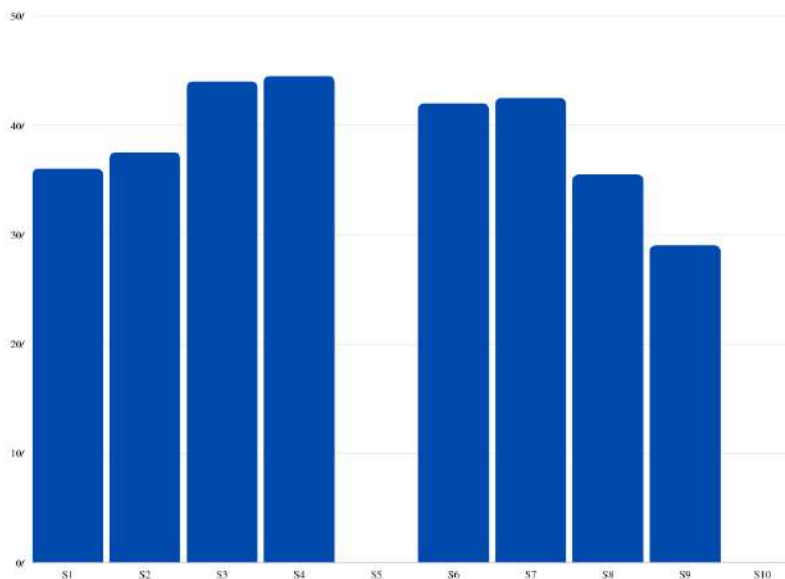
5.4 Data collected from tests

In the following sub-chapters, we will present data collected from tests. Test scores could be easily coded as “the value range of the variable will be the same as the possible scores for the test” (Dörnyei, Z., 2007, p.199). In each section, we will present a graph that shows our students’ results. At the end, we will present a graph which compare all the data collected in order to observe hoped developments in note taking.

Since note taking does not imply a mere transcription of what the teacher says, one point was given both when the target word was written, and when synonyms or personal elaborations were employed. Zero points were given when the words and sentences written were completely wrong or when spaces were left blank. All test scores were calculated out of 50.

In each sub-chapter, we will also present some tables containing qualitative data, concerning the most relevant elements that emerged from students’ tests.

5.4.1 Data collected from placement test

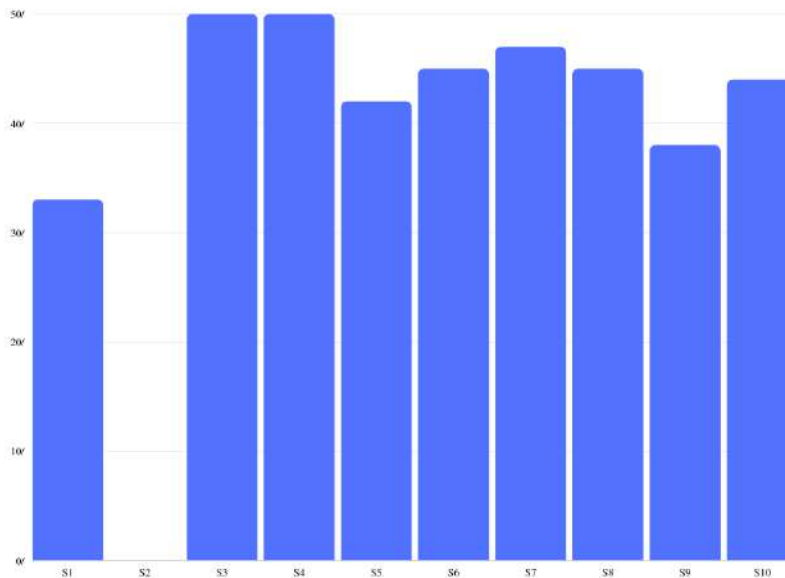


Comments	
S1	<p><i>Emisfero settentrionale</i> (northern hemisphere) was the target word, <i>emisfero del nord</i> was written, a synonym which was seen a little above.</p> <p>S1 wrote “c’è la Russia” instead of <i>è in Russia</i>.</p> <p>In the third stratum, only the most important words were written.</p>
S2	<p><i>Emisfero settentrionale</i> (northern hemisphere) was the target word, <i>emisfero del nord</i> was written, a synonym which was seen a little above.</p> <p>S2 did not write information as it was explained, but kind of re-elaborated it, which is perfectly fine, as the information written was correct.</p> <p>Both <i>scorre</i> and <i>passa</i> were said, S2 is the only one who used the second word.</p> <p>In the third stratum, only the most important words were written.</p>
S3	<p>We said “una parte della Russia è in Asia e una parte della Russia è in Europa” (one part of Russia is in Asia and one part of Russia is in Europe); in the test there was purposely “una parte è in ..., una parte è in ...” (one part is in..., one part is in...). S3 was writing <i>Russia</i> in the blank space. However, S3 then realised that <i>Russia</i> was wrong and wrote the correct word.</p> <p>In the third stratum, the most important information was written in a discursive manner.</p>
S4	<p>We said “una parte della Russia è in Asia e una parte della Russia è in Europa” (one part of Russia is in Asia and one part of Russia is in Europe); in the test there was purposely “una parte è in ..., una parte è in ...” (one part is in..., one part is in...). S4 was writing <i>Russia</i> in the blank space. However, S4 then realised that <i>Russia</i> was wrong and wrote the correct word.</p> <p>Next to <i>monsoni</i> and <i>vento</i>, S4 wrote a word in Bangla.</p> <p>Even though the definition of <i>bassopiano e altopiano</i> was not taken into consideration as we realised it was too difficult, S4 is the only one who wrote it correctly.</p> <p>In the third stratum, only the most important words were written.</p>
S5	Absent

<p>S6</p>	<p>Many words were misspelt, for instance “setintrionale” instead of <i>setentrionale</i>, “marri” instead of <i>mari</i>, “Rusia” instead of <i>Russia</i>.</p> <p>We said “una parte della Russia è in Asia e una parte della Russia è in Europa” (one part of Russia is in Asia and one part of Russia is in Europe); in the test there was purposely “una parte è in ..., una parte è in ...” (one part is in..., one part is in...). S4 was writing <i>Russia</i> in the blank space. However, S4 then realised that <i>Russia</i> was wrong and wrote the correct word.</p> <p>S6 wrote “c’è la Russia” instead of <i>è in Russia</i>.</p> <p>S6 wrote that <i>monsoni</i> “is vento”, using the verb translated into English.</p>
<p>S7</p>	<p>S7 wrote “L’Asia è una continenti”, added a -a to the article to make the article agree with the subject.</p> <p>We said “una parte della Russia è in Asia e una parte della Russia è in Europa” (one part of Russia is in Asia and one part of Russia is in Europe); in the test there was purposely “una parte è in ..., una parte è in ...” (one part is in..., one part is in...). S7 was writing <i>Russia</i> in the blank space. However, S7 then realised that <i>Russia</i> was wrong and wrote the correct word.</p> <p>S7 wrote “emisfre” instead of <i>emisfero</i>, even though the word spelt correctly was just a little above.</p> <p>S7 wrote “c’è la Russia” instead of <i>è in Russia</i>.</p> <p>Instead of writing <i>centrale</i>, S7 wrote “al centro”, a synonym, which is perfectly fine.</p> <p>In the third stratum, the most important information was written in a discursive manner, even though very often words are misspelt: <i>piove solo d’estate</i> became “fiori sono estate”.</p>
<p>S8</p>	<p>S8 wrote “c’è la Russia” instead of <i>è in Russia</i>.</p> <p>Some words were misspelt.</p> <p>In the third stratum, in some cases, information was written in a discursive manner, in other cases, only the most important words were written.</p>
<p>S9</p>	<p>In many occasions S9 got lost and left some blank spaces.</p> <p>We said “emisfero settentrionale o emisfero del nord”, the target words were <i>emisfero del nord</i>. S9 wrote only “del nord”, which is perfectly</p>

	<p>fine, as <i>emisfero</i> would be only a repetition. S9 wrote only the most important information.</p> <p>Contrarily to this, in a further passage, S9 tried to write everything that was said, without paying attention to what was already written. By doing so, wrote the right pieces of information in the wrong place.</p> <p>S9 wrote “c’è la Russia” instead of <i>è in Russia</i>.</p> <p>In the third stratum, the most important information was written in a discursive manner.</p>
S10	Absent

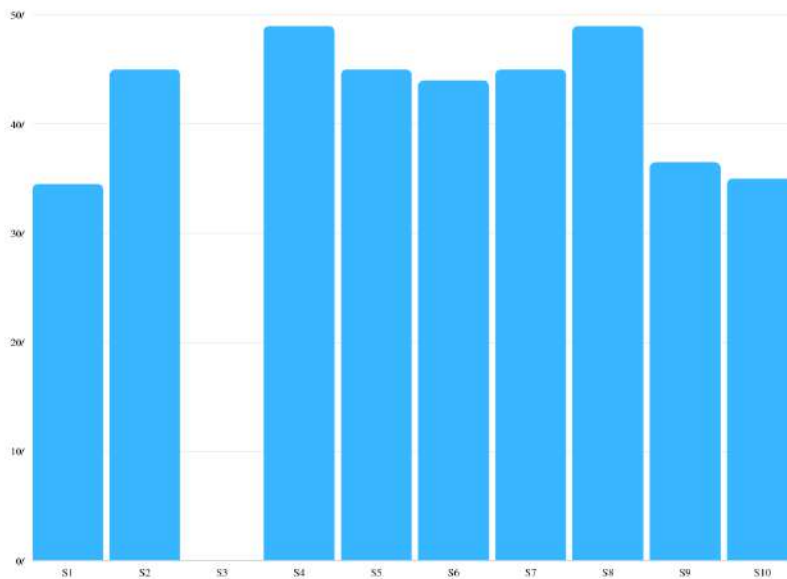
5.4.2 Data collected from intermediate-period test

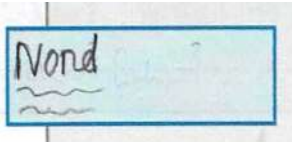


Comments	
S1	<p>Numbers were written in letters.</p> <p>The title written, “le tropicale”, has no sense in that context.</p> <p>In the map all information was written, even though in the wrong place.</p> <p>In the third stratum, many pieces of information are missing and some words are misspelt.</p>
S2	Absent
S3	Numbers were written in letters.
S4	S4 wrote numbers, which is a strategy to be quicker.
S5	Numbers were written in letters.

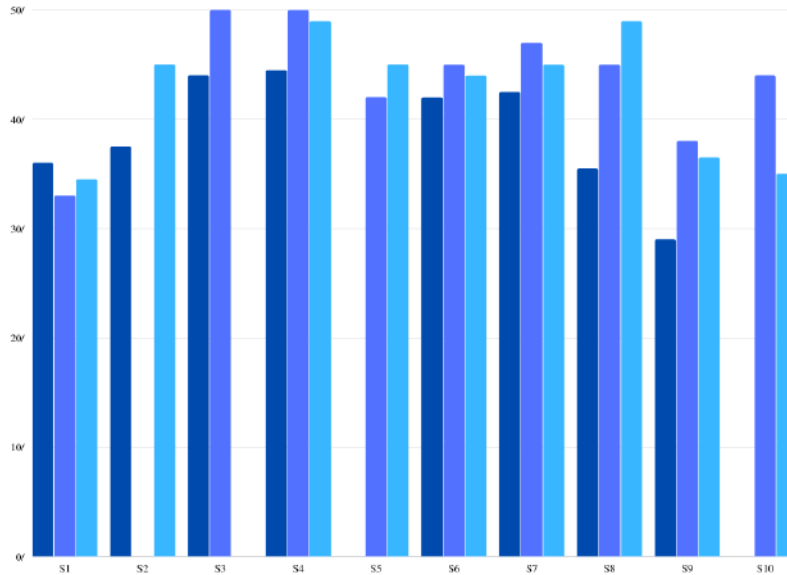
S6	S6 wrote numbers, which is a strategy to be quicker. Some words were misspelt.
S7	Numbers were written in letters. In some cases, S7 underlined the words heard even when it was not required to make a choice between two options.
S8	The sentence to be completed was: <i>paralleli importanti</i> . We said “i paralleli important sono cinque”. S8 wrote everything that was said without selecting the target information. In the third stratum, S8 wasted time writing “ci sono” without writing the target information.
S9	Numbers were written in letters. In many cases, S9 did not underline the correct word. In the map, S9 wrote one piece of information in the wrong place. S9 wrote only the most important pieces of information without rewriting everything that was said.
S10	S10 wrote numbers, which is a strategy to be quicker. In some cases, S10 underlined the words heard even when it was not required to make a choice between two options.

