

Edited by Carola Z. Gavazzi and Benedetta Toni

LEADING LEARNING

THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY
ON EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE
AGENCY OF TEACHERS AND DIRECTORS



AREA 11
HISTORICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL,
PEDAGOGICAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL
SCIENCES

LEADING LEARNING



AREA II

HISTORICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, PEDAGOGICAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Coordinator:

Dario Ianes (Free University of Bozen-Bolzano)

Antonio Calvani (University of Florence)

Cesare Cornoldi (University of Padua)

Cristina De Vecchi (University of Northampton – UK)

Stefano Vicari (Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital, Rome)

TRANSLATION AND REVISION

JENNIFER ELAINE MILANI AND BENEDETTA TONI

EDITING

PUNTOFERMO

LAYOUT

PUNTOFERMO | ANDREA MANTICA

COVER

PUNTOFERMO | ANDREA MANTICA

ART DIRECTOR

GIORDANO PACEZZA

COVER ILLUSTRATION

© MARJE

© 2026 Edizioni Centro Studi Erickson S.p.A.

Via del Pioppeto 24

38121 TRENTO

Tel. 0461 951500

www.erickson.it

info@erickson.it

ISBN: 978-88-590-4691-2

This e-book is distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).



All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced by any means without the prior written permission of the Publisher.

Edited by Carola Z. Gavazzi and Benedetta Toni

LEADING LEARNING

THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL
MOBILITY ON EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP AND THE AGENCY OF
TEACHERS AND DIRECTORS



ABOUT THE EDITORS AND AUTHORS

Carola Z. Gavazzi

Currently director at the Accredited European School in Parma, she has been a school director since 2014 and, from 2019 to 2024, she was director at the Consulate General in Zurich. A former teacher of English language and literature in secondary schools, she has been a tutor for the National Language and Methodology Training Plan for primary school teachers since 2005 and, since 2009, has been an accredited trainer in the “Poseidon” project. She has collaborated with local authorities and the University of Insubria in Como and Varese as a lecturer in master’s courses for intercultural trainers. Her specialisations include: Master’s in Special Educational Needs, Master’s in Educational Leadership in Multicultural Contexts, DITALS certification, FILIS and teaching Italian as a second language. Her positions include: USR observer in TFA cycles, member of the school management evaluation team, trainer for newly appointed teachers, coordinator and contact person for numerous Erasmus+ projects, and Erasmus+ evaluator of internationalisation projects. She is also the winner of two Council of Europe “Pestalozzi” specialisation grants and author of numerous teaching manuals for English language and internationalisation. She coordinated the bilateral project with the accredited European school in Innsbruck.

Benedetta Toni

Currently deputy director at the Accredited European School in Parma, a position she has held for ten years, she has been an adjunct professor at the University of Bologna for over twenty years. She was a researcher at the Regional Institute for Educational Research for Emilia Romagna for six years, regional representative for the Lifelong Learning Programme and scientific coordinator of the multi-year European training project for future primary school teachers, “Italian-British Exchange”, in partnership with the University of Bologna, the Ministry of Education, University and Research, the Universities of Bedford and Canterbury, and the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) in London. She was also scientific coordinator of the regional project “Languages and Cultures” and representative for regional projects on internationalisation.

Her specialisations include: Master of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of Limerick, Certificate in Early Education Leadership (CEEL) from Harvard University, CECLIL and CEDILS certifications from Ca’ Foscari University in Venice. Within the European school system, she has been trained in educational leadership in Luxembourg, Munich and Alicante and, as deputy director, participated in international conferences in Manosque and The Hague. She has participated in Leonardo, Comenius and Erasmus+ projects, coordinating the projects “STAR Screening, Testing, Activities and Research” and “Leading Learning”. She is the author of several publications on teaching and educational leadership in an international context.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Zohra Bennamane

Currently a primary school teacher in the French-speaking section at the Accredited European School in Parma and assistant of the deputy director of the nursery and primary cycles, she is a member of the Educational Council and part of the Middle Management staff working on European projects. For several years, she was coordinator of the French-speaking section of the primary school and was involved in well-being at school and the “KIVA” project. She has participated in several Erasmus+ projects, coordinating the projects “Harvesting from young minds to build the future” and “Leading Learning.”

Cecilia Comani

Currently a primary school teacher in the Italian section of the European School in Parma and assistant of the deputy director of the nursery and primary cycles, she is the contact person for environmental education projects in primary schools and has been the coordinator of the Italian section of the primary school for several years. She has participated in teacher and management exchanges with the Accredited European School in Innsbruck and in the Erasmus+ project “Leading Learning.”