5.4.3 Data collected from final test



Comments	
S1	<p>Borders were not completely correct, some are missing.</p> <p>The symbol °C was used.</p> <p>In the third stratum, S1 wrote the most important words.</p>
S2	<p>The symbol °C was used.</p> <p>In the third stratum, S2 wrote the most important words.</p>
S3	Absent
S4	<p>The symbol °C was used.</p> <p>S4 wrote “archipelago = insieme di isole”, used one of the symbols taught.</p> <p>In the third stratum, S4 wrote the most important words. In the map, S4 was the only one who wrote something on the blank space under <i>climi e ambienti</i>. S4 used the symbol “ in order not to repeat the same word, a strategy which is used a lot in Italian.</p>
S5	<p>Borders were not completely correct.</p> <p>S5 underlined both <i>monarchia</i> and <i>repubblica</i>, without selecting the target information.</p>
S6	<p>S6 wrote the cardinal points on the map.</p> <p>Instead of writing <i>mare</i>, S6 used a drawing. <i>Mare del Nord</i> became:</p>  <p>The symbol °C was used.</p> <p>S6 wrote “archipelago = insieme di isole”, used one of the symbols taught.</p> <p>In the third stratum, S6 wrote the most important words.</p> <p>S6 wrote “inverno long”, using the English translation of <i>lungo</i>.</p>
S7	The symbol °C was used.
S8	<p>The symbol °C was used.</p> <p>In the third stratum, S8 wrote everything in a discursive manner.</p>
S9	In the scheme, borders were almost completely wrong. Many pieces of information were missing.
S10	<p>S10 wrote the most important words.</p> <p>In the third stratum, S10 wrote the most important words.</p>

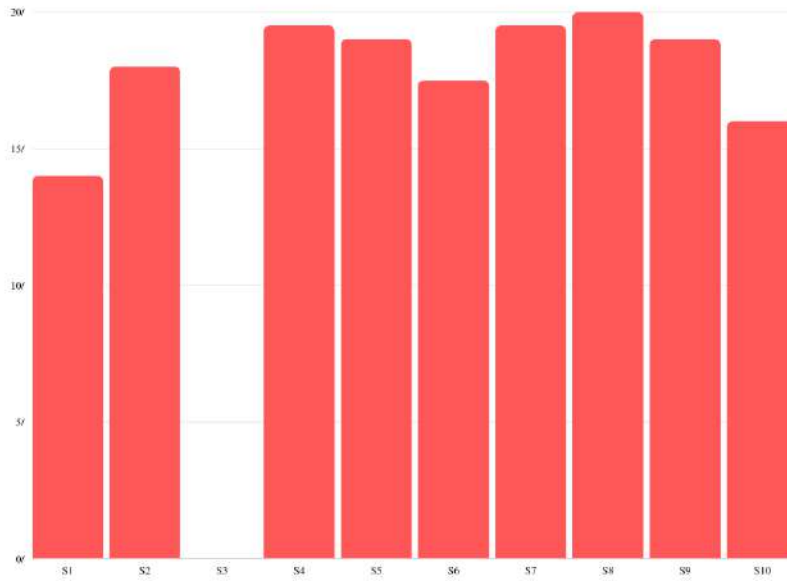
The results obtained from the three tests were then put into one single graph, which will now be presented.



With the exception of S1 and S10, all students showed different degrees of improvement from the placement test to the final test.

The final test was composed of a further part, whose results were not included in the previous count. In this part, students were asked to take notes more freely. They were given the possibility to choose between the map and the scheme. S4, S9, and S10 chose the map, the others chose the scheme.

In this case, scores were calculated out of 20. The following graph will show the collected results.



These results will be discussed in the following chapter.

Comments	
S1	S1 wrote only the most important words.
S2	S2 used some symbols.
S3	Absent
S4	S4 used some symbols. Pieces of information were written in a schematic way.
S6	S6 used some symbols.
S9	S9 used a symbol.
S10	S10 wrote the most important words.

6. Data discussion

In qualitative research, data collection and data analysis are followed by data discussion, a final phase which concerns the interpretation of data, in order for conclusions to be drawn (Dörnyei, Z., 2007, p.257).

Therefore, after having presented our data in the previous chapter, we will now proceed with its discussion. Discussion will be divided into four sub-chapter, one for each data collection tool.

Our discussion will be focussed on the following main topics:

- Learning strategies already known by our students
- Facilitating actions useful for the development of note taking
- Efficacy of stratification in facilitating the development of note taking

6.1 Discussion of data collected from questionnaire

As seen in the fifth chapter, questions were subdivided into three categories, concerning students' personal information, school in their countries of origin, and school in Italy. During our discussion, these categories may overlap as we were interested in observing also possible similarities and differences between the two contexts taken into account, namely school in our students' countries of birth and school in Italy.

What emerged from our data was that our class was composed by eight students from Bangladesh and two students from Senegal. This composition is not surprising and may reflect a larger scale situation. As a matter of fact, as mentioned in the first chapter, among all migrants living in the Municipality of Venice, in both 2018 and 2019, the Bangladeshi community was the most numerous. Also the presence of the two Senegalese students is not surprising, as Senegal, in both years, was the most represented African country in the Municipality of Venice.

Another feature that emerged was that our students were all first-generation migrants, as they personally experienced migration flows. Moreover, they can be defined as newcomers, as they arrived in Italy within the last two years. Some of them arrived during 2019, whereas three during 2020. The last student arriving in Italy was S10 (June 2020). All of them, at the moment of the laboratory, were living in Mestre, Gazzera, and Marghera, which are three boroughs of the Municipality of Venice.

Half of our students were enrolled in the right school grade. Whereas four, namely S1, S2, S4 and S6, were still attending their third year of Middle School, despite being born in 2006. Although all students should be enrolled according to their age, *Linee guida per l'accoglienza e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri* (2006) highlighted that, in some cases, after a deep analysis, some migrant students could be placed in lower grades if this is perceived as beneficial. Interesting was the case of S5, who was enrolled in the third year of middle school, despite being born in 2008.

According to our students' scholastic background, only one Senegalese student, S10, answered to have not attended school in their country of origin, therefore, arriving in Italy as an illiterate. In this case, difficulties in studying were more than reasonable. The other students reported to have attended 6 to 8 years of school. Our Bangladeshi students, with the exception of S1, who did not answer, told us that they attended a private school. This datum is a bit uncertain as many of them reported only the subjects that are normally studied in Bangladeshi public schools, namely English, Bangla, Science, Maths, Religion, and Physical Education (Bastasin, A., Tonioli, V., & Mamataz, H. H., 2018). Only our Senegalese student, S9, answered to have attended a public school and only one Bangladeshi student, S3, reported to be enrolled in a religious school.

Here in Italy, only S3 stated to have attended 2 years of school. The other students attended one year or less. They entered the Italian school system by being enrolled in the third year of Middle School, with the exception of S3, S4, and S5 who attended also the second year of Middle School. It should be mentioned that many of them told us that during 2020 lockdown, due to Covid-19, when all schools were closed, they did not attend online lessons. This recalls data reported in the first chapter, collected by INDIRE (2020). It was showed that students from migrant backgrounds were among those which were thought to be excluded by online learning. This for sure reduced their exposition to Italian and their possibility to develop study skills.

Our students were all enrolled in different schools in Mestre. The presence of students from different schools and even different grades may be a characteristic of Ital2 laboratories.

We investigated the subjects studied by our students, both in their countries of origin and in Italy. What is important to highlight here is that only three Bangladeshi students (S4, S6, S8) and one Senegalese student (S9) reported Geography among the subjects studied in their countries of origin. As far as school in Italy is concerned, although 8 students reported to have been studying Geography at school, they also mentioned to have started

studying it only in the middle of the 2020/2021 school year. Reason why we chose to focus on this subject.

The greatest differences between school in Bangladesh and Senegal and schools in Italy concern subjects such as Religion and foreign languages. Here in Italy non-Christian students are excluded from the study of Religion. As far as foreign languages are concerned, English, which is always studied in Middle Schools in Italy, being it a *lingua franca*, was studied only by our Bangladeshi students, being the presence of English in Bangladeshi schools rooted in the colonial past of Bangladesh (Rahman, M. M., Islam, M. S., Karim, A., et al., 2019). French, which is studied by the majority of our students here in Italy, was studied only by our Senegalese student, as French is the official language of Senegal. Arabic, which is the official language of Islam⁴⁰, is not studied in Italy, and was studied only by two students in their countries of origin, one Bangladeshi (S7) and one Senegalese (S9).

As far as the languages used at school are concerned, Bangladeshi students used Bangla and English in Bangladesh; the Senegalese student used Wolof and French in Senegal. This is understandable as they are some of the languages spoken in those countries. Here in Italy, students reported to use Italian, which is both the national language and the language of instruction. They added also other languages, such as English, French, and Spanish⁴¹. According to our students, these three foreign languages are used only during foreign-language lessons. What emerges is that their mother tongues, Bangla and Wolof, are not taken into consideration at school, and that English and French are not used as bridge languages. This goes against what was mentioned in the second chapter, namely that mother tongues or, at least, bridge languages, may be employed as facilitation resources, in order for key words and key concepts to be made comprehensible. A further problem was that all students perceived words used by Italian teachers as difficult, a fact which may strengthen difficulties in studying as, as we have already pointed out, the comprehensibility of input is fundamental.

We then wanted to investigate their knowledge of possible learning strategies, taught both in their countries of origin and in Italy. First of all, the majority of our students, both Bangladeshi and Senegalese, reported to be taught to take notes in their countries. We explained to them that we intended note taking as a skill and strategy which implies listening to teachers and writing down the most important pieces of information. Here in

⁴⁰ Our students were all Muslims.

⁴¹ S4 was the only one who studied Spanish instead of French.

Italy, only four students answered to have been taught to take notes (S2, S3, S7, S8), even though, when asked what they were taught, they said “nothing”. The lack of attention towards the development of this skill may be explained in terms of students’ low linguistic level. At the same time, literature shows that the development of this skill is one of the areas more neglected by language education (Daloiso, M., 2020) and by teachers (Balboni, P. E., 2018).

Our students were not familiar also to summarising, another strategy present in the CALLA Model, which was taught to S1, S5, S7 in Bangladesh, and only to S8 here in Italy. This last data, in line with data concerning note taking, may be explained in terms of too high linguistic and cognitive demand, as summarising is an integrated skill, which requires a B1 level (Bricchese, A., 2020).

A strategy which is shared in both contexts is that of underlying the most important words. Whereas using maps and schemes was particularly taught in Italy. Only three Bangladeshi students and one Senegalese student were taught to employ them in their countries of origin.

All students reported to have been taught other study strategies, such as circling words, highlighting, writing the most important words, writing or underlying what was not understood. Here in Italy, only a half of our students (S1, S3, S4, S7, S9) have been taught other study strategies, basically the same mentioned also in the other context.

6.2 Discussion of data collected from research diary

Data collected from research diary, which in the previous chapter were presented according to the reference lesson, will now be discussed according to our three main research topics.

We will first focus on learning strategies already known by our students. A strategy that our students employed was that of using their mother tongue or a bridge language. In the second chapter it was mentioned that those languages can be employed in order to explain some key terms or concepts, as a facilitating action. At the same time, applying linguistic knowledge of other languages to the target language is one of the learning strategies present in the CALLA Model. In this respect, one of the most salient events was when S2 explained the meaning of *atmosphere* and *atmospheric conditions* in Bangla to the other Bangladeshi students, as S2 knew the meaning but was not able to express it into Italian.

Therefore, all Bangladeshi students listened to S2 and then tried to explain in Italian what was said to the two Senegalese students and to us. The Senegalese student S9 was then able to explain what *atmosphere* is, namely “è fuori dalla Terra” (it is outside earth).

Second, in order for students to develop note taking, we wanted to identify some facilitating actions and strategies that may be employed.

In the second chapter, the importance of social mediation was stressed. For this reason, during lesson 3, we proposed a cooperative-learning activity focussed on note taking. Each student had a scheme to complete, stratified according to their level, and a piece of information different from that of their other peers. The different pieces of information concerned topics already covered in other activities. Working on lexicon and topics before taking notes proved successful. Pre-lecture discussion was identified as a key element in the aforementioned study by Yasemin Kirkgöz (2010). During this cooperative-learning activity, in order to complete the scheme, each student had to ask for information to their other classmates. The fact that students were the real sources of information made note taking less anxious, lowering the possibilities of activating the affective filter (Krashen, S. D., 2009).

An important element that was identified was that of using a scheme or a map. As highlighted by Gray and Madson (2007, in Welch, A., & Duffield, S., 2012), showing students a structure for taking notes may improve the quality of their notes. From our point of view, this could be useful also during the first phases of note-taking development. As a matter of fact, during the placement test, we had the impression that the scheme was helpful. For instance, S7 understood that the scheme presented the different pieces of information in order. At a certain point, S7 said “Prof, adesso fiumi” (“Miss, now rivers”). The employment of a scheme and of key words in the left-hand side column helped students as they introduced the topics on which they had to take notes. The structure of the scheme that we employed recalled that used in Cornell note-taking method, with a column for notes and one for possible questions and key words. We chose this structure as literature showed the efficacy of this method (Faber, 2000; in Welch, A., & Duffield, S., 2012). If in the placement test key words were already given in order to guide students, during lesson 4 we made students write the key words themselves. They faced no difficulties in identifying a possible title for their notes and possible key words for the first two sections of the scheme. However, when asked to divide the other sections autonomously and to find key words, they panicked a little bit. We had to suggest the first subdivision and the first title *dove?* (Where?). S4 was then able to identify the section

clima (climate) and the last section *cosa c'è?* (What is there?). The final result is that presented in the following image.

1 [LA REGIONE ... equatoriale ...]

(Dove?)^c
 - Lungo l' equatore e nord a e sud dell' equatore]

(clima)
 - [Clima caldo umido = fa molto caldo e c'è molta umidità
 - Piove tanto
 - Estate e inverno sono uguali]
 - [Foresta pluviale
 - Ci sono molte piante e molti animali, per esempio

(come c'è?)



gli uccelli ... le Scimmie gli Insetti]

Despite the difficulties faced during this lesson, the following week students, working in couples or groups, were able to complete the scheme very easily. Another activity we proposed, in order to reason on the structure of the scheme and on logic connections among pieces of information, was that of making them construct a scheme, starting from given information and key words.

Given the importance of concept maps, as highlighted by Novak (2010), in the same lesson we gave our students the structure of a concept map, which has to be completed with the notes taken the previous week on the scheme. They faced no difficulties in carrying out this task. Therefore, we believed that concept maps could be employed also for taking notes.

Other elements that emerged during the various lessons were the employment of bulleted lists and numbers, in order to organise pieces of information, as suggested by Yasemin Kirkgöz (2010). Also signalling when students had to take notes was perceived as useful. During the weeks, we noticed that none of them tried to take notes, therefore, introducing each note-taking activity with *PRENDIAMO APPUNTI!* (Let's take notes!) helped them get ready for the task.

Being guided note-taking based on selective listening (Balboni, P. E., 2015), we wanted our students to practice this. During lesson 8, they were divided into groups. Each group

was given a map of the United States and some photos of different environments present in the USA, which had already been studied together. The activity consisted in listening and putting the right photo on the right State in the map. Therefore, our students had to focus their attention only on fundamental pieces of information. The same pieces of information had then to be underlined in a text, a strategy which our students were used to, and to be put in an empty concept map. Students could decide how to organise information on the map and were free to use colours or other elements. Some of them employed colours, for this reason in the last two lessons we used colours for highlighting the different parts of the scheme and map.

The study by Yasemin Kirkgöz (2010) stressed also the importance of teaching symbols and abbreviations. Despite some of our students felt that using them was difficult, some others, especially those with lower proficiency levels, seemed to be particularly facilitated. S1, for instance, was able to immediately identify the right symbol that had to be used. Many of our students used symbols during the final test and S6 used the handout with symbols in order to be quicker.

As far as the efficacy of stratification in facilitating the development of note-taking is concerned, what emerged was that, during the placement test, the majority of students felt more comfortable in completing the first part. The test was stratified according to the different phases identified by Bricchese (2020) and Serragiotto (2020). Given the cognitive and linguistic demand required by note taking, we expected some difficulties and, at the end of the lesson, we realised that some students would need to take a step back and start their note-taking journey by only underlying the target words. This was decided as many students panicked during the test, did not know how to write the majority of words, thus needing a lot of help.

We believed that giving our students stratified worksheets similar to those employed in tests would lead some of them to miss some pieces of information, especially in the third stratum. The objective of our research was giving them the opportunity to progress, but at the same time we wanted to make them perceive note taking as accessible, in order not to demotivate them. For this reason, during normal lessons, we personally modulated the linguistic and cognitive demand. Therefore, stratification was employed in a different manner. In this respect, it is fundamental to calibrate the tasks, in terms of number of words to be eliminated. This emerged from an error I personally made in designing the task: During lesson 2, group 1, who had to underline the target words, was able to complete the definition of climate only after a first explanation, whereas group 2, who

had to write the missing words, needed two more explanations, as the target words were equal in the two groups.

When a normal stratified worksheet was employed, for instance in lesson 9, it was necessary to make students confront and complete their notes.

At the end of lesson 9 we also made an “experiment”. We wanted to see whether our students could take notes without a structure. In order to make this task less anxious, we made them work in groups. S2, S5, S7 constructed a map. S3 and S6 wrote a text and highlighted some connections by using arrows. S8 wrote everything in a text. S1 and S10 wrote only the most important words. They carried out this task very well, according to their levels. However, it is important to mention that in some cases connections among pieces of information were not really appropriate. All the data that we collected during these lessons made us design as such the last scheme and map employed in the final test. Although in this part students had to take notes almost freely, they all were able to carry out this task incredibly well. Even S10, despite their scholastic background, was able to identify the majority of target words.

Finally, we want to highlight another element: Students’ difficulty in using cardinal points and in finding countries on a map. For this reason, during note-taking tasks, we made our students write the borders of some countries directly on a map. Another activity which aimed at developing their geographical awareness was that proposed during lesson 8. Students were given a map of the United Europe and had to circle with the same colour all the countries that entered the EU in the same year, according to what we told them. When they could not find a country, we used North, South, West, and East to guide them, and this helped them strengthen their knowledge on cardinal points.

6.3 Discussion of data collected from students’ evaluation sheets

The first few questions of the evaluation sheets concerned our students’ general understanding and their perception on collaboration with peers. Asking whether they were able to understand and whether activities were easy helped us modulate the demand of each lesson. As a matter of fact, in the second chapter, it was stressed the importance to give students comprehensible inputs and activities which are challenging, yet perceived as accessible. In the majority of cases, our students perceived our lessons are understandable and not too difficult. The only exception was lesson 8, when our students

were taught to use symbols. In that case, our activities were not always perceived as easy by the majority of our students.

We wanted to investigate students' perception on collaboration with peers, as, as mentioned in the second chapter, social mediation is fundamental within plurilingual Mixed Abilities Classes. During our case study, students worked in couples or groups many times, so that they could help each other and learn in a non-anxiogenic setting. In the majority of cases, our students perceived to be helped by their classmates and said to help them. However, there were also students who admitted to have not (always) helped their peers. Their answers reflect what we observed in class. It was evident that some students were more willing to work with others, whereas others, such as S9 and S2, preferred to carry out tasks alone. As mentioned in the second chapter, forcing students in working with others may results harmful. For this reason, we tried to alternate moments of couple- or group-work with moments of individual work. When possible, we made students choose whether working with someone or alone.

We then wanted to investigate students' perceptions on note taking, and on the strategies that we proposed to them, in order to understand whether they were felt helpful.

First of all, it should be noted that, if at the beginning all students perceived note taking as *very difficult*, *difficult*, or *so and so*, lesson after lesson their answers became more positive, and after the final test all perceived note taking as *so and so* (in the worst case), *easy*, or *very easy*. From our point of view, this is a great result, as perceiving a task as too difficult may demotivate students. This data is also in line with their feeling, in the majority of cases, of success in note taking lesson after lesson and with their feeling of being more confident, even though not always, with respect to the previous week.

Despite these positive answers, in the majority of cases students admitted that they did not always try to take notes at school. When they did, the map seemed to be preferred to the scheme. This is in line with data concerning the usefulness of these two tools. According to our students, the map seemed to be perceived a little more useful than the scheme. It is positive that students accept this instrument as, as mentioned in the fourth chapter, concept maps may be considered as facilitative tools in school. Being good for finding key concepts and principles, something which is fundamental for note taking, this tool may sustain especially the first phases of students' note-taking development.

It should be noted, however, that when students were given the possibility to choose between a map or a scheme for taking notes, the majority of them preferred using the scheme, as, according to them it was (very) easy or easier than the map, or they liked it.

Generally speaking, students said that note taking was easier when they were given a map or a scheme. This is in line with a study on the promotion of note taking with learners of English as a second language, carried out by Yasemin Kirkgöz (2010), where the employment of incomplete schemes of the lecture, with headings and main points, which students had to complete with main information, proved successful.

Apart from quantitative data, an important element emerges here: Some students prefer taking notes by using the map, others by using the scheme. This is the result of the presence of multiple intelligences, of different cognitive and learning styles within a single class. In the second chapters, it was stressed the importance of not favouring one group at the expense of another. From our point of view, this is a fundamental element with a skill as personal as note taking.

As proposed in the third chapter, with foreign students note taking may be facilitated. Students may be guided from first stages where some key terms have to be written, to stages where key concepts have to be detailed, to final stages where note taking is freer (Bricchese, A., 2020; Serragiotto, G., 2020). We already knew our students' linguistic level and we expected them to perceive the first stratum as easier with respect to others. Data collected with students' evaluation sheet after the placement test confirmed our expectation. As a matter of fact, in the majority of cases students could take notes when a few words were missing but could not (always) take notes alone.

Students' evaluation sheets were also employed to investigate students' perceptions of the efficacy of certain strategies. We re-proposed one of the strategies employed in the aforementioned study by Yasemin Kirkgöz (2010), namely teaching students abbreviations and symbols. Although the majority of our students replied that using symbols did not always make note taking easier, four of them believed that using symbols made them quicker, whereas four not always. However, as seen in the previous sub-chapter, some of them, especially S1 and S6, two of the students with a lower linguistic level, seemed to have benefited from this strategy.

The same study highlighted the importance of presenting notes in a clear and logic way, and, in this respect, numbers might be employed. Therefore, from a certain point, we started employing numbers to order information, as at the beginning we observed that our students tended to get lost. The great majority of our students perceived the use of numbers as helpful, none of them perceived the contrary.

In addition to this, we employed different colours in order to guide our students, as during different activities they enjoyed using them. Again, the majority of them perceived this as helpful.

Given the importance of working with classmates, we wanted to investigate whether our students perceived taking notes in couples or groups as helpful. Only three students were completely convinced of the efficacy of this strategy.

6.4 Discussion of data collected from tests

On the whole, all students, with the exception of S1 and S10, showed a certain degree of improvement, especially when comparing the placement test to the final test. Certain students registered slight lower scores in the final test, if compared to the intermediate-period test⁴².

In the third stratum of the placement test, students took notes in two different ways. One group of students wrote only some of the most important words. Other students (S3, S7, S9) wrote the most important pieces of information in a discursive manner.

An interesting element to note is that students at the beginning were not able to select only target information. This emerged from a common mistake they made. In the test, the following two sentences were to be completed with the words *Europa* and *Asia*:

I monti Urali dividono la Russia in due parti:

- *Una parte è in*
- *Una parte è in*

We were talking about Russia and we said that “Una parte **della Russia** è in Europa e una parte **della Russia** è in Asia”. We added *della Russia* as we wanted to observe whether our students were able to select only the target information. Many of them wrote *Russia* in the blank space. Only after we made them notice the error, they were able to select the right piece of information.

In a further passage, S9 tried to write everything that was said, without paying attention to the structure and without selecting only the right information. This led S9 to write pieces of information in the wrong place.

Some of our students also used other languages, for instance S4 translated *monsoni* into Bangla, and S6 wrote the target word in Italian, whereas the verb in English (“is vento).

⁴² It should be mentioned that our students were really tired due to Ramadan.

The fact that some of them panicked a bit during the test, misspelt a lot of words, and needed notions to be repeated, made us take a step back. For this reason, in the intermediate-period test, students were also required to underline the right words.

On average, students did better in this test, with respect to the placement test. Only S1 registered a slightly lower score.

When numbers had to be written, some of them wasted time writing them in letters.

In the test, the following sentence had to be completed with the number 5:

- *paralleli importanti*

We purposely said “i paralleli più importanti sono cinque”. All students wrote only the number, whereas S8 put the article on the dots and then wrote the sentence almost mechanically.

The final test was slightly more difficult with respect to the intermediate-period test, this could be the reason why some students scored 1-to-2 points less.

Some elements which should be noticed are the employment of some symbols, such as °C for degrees, “ instead of repeating the same word, = for expressing equal meanings. S6, when asked to write the names of the seas around Germany, wrote the names *Nord* and *Baltico* accompanied by the drawing of waves. S6, as observed in the first test, wrote the target word in Italian accompanied by an adjective in English, “inverno long”.

In this final test, we added a further part. This decision was based on what we noticed during the previous lesson, when we did the simulation. We asked our students to try and take notes on an empty sheet. They all succeeded in the task, each student according to their level. Even when students tried to construct a map, their connections where not logical. For this reason, we decided to add this further part, where a structure and only a few key words were given, and where students had to take notes freely. What emerged was that students who during the course belonged to Group 1 tended to write only the most important words, whereas students belonging to Group 2, with the exception of S2 and S4, tended to write information in a discursive manner. What is important to note is that all were able to write almost all pieces of information. Also in this part, some of our students employed some symbols.

7. Proposals of learning units to learn note-taking in Italian L2 when studying Geography

In this chapter, we will attach the learning units proposed during our Ital2 laboratory used to study Geography and to learn to take notes.

Learning Unit 1

IL CLIMA e LE REGIONI CLIMATICHE

IL METEO

- *Che tempo fa? Guarda la cartina, rispondi alle domande usando le parole qui sotto.*

L'ARCOBALENO – FA CALDO – LA PIOGGIA – UNA TROMBA D'ARIA – VENTO – FA FREDDO – IL SOLE – IL TEMPORALE – LA NEVE – NUVOLOSO



America del Nord:

1. In Canada c'è
2. Negli Stati Uniti c'è

America del Sud:

3. In Brasile c'è

Europa:

4. In Italia c'è

Africa:

5. In Sudafrica c'è
6. In Senegal è

Asia:

7. In Russia c'è
8. In Bangladesh

Oceania:

9. In Australia c'è

L'ATMOSFERA E LE CONDIZIONI ATMOSFERICHE

- Guarda le immagini e prova a spiegare cosa significano queste parole.



Atmosfera =

.....

.....

.....



Condizioni atmosferiche =

.....

.....

.....

PRENDIAMO APPUNTI!

CHE COS'È IL CLIMA?

(Gruppo 1)

- Ascolta la definizione di clima. Sottolinea le parole in grassetto giuste.

È l'insieme delle condizioni **atmosferiche / meteorologiche** che **ci sono / non ci sono** in un luogo in **1 anno / 3 anni**, e che **si ripetono / non si ripetono** per almeno 10 anni.

(Gruppo 2)

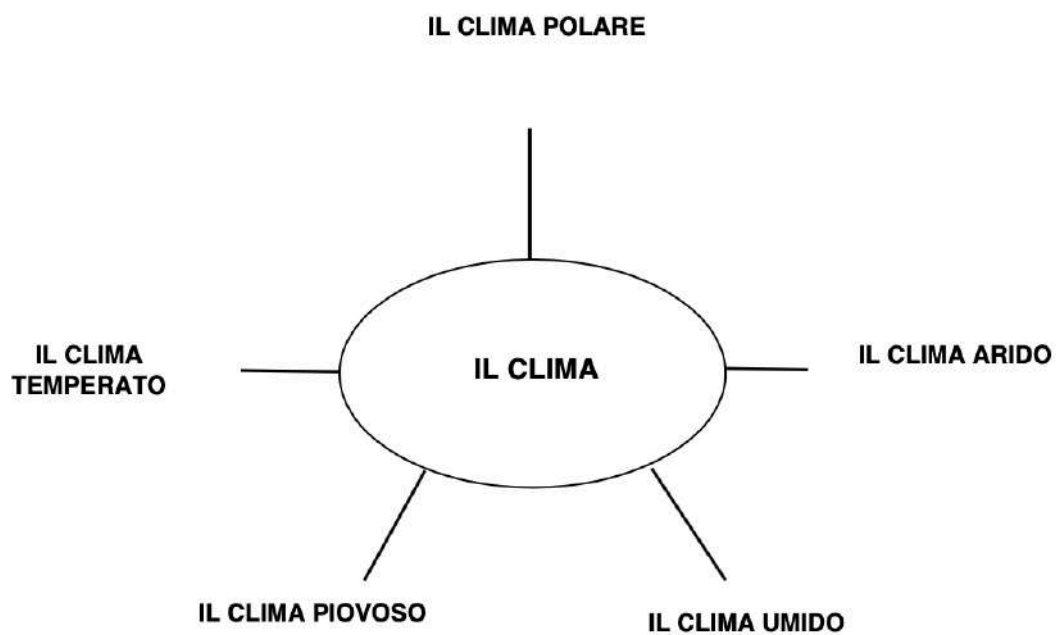
- Ascolta la definizione di clima. *Completa la definizione con le parole che mancano.*

È l'insieme che in in anno, e che per almeno 10 anni.

PRENDIAMO APPUNTI!

I CLIMI PIÙ IMPORTANTI

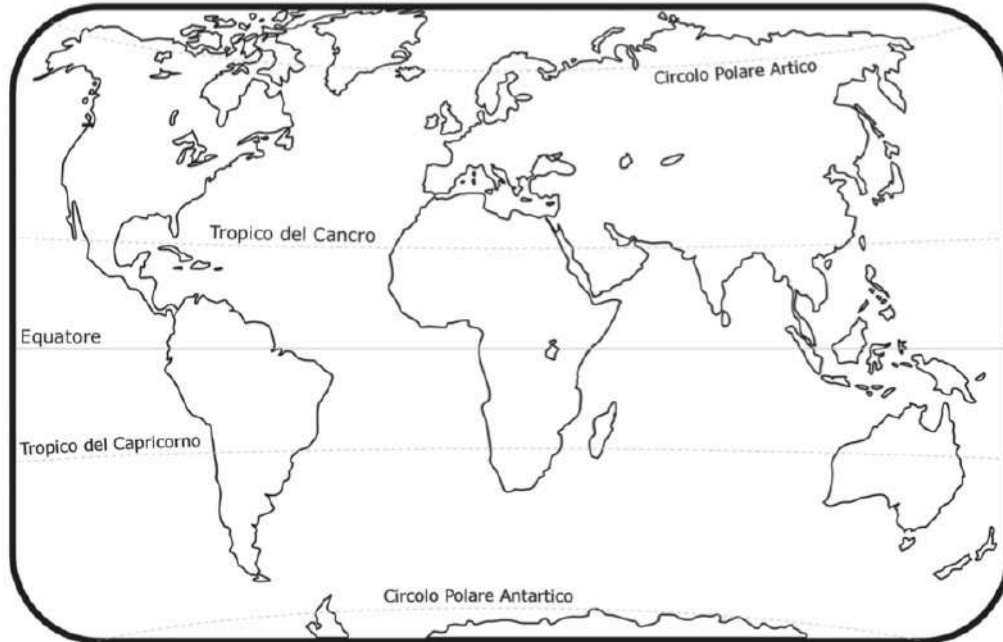
- *Costruiamo la mappa dei climi più importanti. Secondo te quali caratteristiche hanno questi climi? Scrivi nella mappa solo le caratteristiche giuste.*



LE REGIONI CLIMATICHE

In base al tipo di clima, possiamo dividere il pianeta in alcune **REGIONI CLIMATICHE**.

- *Ascolta le indicazioni e colora la zona climatica giusta.*



- *Quante sono le regioni climatiche?*

LA LEGENDA

- *Guarda la cartina e le parole scritte alla lavagna. Poi completa la legenda.*

	REGIONI CLIMATICHE:

UN PO' DI PAROLE DELLA GEOGRAFIA

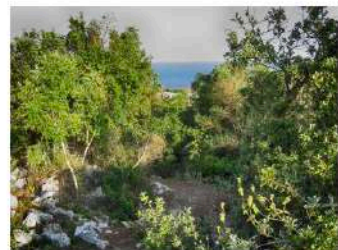
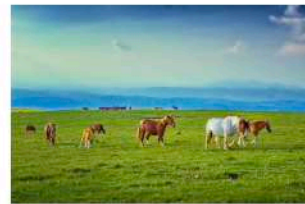
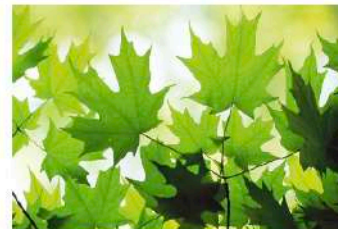
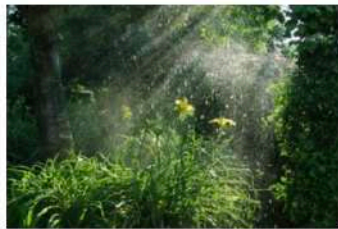
- *Incolla ogni definizione vicino alla parola giusta.*

PAROLE DELLA GEOGRAFIA:	DEFINIZIONE:
EQUATORE	
PARALLELI	
MERIDIANI	
TROPICO DEL CANCRO	
TROPICO DEL CAPRICORNO	
CIRCOLO POLARE ARTICO	
CIRCOLO POLARE ANTARTICO	

Linea immaginaria che divide la Terra a metà.
Linee immaginarie parallele all'equatore.
Linee immaginarie che passano per il Polo Nord e il Polo Sud.
Parallelo molto importante, si trova a Nord dell'equatore.
Parallelo molto importante, si trova a Sud dell'equatore.
Parallelo molto importante, si trova intorno al Polo Nord.
Parallelo molto importante, si trova intorno al Polo Sud.

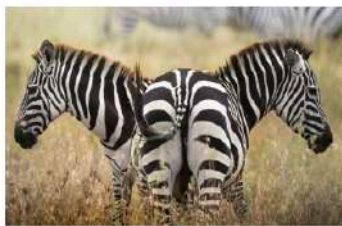
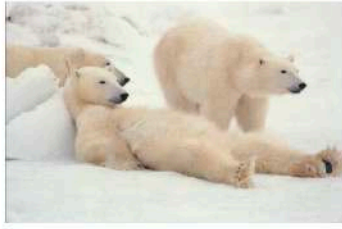
- *Scrivi i nomi degli ambienti sotto all'immagine giusta.*

AMBIENTE POLARE – SAVANA – DESERTO – PRATERIE – MACCHIA – FORESTA
PLUVIALE – FORESTA DI LATIFOGIE



- *Scrivi i nomi degli animali sotto all'immagine giusta.*

LEONI – ORSI BIANCHI – PINGUINI – ELEFANTI – ZEBRE – RENNE – CAVALLI



PRENDIAMO APPUNTI!

(Gruppo 1)

- In questo schema mancano delle informazioni. Ascolta quello che ti dicono i tuoi compagni: sottolinea l'informazione giusta o scrivi le parole che mancano.

REGIONI CLIMATICHE:	CARATTERISTICHE:
ZONA TROPICALE	STAGIONI: stagioni: 1. Estate: piove tanto / poco , fa caldo / freddo , c'è umidità 2. Inverno: , fa un po' meno caldo
	AMBIENTE: tipi di ambiente: 1. La foresta pluviale / piovosa : ○ Vicina all'....., piove moltissimo / pochissimo , ci sono tante piante diverse / uguali 2. La savana: ○ Area molto grande / molto piccola ○ Piove / non piove → crescono erbe molto alte ○ Piove / non piove → le erbe diventano secche ○ Vivono i, le zebre, gli elefanti 3. Il deserto caldo / freddo : ○ Luogo arido / piovoso e pieno di sabbia / sassi , ○ Piove quasi sempre / non piove quasi mai ○ Vicino ai ○ Giorno: fa molto caldo / freddo ○ Notte: fa molto caldo / freddo
ZONE POLARI	STAGIONI: stagioni: 1. Estate: a. Corta / lunga b. Sole di mezzanotte / mezzogiorno : il Sole non tramonta mai per un po' di mesi 2. Inverno: a. Molto corto / lungo b. Fa molto caldo / freddo c. Notte / giorno polare: c'è sempre buio per un po' di mesi

	<p>AMBIENTE:</p> <p>1. Ambiente:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C'è tantissimo ghiaccio / erba ○ Ci sono le renne, gli bianchi e i pinguini
<p>ZONE TEMPERATE</p>	<p>STAGIONI:</p> <p>..... stagioni:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Estate: fa caldo / fa freddo 2. Inverno: fa caldo / fa freddo 3. Primavera: temperature miti = 4. Autunno: temperature miti
	<p>AMBIENTE:</p> <p>..... tipi di ambiente:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foreste di latifoglie: latifoglie = alberi con le larghe / strette 2. Praterie: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ci sono molte erbe ○ Piove tanto / poco ○ Lontane / vicine dagli oceani ○ Corrono i cavalli / conigli 3. Macchia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ci sono boschi di alberi sempre verdi, e tante piante diverse

(Gruppo 2)

- In questo schema mancano delle informazioni. Ascolta quello che ti dicono i tuoi compagni: scrivi le parole che mancano.

REGIONI CLIMATICHE:	CARATTERISTICHE:
ZONA TROPICALE	STAGIONI: stagioni: 3. Estate: piove, fa, c'è
	4. Inverno:, fa un po' meno caldo
	AMBIENTE: tipi di ambiente: 4. La: o Vicina all'....., piove moltissimo, ci sono tante
	5. La savana: o Area molto o → crescono erbe molto alte o → le erbe diventano secche o Vivono i, le, gli
	6. caldo: o Luogo arido e pieno di o Non piove quasi mai o Vicino ai o Giorno: o Notte:
ZONE POLARI	STAGIONI: stagioni: 3. Estate: a. b. Sole di: il Sole non tramonta mai per un po' di mesi
	4. Inverno: a. Molto b. Fa molto c. polare: c'è sempre per un po' di mesi

	<p>AMBIENTE:</p> <p>2. Ambiente</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C'è tantissimo ○ Ci sono le, gli bianchi e i
<p>ZONE TEMPERATE</p>	<p>STAGIONI:</p> <p>..... stagioni:</p> <p>5. Estate: fa</p> <p>6. Inverno: fa</p> <p>7. Primavera: temperature miti =</p> <p>8. Autunno: temperature miti</p> <hr/> <p>AMBIENTE:</p> <p>..... tipi di ambiente:</p> <p>4. Foreste di latifoglie: latifoglie = alberi con le</p> <p>5. Praterie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ci sono molte erbe ○ Piove ○ dagli oceani ○ Corrono i <p>6. Macchia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ci sono boschi di alberi, e tante piante diverse

<p>Nella zona tropicale ci sono due stagioni: l'estate e l'inverno.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In estate piove tanto, fa caldo, c'è umidità. 2. In inverno non piove e fa un po' meno caldo.
<p>Nella zona tropicale ci sono tre tipi di ambiente: la foresta pluviale, la savana e il deserto caldo.</p>
<p>La foresta pluviale è vicina all'equatore. Nella foresta pluviale piove moltissimo e ci sono tante piante diverse.</p>
<p>La savana è un'area molto grande. Quando piove crescono erbe molto alte, quando non piove le erbe diventano secche. Nella savana vivono i leoni, le zebre e gli elefanti.</p>
<p>Il deserto caldo è un luogo arido e pieno di sabbia. Nel deserto non piove quasi mai. Il deserto è vicino ai Tropici. Di giorno fa molto caldo, di notte fa molto freddo.</p>

Nelle zone polari ci sono due stagioni: l'estate e l'inverno.
L'estate è molto corta. In estate c'è il Sole di mezzanotte, cioè il Sole non tramonta mai per un po' di mesi.

Nelle zone polari ci sono due stagioni: l'estate e l'inverno.
L'inverno è molto lungo e fa molto freddo. In inverno c'è la Notte polare, cioè c'è sempre buio per un po' di mesi.

Nelle zone polari c'è l'ambiente polare, c'è tantissimo ghiaccio. Nell'ambiente polare ci sono le renne, gli orsi bianchi e i pinguini.

Nelle zone temperate ci sono quattro stagioni: l'estate, l'inverno, la primavera e l'autunno.

1. In estate da caldo
2. In inverno fa freddo
3. In primavera ci sono temperature miti, cioè non fa troppo caldo e non fa troppo freddo
4. In autunno ci sono temperature miti.

Nelle zone temperate ci sono tre tipi di ambiente: le foreste di latifoglie, le praterie e la macchia.

1. Nelle foreste di latifoglie ci sono le latifoglie, cioè piante e alberi con le foglie larghe.
2. Nelle praterie ci sono molte erbe, piove poco. Le praterie sono lontane dagli oceani. Nelle praterie corrono i cavalli.
3. Nella macchia ci sono boschi di alberi sempre verdi, ci sono cespugli e tante piante diverse.

USA I TUOI APPUNTI!


- *Prova a descrivere il tuo Paese o un Paese che ti piace. Ricordati di descrivere anche il clima e l'ambiente.*

.....
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Learning Unit 2

CHE COSA C'È IN AFRICA?

- Collega ogni parola alla definizione giusta e all'immagine giusta.

MONTE	FIUME	LAGO	CASCATA
È una grande massa d'acqua dentro un grande buco nella terra.	Rilievo naturale molto grande e alto, è alto più di 600 metri.	Si forma quando un fiume fa una discesa improvvisa.	È un corso d'acqua che di solito finisce nel mare.
			
Questo è il Nilo (6671 km =)	Queste sono le Vittoria	Questo è il Kilimangiaro (5895 m =)	Questo è il Tanganica

(Gruppo 1)

PRENDIAMO APPUNTI!

- Guarda i rettangoli A, B, C, D, E, F e prendi appunti: sottolinea le parole giuste e scrivi le parole che mancano.

TITOLO:	
<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>A</p>
<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>B</p> <p>In Africa ci sono tipi di regioni climatiche:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. regione equatoriale 2. regioni sub-tropicali 3. regioni tropicali 4. regioni sub-tropicali

1. LA REGIONE

C

- Lungo / Lontano l' e subito a nord e a sud dell'equatore / dei tropici
- Clima caldo-umido / caldo-secco = fa molto e c'è molta umidità
- Piove
- Estate e inverno sono uguali / diversi
- Foresta pluviale / piovosa
- Ci sono molte piante e molti animali, per esempio



..... Scimmie / Serpenti Insetti

2. LE REGIONI

D

- Un po' lungo / lontano dall', verso nord / ovest e verso sud / est
- Clima tropicale / equatoriale
- Piove solo in un periodo dell'anno / durante tutto l'anno
- In estate / inverno: molto (Fino a)
- In estate / inverno: la temperatura può scendere fino a
- SAHEL = bordo del, regione dell'Africa del deserto del Sahara. In questa regione c'è la steppa / macchia.



- Tra la foresta pluviale e la steppa c'è la

3. LE REGIONI

E

- Vicino ai
- Clima *tropicale-arido / tropicale-umido*
- Fa molto
- *Non piove quasi mai / Piove quasi sempre*
- *Di giorno / notte fa molto caldo / freddo e di giorno / notte fa caldo / freddo*
- C'è il
- Deserto del Sahara
- Deserto del Kalahari e Deserto del Namib
- **OASI** = area molto *piccola / grande* nel deserto, ci sono, le palme e un po' di



4. LE REGIONI

F

- Vicino al *Mar Mediterraneo / Mar Rosso* e intorno al Capo di Buona Speranza



- Clima *temperato / tropicale*
- In *estate / inverno* fa *caldo / freddo*
- L'estate è secca =
- In inverno ci sono temperature
- Piove soprattutto in *inverno / estate*
- mediterranea

(Gruppo 2)

PRENDIAMO APPUNTI!

- Guarda i rettangoli A, B, C, D, E, F e prendi appunti: scrivi le parole che mancano.

TITOLO:	
<p>.....</p>	<p>A</p>
<p>.....</p>	<p>B</p> <p>In Africa ci sono tipi di regioni climatiche:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. regione equatoriale 2. regioni sub-tropicali 3. regioni tropicali 4. regioni sub-tropicali

1. LA REGIONE

C

- Lungo l' e dell'
- Clima = fa molto e c'è molta umidità
- Piove
- Estate e inverno sono
- Foresta
- Ci sono molte e molti animali, per esempio



..... Scimmie

Insetti

2. LE REGIONI

D

- Un po' lontano dall', verso e verso
- Clima
- Piove solo in periodo dell'anno
- In: molto (fino a)
- In: la temperatura può scendere fino a
- SAHEL = bordo del, regione dell'Africa del deserto del Sahara. In questa regione c'è la



- Tra la foresta pluviale e la steppa c'è la

3. LE REGIONI

- E
- Vicino ai
 - Clima
 - Fa molto
 - Non piove quasi mai
 - Di giorno fa molto e di notte fa
 - C'è il
 - Deserto del Sahara
 - Deserto del Kalahari e Deserto del Namib
 - OASI = area molto piccola nel deserto, ci sono, le palme e un po' di



4. LE REGIONI

- F
- Vicino al Mar Mediterraneo e intorno al Capo di Buona Speranza



- Clima
- In fa caldo
- L'estate è secca =
- In inverno ci sono temperature
- Piove soprattutto in
- mediterranea

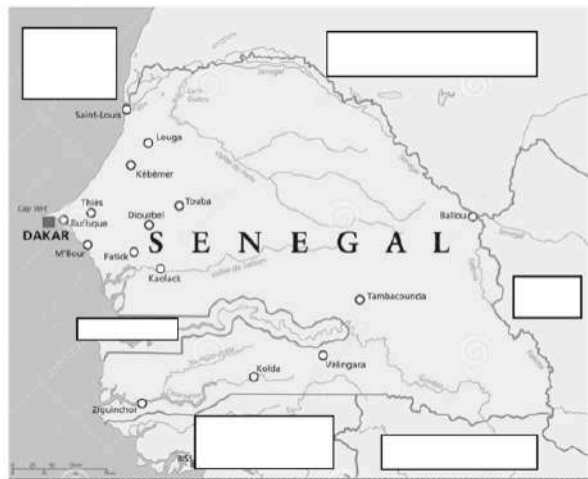
- Vero (V) o falso (F)? Segna con una X se le risposte sono vere (V) o false (F).

1. L'Africa è circondata da due mari e da due oceani.	V	F
2. In Africa ci sono cinque tipi di regioni climatiche.	V	F
3. Nelle regioni sub-equatoriali c'è il deserto.	V	F
4. In Africa ci sono tre deserti importanti.	V	F
5. La macchia mediterranea è nella regione equatoriale.	V	F

- Costruisci lo schema del Senegal: Usa le parole chiavi e le informazioni qui sotto.

CONFINI	CLIMA
FIUMI E LAGHI	AMBIENTI
REGIONE CLIMATICA	STAGIONI

Il Senegal confina a Nord e a Nord-Est con la Mauritania, a Est con il Mali.
Il Senegal confina a Sud-Ovest con la Guinea, e Sud-Est con la Guinea-Bissau, a Ovest con l'Oceano Atlantico.
Il Gambia divide la parte nord-occidentale e sud-occidentale del Senegal.
I fiumi principali sono il Senegal (1085 km), il Saloum (250 km), il Gambia (1130 km) e il Casamance (300 km).
A Nord-Ovest c'è il Lago di Guiers (170 km ²).
Il Senegal si trova nella regione tropicale.
In Senegal fa sempre molto caldo.
In Senegal c'è il clima tropicale.
A Sud piove da maggio a dicembre.
A Nord, lontano dall'Oceano, c'è un clima tropicale-arido.
Dove c'è il clima tropicale-arido piove pochissimo e solo 2-3 mesi l'anno.
A Nord, lontano dall'Oceano, la stagione umida è più corta.
A Nord il Senegal è vicino al deserto del Sahara.
Al centro c'è la steppa.
A Sud ci sono la foresta pluviale e la savana.
Ci sono due stagioni.
C'è la stagione secca, fra novembre-dicembre e aprile-maggio.
C'è la stagione umida, a giugno-settembre.
A Sud la stagione umida è più lunga.



Learning Unit 3

- In quali Stati troviamo questi ambienti? Ascolta e metti l'immagine giusta sopra lo Stato giusto.

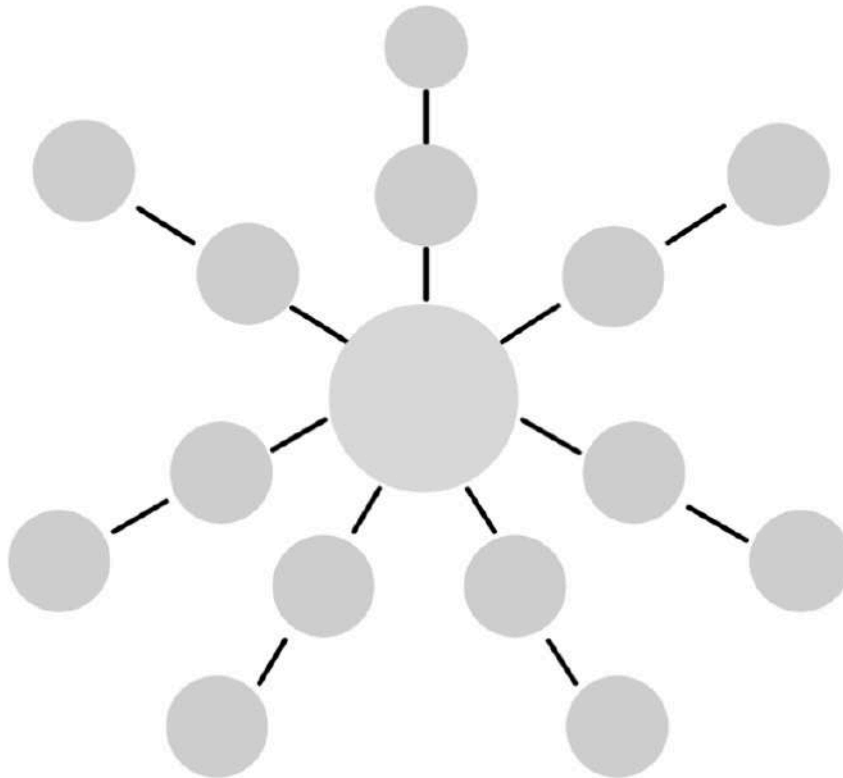


- Leggi il testo e rispondi alle domande.

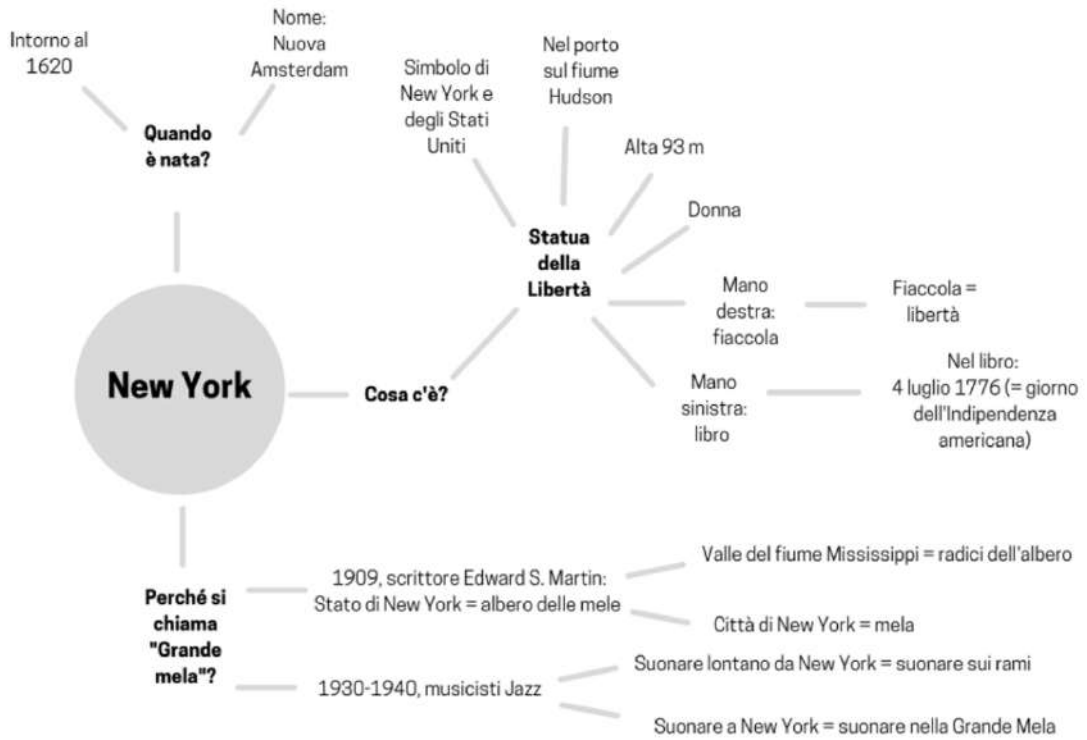
Negli Stati Uniti ci sono molti ambienti naturali. Nello Stato dello Utah c'è un deserto bianco, perché è fatto di sale e trova intorno al Grande Lago Salato. Nel centro degli Stati Uniti ci sono le praterie. La prateria più grande si trova nello Stato del North Dakota. Negli Stati Uniti ci sono anche molte foreste. Nello Stato della Florida ci sono le foreste tropicali. Nello Stato del Nevada ci sono le foreste di sequoie. Le sequoie sono gli alberi più antichi della Terra, sono alberi grandissimi. Nello Stato della California c'è il Deserto del Mojave. Nello Stato dell'Arizona c'è il Grand Canyon. Il Grand Canyon è un taglio nella roccia e è stato fatto dal fiume Colorado. Infine, nello Stato dell'Alaska, c'è l'ambiente polare.

1. Il deserto nello Stato dello Utah è bianco, perché?
2. Negli Stati Uniti ci sono due tipi di foreste, quali?
3. Che cosa sono le sequoie?
4. Quale fiume ha creato il Grand Canyon?

- Leggi di nuovo il testo: sottolinea con un colore il nome degli ambienti, sottolinea con un altro colore il nome degli Stati.
- Completa la mappa degli ambienti e degli Stati con le parole che hai sottolineato.



- Leggi questi appunti e scrivi un piccolo testo su New York.



(Gruppo 1)

QUANDO È NATA?	New York nasce Il vecchio nome di New York è
COSA C'È?	A New York La Statua della Libertà è Nella mano destra ha Nella mano sinistra ha
PERCHÉ SI CHIAMA "GRANDE MELA"?	Lo scrittore nel dice che I musicisti Jazz nel 1930 e nel 1940 dicono che

(Gruppo 2)

QUANDO È NATA?	New York nasce Il vecchio nome di New York è
COSA C'È?	A New York
PERCHÉ SI CHIAMA "GRANDE MELA"?	Lo scrittore nel dice che I musicisti Jazz nel 1930 e nel 1940 dicono che

NEW YORK

QUANDO È NATA?

New York nasce intorno al 1620.

Il vecchio nome di New York è Nuova Amsterdam.



COSA C'È?

A New York c'è la Statua della Libertà.

La Statua della Libertà è il simbolo di New York e degli Stati Uniti. È nel porto sul fiume Hudson.

La Statua è alta 93 metri, è una donna.



Nella mano destra ha una fiaccola. La fiaccola significa libertà.

Nella mano sinistra ha un libro. Nel libro c'è una data, 4 luglio 1776, cioè il giorno dell'Indipendenza americana.



PERCHÉ SI CHIAMA "GRANDE MELA"?

Lo scrittore Edward S. Martin nel 1909 dice che lo Stato di New York è come l'albero delle mele.

La Valle del fiume Mississippi è come le radici dell'albero.

La Città di New York è come una mela.

I musicisti Jazz nel 1930 e nel 1940 dicono che suonare lontano da New York è come suonare sui rami.

Dicono che suonare a New York è come suonare nella Grande Mela.



Learning Unit 4

L'UNIONE EUROPEA



- Cerchia con lo stesso colore gli Stati che sono entrati nell'Unione Europea nello stesso anno.

- Completa la legenda con i colori degli Stati e con le date di quando questi Stati sono entrati nell'Unione Europea.
- Scrivi un titolo per la tua legenda.

	TITOLO:

L'UNIONE EUROPEA

L'Unione europea è un gruppo di 27 Paesi. Questi Paesi hanno deciso di lavorare insieme e di aiutarsi.

L'idea di creare l'Unione europea è nata dopo due grandi guerre in Europa.

L'Unione Europea è nata perché i Paesi europei hanno capito che lavorare insieme è meglio di fare la guerra.

Nel giugno del 2016, il Regno Unito ha deciso di uscire dall'Unione europea.

Dal 31 gennaio 2020, il Regno Unito non fa più parte dell'Unione europea.

Grazie all'Unione europea le persone possono andare liberamente da un Paese all'altro.

Possono vivere, studiare o lavorare in qualsiasi Paese dell'Unione europea.

Per esempio, un francese può andare a lavorare in Italia o uno studente del Belgio può andare all'Università in Grecia.

• Rispondi alle domande.

1. Quanti Paesi ci sono nell'Unione europea?
2. Quando è nata l'idea di creare l'Unione europea?
3. Perché è nata l'Unione europea?
4. Il Regno Unito fa ancora parte dell'Unione europea?
5. Grazie all'Unione europea, cosa possono fare le persone?

• Collega ogni simbolo al suo significato.

=	MAGGIORE
>	DOPO
<	PER ESEMPIO
x	UGUALE
+	MINORE
x es.	PIÙ
→	O
/	PER

• Cerca nel testo le frasi che hanno lo stesso significato delle frasi qui sotto. Poi scrivile sui puntini.

1. Unione Europea = 27 Paesi

.....

2. Due grandi guerre → idea Unione europea

.....

3. Lavorare insieme > fare la guerra

.....

4. X es. un francese può lavorare in Italia

.....

5. Un francese lavorare in Italia / uno studente belga andare all'Università in Grecia

.....

- Collega ogni simbolo a tutti i significati che secondo te può avere.

	È più grande di ...
=	Con ...
	È come ...
>	È peggio di ...
	Significa ...
<	È meglio di ...
	Insieme a ...
→	È ...
	Prima ... dopo ...
+	È più piccolo di ...
	È il simbolo di ...
	Cioè ...

• Prova a prendere appunti usando i simboli che abbiamo imparato.

1. Bandiera UE blu cerchio di 12 stelle oro.
2. Stelle i Paesi sono uniti e si aiutano.
3. Ogni Stato ha un inno. Inno canzone.
4. Germania Belgio.
5. Portogallo Spagna.
6. Nascita Unione Europea non ci sono più guerre.
7. Austria Finlandia Svezia entrano nell' il



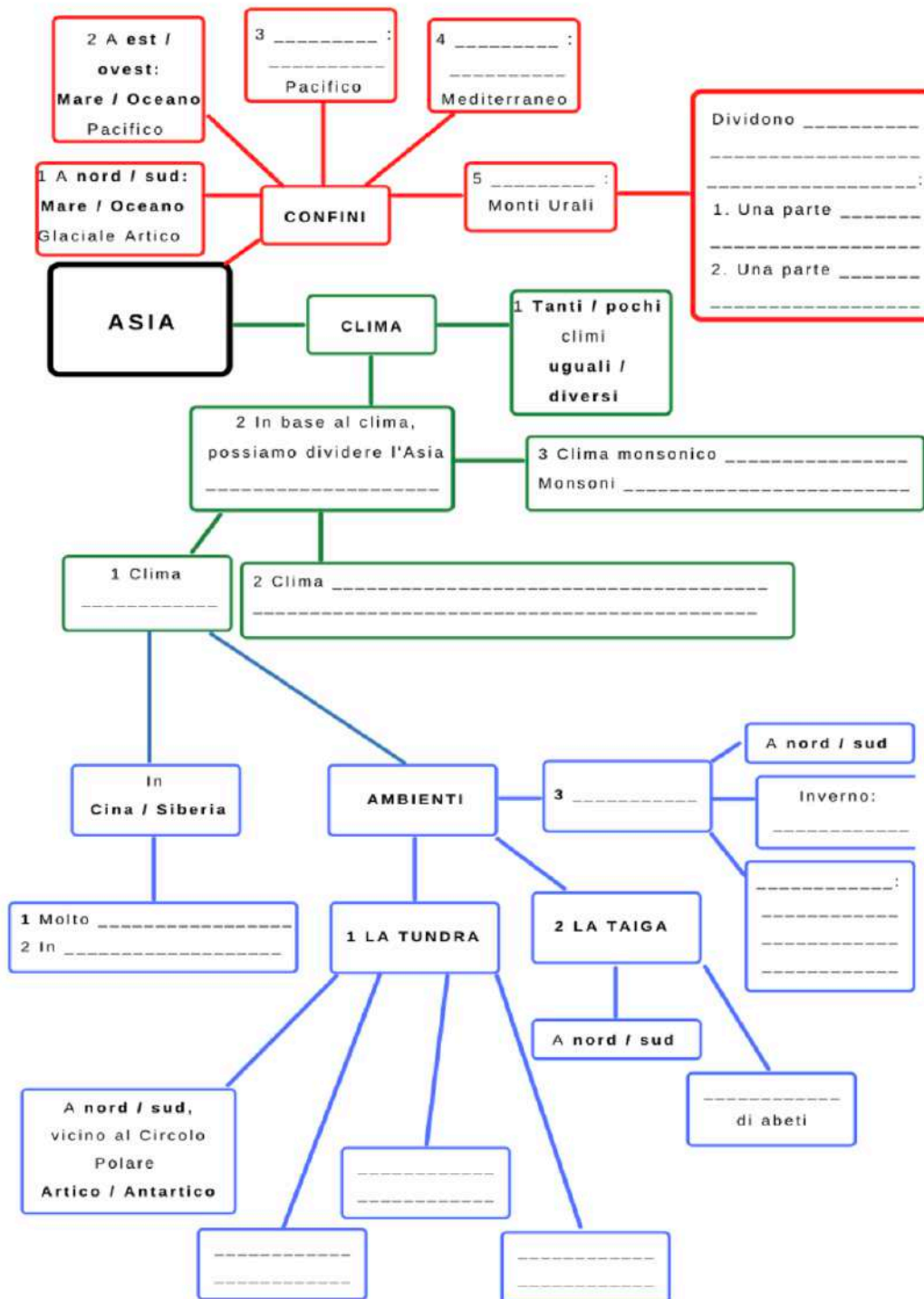
Simulation

- **Ascolta e scrivi solo le informazioni più importanti.**

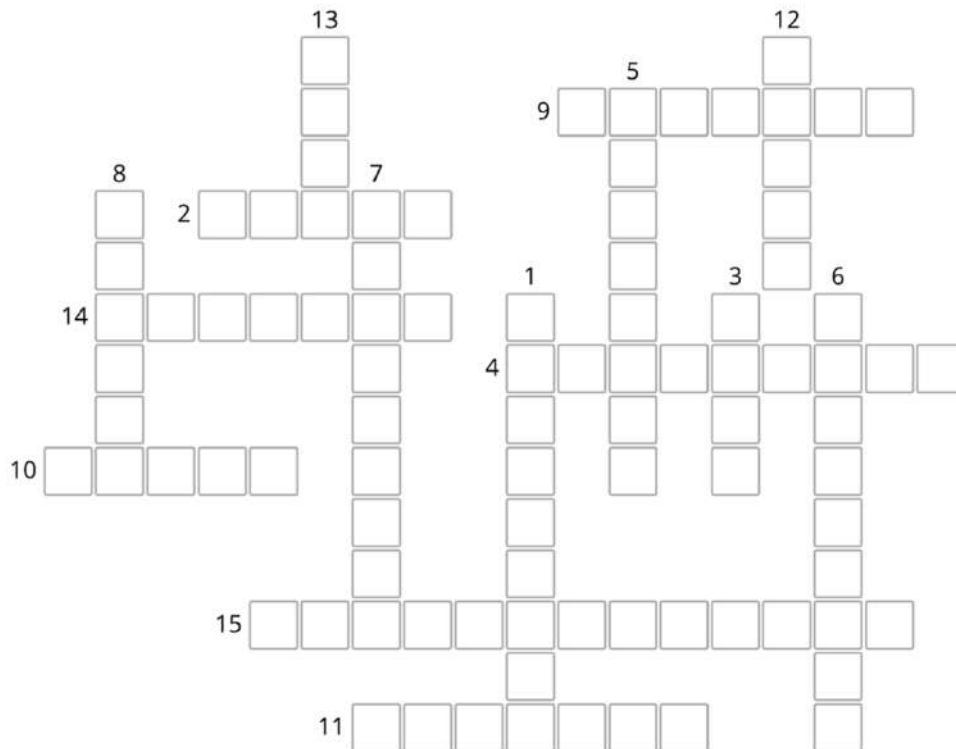
ASIA

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

ASIA	
CONFINI	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A nord / sud : Mare / Oceano Glaciale Artico 2. A est / ovest : Mare / Oceano Pacifico 3. _____ : _____ Indiano 4. _____ : _____ Mediterraneo 5. _____ : Monti Urali. <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <p>Dividono _____ :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Una parte _____ 2. Una parte _____ </div>
CLIMA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tanti / pochi climi uguali / diversi 2. In base al clima, possiamo dividere l'Asia _____ : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clima _____ 2. Clima _____ 3. Clima monsonico _____ Monsoni _____
CLIMA FREDDO	<p>In Cina / Siberia</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Molto _____ 2. In _____ </div> <p>AMBIENTI:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. La tundra: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nord / sud, vicino al Circolo Polare Artico / Antartico • _____ • _____ • _____ 2. La taiga: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nord / sud • _____ di abeti 3. _____ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nord / sud • Inverno: _____ • _____ : _____



• **Ripassiamo con il cruciverba!**



1. Gas intorno alla Terra.
2. Insieme delle condizioni atmosferiche che ci sono in un luogo in un anno che si ripetono per almeno dieci anni.
3. Temperature = non fa troppo caldo e non fa troppo freddo.
4. Regione climatica tra il Tropico del Cancro e il Tropico del Capricorno.
5. Linea immaginaria che divide la Terra a metà.
6. Linee immaginarie parallele all'equatore.
7. Linee immaginarie che passano per il Polo Nord e per il Polo Sud.
8. Quanti sono i paralleli più importanti?
9. Ambiente dove di giorno fa molto caldo, di notte fa freddo, e dove c'è molta sabbia.
10. Animali che vivono nella savana. Sono a strisce bianche e nere.
11. Animali che corrono nelle praterie.
12. Clima = non piove quasi mai.
13. Area piccola nel deserto dove ci sono le palme e poca acqua.
14. Quale città ha come soprannome "Grande Mela"?
15. Nome del gruppo di 27 Paesi che lavorano insieme e si aiutano.

Conclusion

In chapter number 6 we saw that data discussion is a fundamental phase, which aims at interpreting data, in order for conclusions to be drawn. In the final section of this thesis, we will try to answer our research questions, which are:

- **RQ 1:** What learning strategies do our students already know? Were they taught those strategies in their countries of birth and/or in Italy? Do they already know to take notes?
- **RQ 2:** What facilitating actions may be employed in order for students to learn and develop note taking in Ital2?
- **RQ 3:** Can stratification be useful in order for students to learn and develop note taking in Ital2?

1. Research question 1

Our first research question aimed at investigating what learning strategies were already known by our students at the beginning of our Ital2 laboratory. Moreover, by comparing some data concerning two different scholastic settings, we wanted to understand whether those learning strategies were taught in our students' countries of birth or in Italy, or both. Data useful for answering this research question was collected from the questionnaire proposed at the beginning of the laboratory.

The strategies that we wanted to investigate were note taking, summarising, underlying the most important words, doing schemes and maps. We chose those strategies as we believed them to be fundamental in school settings, especially from High School onwards, and not to be really developed in our students.

What emerged was that six of our students out of nine⁴³ were taught to take notes in their countries of birth, whereas only four students reported to have been taught this skill and strategy here in Italy. Before asking this question, we explained what we meant by note taking, namely writing down the most important pieces of information while listening to the teacher. However, further investigation should be made in order to fully understand how this skill and strategy is conceived in their countries of birth.

⁴³ S10 did not go to school in their country of birth.

As far as summarising is concerned, our students appeared not to be familiar with this strategy. Only three students were taught to write summaries in their countries of origin, whereas only one here in Italy.

We can conclude that more attention was given to these strategies in Bangladesh and Senegal than in Italy.

A strategy which is shared in both contexts is that of underlying the most important words. Whereas a strategy which was more given attention to here in Italy than in students' countries of birth was employing schemes or maps. As a matter of fact, only three Bangladeshi students and one Senegalese student were taught this strategy in their countries of birth.

We also asked our students if they were taught other learning strategies, both in their countries of birth and here in Italy. The strategies that emerged, such as circling words, highlighting, writing the most important words, were taught especially in Bangladesh and Senegal.

Another important strategy used unconsciously by our students during our Ital2 laboratory was that of employing their mother tongue or a bridge language. Applying linguistic knowledge of other languages to the target language is one of the learning strategies present in the CALLA Model. Our students helped each other and clarified some concepts of Geography by employing other languages, such as Bangla. Also in their notes, students employed languages such as Bangla and English.

2. Research question 2

In our research project, a special focus was given to note taking. For this reason, our second research question aimed at identifying possible facilitating actions that may be employed in order for students to learn and develop note taking in Ital2. The facilitating actions that we identified are:

- Working on specific lexicon before taking notes: Meeting unknown and difficult words may block students from taking notes. Therefore, working on those words beforehand might reduce this risk.
- Working with peers: Taking notes during cooperative-learning activities, during which students become the sources of information, may be helpful, especially at the beginning, to make note taking less anxious. Also taking notes in groups or comparing notes at the end of the lesson may be useful. However, it is important to remember that some students prefer to carry out tasks alone. Therefore, it is

fundamental to alternate moments of couple- and group-work with moments of individual work.

- Employment of a structure: Two different types of structures were employed in our research project and both proved successful. They were the scheme and the concept map. Generally speaking, the employment of schemes and maps made students perceive note taking as easier. It is important to highlight that some students may prefer the map, whereas others the scheme. For this reason, especially with a skill as personal as note taking, we believe that students should always be given the possibility to choose between these two structures.
- Giving key words: This is important especially at the beginning. Key words can be written in the left-hand side column of the scheme or in some boxes in the map. They are helpful in order to introduce topics and to guide students while they are taking notes.
- Organising pieces of information: Employing numbers and bulleted lists proved to be helpful for students. We realised that it is also important to say numbers out loud during explanations, so that students can orient more easily in the given structure, without wasting time in searching where to write the different pieces of information.
- Using colours: Signalling the different parts, and thus the different topics with different colours, especially in the map, was felt as helpful.
- Signalling note-taking activities on the worksheet: Writing, for instance, *Prendiamo appunti!* (Let's take notes!), may help students get ready for the task, especially with those students who do not employ this strategy autonomously.
- Practicing selective listening: Being guided note-taking based on selective listening, it is important to practice this skill. This may be done through TPR activities which, during beginning stages, do not necessarily employ a linguistic output.
- Teaching symbols and abbreviations: Although the employment of symbols may be perceived as difficult, students seemed facilitated and little by little started employing them autonomously. Also using little drawings may be helpful, e.g., drawing a star instead of writing *stella* (see Appendix B).

3. Research question 3

Our third and last research question aimed at observing the efficacy of stratification in facilitating students' learning and development of note taking in Ital2. According to students' test scores, which generally showed a certain degree of improvement, we can state that stratification played a role during our lessons.

According to data collected from the placement test, we would argue that some students with A1/A2 level may require to take a step back and start taking notes by only underlying the target words.

We argue that, during ordinary lessons, stratification should be employed in a different manner, especially if the goals are giving students the opportunity to capture all pieces of information and making them perceive note taking as accessible, in order not to demotivate them. In this respect, we believe that personally modulating the linguistic and cognitive demand is necessary. As a matter of fact, when normal stratified worksheets were employed, it was necessary to make students confront and complete their notes.

What emerged from the last structure given during the final test was that all students, although they had to take notes more freely, succeeded in the task. The interesting data was that Group 1 tended to write only the most important words, whereas Group 2 tried to write information in a more discursive manner. Despite the different modalities employed, which suggest a sort of transposition of the note-taking modalities they were used to according to their stratum, they all were able to write almost all pieces of information. Therefore, we can conclude that stratification was effective.

This research represents only a small-scale case study. It would be interesting to design other follow-up studies, which would employ a control group, in order to observe the actual efficacy of the facilitating actions that we identified, and of stratification. Moreover, it would be interesting see these strategies applied in other contexts, for instance for studying other subjects in Ital2.

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Appendix A

Privacy



Progetto co-finanziato dall'Unione Europea



Comune di Venezia



FONDO ASILO, MIGRAZIONE E INTEGRAZIONE (FAMI) 2014-2020

Obiettivo specifico 2. Integrazione/Migrazione legale – ON 2 – Integrazione- lett. h) Formazione civico linguistica – Servizi sperimentali di formazione linguistica 2018-2021

PROG-2506 “VOCI: Vivere Oggi Cittadini in Italia. Percorsi Sperimentali di apprendimento di italiano e di educazione civica”

Ai sensi e per gli effetti di cui al D.Lgs. 196/2003 e art. 14 Reg. UE 2016/679, s'informa che:

a) che il titolare del trattamento è il Comune di Venezia, in quanto Beneficiario Finale (informativa del Servizio Pronto Intervento Sociale Inclusione e Mediazione in <https://www.comune.venezia.it/it/content/servizio-pronto-intervento-sociale>);

b) che i dati personali dell'interessato saranno trattati esclusivamente per lo svolgimento delle attività di progetto finanziate con risorse a valere sul Fondo Asilo Migrazione e Integrazione (FAMI). Gli stessi dati saranno inoltrati all'Autorità Responsabile del FAMI, con sede in Roma, presso il Viminale, per l'espletamento dei controlli cui la stessa Autorità è per legge preposta, oltre che per quelli di competenza delle Autorità di Audit;

c) che laddove i dati personali suddetti rientrino nelle categorie di cui all'art. 9 del richiamato Regolamento UE, saranno adottate tutte le misure preordinate a garantirne l'esattezza, l'integrità, la riservatezza e la minimizzazione, nonché ad impedirne l'indebita diffusione;

d) che i dati saranno trattati e conservati per il tempo necessario a consentire l'espletamento delle attività di progetto di cui alla lettera b) che precede, oltre che per ottemperare ai controlli previsti dalla normativa vigente. La base giuridica del trattamento è costituita dall'interesse pubblico rilevante costituito da quanto previsto nei Reg. UE n. 514/2014 e n. 516/2014 e da tutti gli ulteriori regolamenti attuativi e delegati dell'UE che ne hanno attuato le relative previsioni, nonché dal Programma Nazionale FAMI, documento programmatico 2014-2020 approvato dalla CE con decisione C(2017) 8713 dell'11 Dicembre 2017, recante modifica della decisione C (2017) 5587 del 14 agosto 2017 e precedenti;

e) che i dati di pertinenza dell'interessato ricevuti dal titolare del trattamento saranno trattati mediante strumenti cartacei e informatici e potranno:

- essere messi a disposizione di soggetti pubblici/pubbliche Autorità nazionali e/o comunitarie per l'espletamento dei controlli previsti dalla legge, ovvero in ragione delle competenze specifiche di tali soggetti;
- essere trasmessi a terzi che abbiano fatto richiesta di accesso agli atti e ai documenti della procedura, ove a ciò legittimati e previo dispiegamento delle prescritte garanzie procedurali a tutela dell'interessato.

Nel caso di trasmissione dei dati ad organismi facenti parte o comunque riconducibili all'Unione Europea, aventi sede al di fuori dei confini nazionali, saranno adottate misure aggiuntive di carattere tecnico per garantire l'integrità e la riservatezza dei dati stessi e per prevenirne l'indebita diffusione.

f) che l'interessato ha diritto a chiedere al titolare del trattamento la rettifica, la cancellazione, la limitazione del trattamento dei dati personali che lo riguardano, ovvero di manifestare la sua opposizione al trattamento medesimo;

g) che l'interessato ha diritto di proporre reclamo al Garante della Privacy ove ritenga che siano state commesse infrazioni al Codice di cui al D. Lgs. n. 196/2003 ovvero al Reg. UE n. 679/2016;

h) che l'interessato copia dei suoi dati personali, dalla stessa trattati o comunque detenuti, anche mediante trasmissione degli stessi in formato digitale di uso comune. Tale diritto è gratuito, salvo il pagamento a titolo di contributo, ai sensi dell'art. 15, comma 3, Reg. UE 679/2016, di un importo determinato in relazione al numero di copie richieste in formato cartaceo;

Il/La sig./sig.ra _____ nato a _____

il _____ Codice Fiscale _____, con la presente, ad ogni effetto di

legge e di regolamento, e in particolare ai sensi del Decreto Legislativo 30 Giugno 2003, n. 196 e art. 14 Reg. UE 2016/679, dichiara espressamente di aver compreso pienamente il contenuto dell'informativa sulla privacy di cui al presente atto e di prestare il proprio consenso al trattamento dei suoi dati personali, particolari e/o "sensibili" per le finalità suindicate.

Data:

Firma:

Appendix B

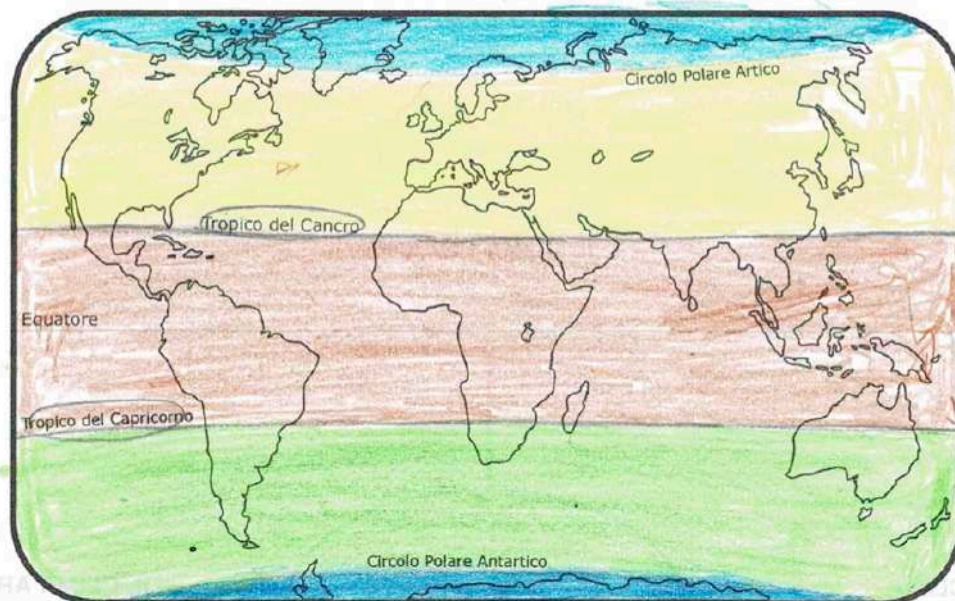
Lesson 2 (10 March 2021) – Learning Unit 1

Climatic regions and map key

LE REGIONI CLIMATICHE

In base al tipo di clima, possiamo dividere il pianeta in alcune **REGIONI CLIMATICHE**.

- Ascolta le indicazioni e colora la zona climatica giusta.



- Quante sono le regioni climatiche? ...5.....


LA LEGENDA

- Guarda la cartina e le parole scritte alla lavagna. Poi completa la legenda.

	REGIONI CLIMATICHE:
	ZONA TROPICALE SETTENTRIONALE (=NORD)
	ZONA TEMPERATA
	ZONA TEMPERATA MERIDIONALE (=SUD)
	ZONA POLARE ARTICA (=NORD)
	ZONA POLARE ANTARTICA (=SUD)

Lesson 5 (7 April 2021) – Learning Unit 2 (end)

Scheme on Senegal



The map shows Senegal and its neighbors: Mauritania to the north, Mali to the east, and Guinea to the south. The Atlantic Ocean is to the west. Major cities like Dakar, Saint-Louis, and Ziguinchor are marked. Handwritten labels in boxes identify 'OCEANO ATLANTICO', 'MAURITANIA', 'MALI', 'GUINEA-BISSAU', and 'GUINEA'.

REGIONE CLIMATICA
Il Senegal si trova nella regione tropicale.

CLIMA
In Senegal c'è il clima tropicale.
In Senegal fa sempre molto caldo.
A Nord, lontano dall'Oceano, c'è un clima tropicale-arido.
Dove c'è il clima tropicale-arido piove pochissimo e solo 2-3 mesi l'anno.
A Sud piove da maggio a dicembre.

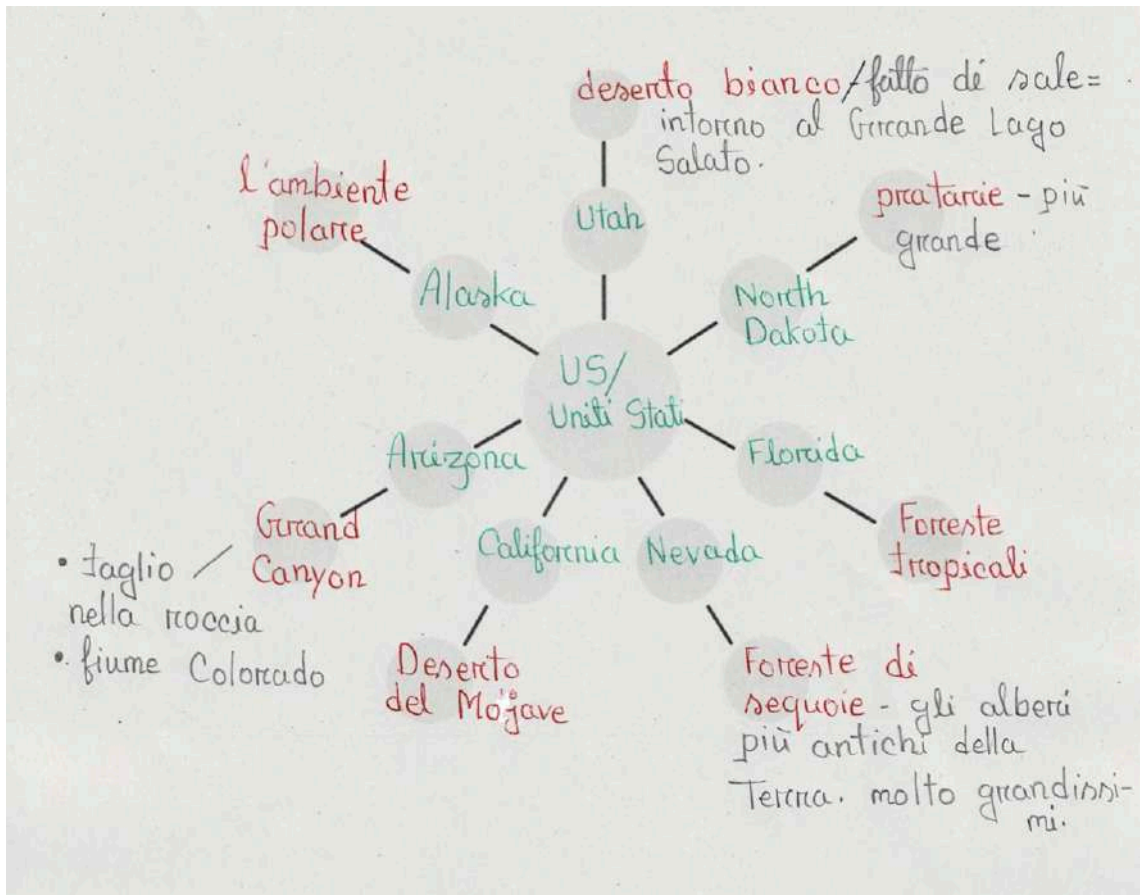
STAGIONI
Ci sono due stagioni.
C'è la stagione secca, fra novembre-dicembre e aprile-maggio.
C'è la stagione umida, a giugno-settembre.
A Nord, lontano dall'Oceano, la stagione umida è più corta.
A Sud la stagione umida è più lunga.

AMBIENTI
A Nord il Senegal è vicino al deserto del Sahara.
Al centro c'è la steppa.
A Sud ci sono la foresta pluviale e la savana.

FIUMI E LAGHI
A Nord-Ovest c'è il Lago di Guiers (170 km²).
I fiumi principali sono il Senegal (1085 km), il Saloum (250 km), il Gambia (1130 km) e il Casamance (300 km).

Lesson 7 (14 April 2021) – Learning Unit 3

Map of some types of environments in the United States



Lesson 8 (21 April 2021) – Learning Unit 4

Note taking using symbols

1. Bandiera UE blu cerchio di 12 stelle oro.
2. Stelle i Paesi sono uniti e si aiutano.
3. Ogni Stato ha un inno. Inno canzone.
4. Germania Belgio.
5. Portogallo Spagna.
6. Nascita Unione Europea non ci sono più guerre.
7. Austria Finlandia Svezia entrano nell' UE il 1. 1995



Bandiera Dell'unione
Europea,

Stelle = ☆ cerchio = ○
UE = Unione Europea

Appendix C

1. Quanti anni hai?
আপনার বয়স কত?

2. Da quale Paese vieni?
আপনি কোন দেশ থেকে এসেছেন?

3. Dove sei nato? In quale città?
আপনি কোথায় জন্মগ্রহণ করেছিলেন? কোন শহরে?

4. In quale città vivevi?
আপনি কোন শহরে বাস করেছেন?

LA SCUOLA NEL TUO PAESE (আপনার দেশে):

5. Sei andato a scuola nel tuo Paese?
আপনি কি আপনার দেশে স্কুলে গিয়েছিলেন?

6. Per quanto tempo?
কত দিন?

7. Quale scuola o quali scuole hai frequentato?
.....
আপনি কোন স্কুলে পড়াশোনা করেছেন?

8. Che tipo di scuole erano (pubblica o privata? religiosa o laica? ...)
.....
তারা কোন ধরনের স্কুল ছিল (সরকারী বা বেসরকারী? ধর্মীয় বা ধর্মনিরপেক্ষ?)

9. Quante ore al giorno stavi a scuola?
.....
আপনি স্কুলে প্রতিদিন কত ঘন্টা ছিলেন?

10. Quali materie facevi? (which subject do you study?)

.....
.....

আপনি কোন বিষয় অধ্যয়ন করেছেন?

11. Quale lingua o quali lingue usavi a scuola? (what language or which language did you use or study?)

.....

আপনি কোন ভাষা বা কোন ভাষা ব্যবহার করেছেন বা অধ্যয়ন করেছেন?

12. Ti hanno mai insegnato a prendere appunti?

আপনাকে কি কখনও নোট নিতে শিখিয়েছে ?

13. Ti hanno mai insegnato a sottolineare le parole più importanti?

আপনাকে কি কখনও সবচেয়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ শব্দগুলিকে আন্ডারলাইন করতে শিখিয়েছে?

14. Ti hanno mai insegnato a fare dei riassunti?

আপনাকে কি সংক্ষিপ্তসার শেখানো হয়েছে?

15. Ti hanno mai insegnato a fare degli schemi o delle mappe?

16. Ti hanno mai insegnato altre tecniche per studiare? Quali?

.....

আপনাকে পড়াশুনার জন্য অন্যান্য কৌশল শিখিয়েছে? কোনটি?

LA SCUOLA IN ITALIA (ইতালিতে):

17. Quando sei arrivato in Italia?

আপনি কখন ইতালি এসেছেন?

18. In quale città abiti in Italia?

আপনি কোন শহরে বাস করেন ইতালিতে?

19. Quanti anni di scuola hai fatto in Italia?

আপনি ইতালিতে কত বছর স্কুল করেছেন?

20. Quali scuole hai frequentato in Italia?
আপনি ইতালিতে কোন স্কুলে পড়াশোনা করেছেন?

21. Quale scuola frequenti adesso in Italia?
আপনি এখন ইতালিতে কোন স্কুলে পড়েন?

22. Quale classe fai? (in which class do you study?)
.....
আপনি কোন ক্লাসে পড়েন?

23. Quali materie fai? (which subject do you study?)
.....
আপনি কোন বিষয় অধ্যয়ন করেছেন?

24. A scuola usi solo l'italiano?
আপনি কি স্কুলে শুধুমাত্র ইতালিয়ান ব্যবহার করেন?

25. I professori a scuola usano tante parole difficili?
স্কুলের শিক্ষকরা কি কঠিন শব্দ ব্যবহার করেন?

26. Ti hanno mai insegnato a prendere appunti?
আপনাকে কি কখনও নোট নিতে শিখিয়েছে ?

27. Ti hanno mai insegnato a sottolineare le parole più importanti?
আপনাকে কি কখনও সবচেয়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ শব্দগুলিকে আন্ডারলাইন করতে শিখিয়েছে?

28. Ti hanno mai insegnato a fare dei riassunti?
আপনাকে কি সংক্ষিপ্তসার শেখানো হয়েছে?

29. Ti hanno mai insegnato a fare degli schemi o delle mappe?

30. Ti hanno mai insegnato altre tecniche per studiare? Quali?
.....
আপনাকে পড়াশুনার জন্য অন্যান্য কৌশল শিখিয়েছে? কোনটি?