Roberta Fantinato

A school director with a European academic and professional background, she graduated in Modern Literature from the Catholic University of Milan and obtained three second-level master's degrees in School Management, Evaluation of Education Systems, and Digital Innovation Management from the Polytechnic University of Milan. She has directed several primary and secondary schools, including the Accredited European School of Parma. Today, she is the school director at the Giulietta Masina Linguistic and Economic-Social High School in Rimini, focusing on inclusion, multilingualism, and digital innovation. A member of the working group for the creation of the first Teachers' Forum of European Schools (Parma, 2024), she has represented Italy in international contexts, including as keynote speaker at the Closing Conference of the European Year of Youth at the European Parliament (Brussels, 2022). A trainer for directors and teachers, she promotes open educational leadership that combines strategic vision, professional ethics, and transnational cooperation. Her career reflects a constant striving towards an inclusive, innovative school model based on European values and dialogue between cultures and shared knowledge.

Yvonne Rebecca Ingler-Detken

She has obtained a PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Duisburg-Essen and is currently a secondary school teacher of German, Geography, and History at the Accredited European School of Parma and assistant of the deputy director of the secondary cycle. She is the coordinator for the “European Youth Parliament” project at the Accredited European School in Parma and a member of the middle management staff for European projects. For several years, she has been the coordinator of the German department. She participated in the exchange program for teachers and directors with the Accredited European School in Innsbruck and in the Erasmus+ project “Leading Learning.”



Co-funded by
the European Union



This volume concerns research on the impact of the Erasmus+ project *Leading Learning*» 2023-1-IT02-KA122-SCH-000141005, CUP J91123000220006.

The volume was published thanks to co-funding from the project.

Edited by Carola Z. Gavazzi e Benedetta Toni.

Project coordination: Zohra Bennamane e Benedetta Toni.

The authors of the various chapters are: *Introduction* (Carola Z. Gavazzi), Chapter 1 *The Erasmus+ Leading Learning training project* (Zohra Bennamane and Benedetta Toni), Chapter 2 *Methodology* (Benedetta Toni), Chapter 3 *Results* (Benedetta Toni), Chapter 4 *Narratives of leaders and teachers* (Benedetta Toni, Roberta Fantinato, Yvonne Rebecca Ingler-Detken, Cecilia Comani, Zohra Bennamane), Chapter 5 *Discussion* (Benedetta Toni).

Translation and revision by Jennifer Elaine Milani and Benedetta Toni.

The following directors and teachers participated in the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project mobility programme: Roberta Fantinato (director), Benedetta Toni (deputy director and project coordinator), Zohra Bennamane (middle manager for European projects and project coordinator), Florence Romain (deputy director for secondary cycle), Kimberley Ward (educational advisor), Mattias Van den Eede (middle manager Career Guidance), Yvonne Rebecca Ingler-Detken (middle manager for European projects), Francesca Mondelli (middle manager for teaching timetables), Cecilia Comani (coordinator for environmental education projects in primary cycle), Michael Spagnoli (middle manager for wellbeing at school in the primary cycle), Christel Henry (coordinator of the French L2-L4 department in the secondary cycle), Gerry Colohan (middle manager for Career Guidance), Mariagrazia Gatti (coordinator of the Intermath project in the primary cycle), Elena Gismondi (ICT coordinator in the primary cycle).

CONTENTS

Introduction (<i>Carola Z. Gavazzi</i>)	9
CHAPTER 1	12
The Erasmus+ <i>Leading Learning</i> training project (<i>Zohra Bennamane and Benedetta Toni</i>)	
The Context in which the Project was Born	12
Needs and Challenges of the Accredited European School in Parma	13
Project Objectives	14
Training Courses	15
Expected Learning Outcomes of the Project	16
The Contribution of the Planned Activities to the Project	17
Selection Criteria for the Eight Teacher Mobilities	17
Implementation of the Results in Daily Practice	18
Research Design	19
CHAPTER 2	20
Methodology (<i>Benedetta Toni</i>)	
Introduction	20
Narrative Tools	20
Research Project and Questions	21
Description of the Context and Participants	22
Method of Data Collection	23
Data Analysis	24

CHAPTER 3	26
Results (<i>Benedetta Toni</i>)	
Introduction	26
Central Theme 1. Holistic Understanding of Leadership	26
Central Theme 2. Teachers' Agency	30
Central Theme 3. Teachers' Mobilities and Intercultural Competences	34
CHAPTER 4	38
Narratives from Leaders and Teachers (<i>Benedetta Toni</i>)	
Introduction	38
Report on the Course <i>Inclusive Leadership</i> (<i>Benedetta Toni</i>)	38
Report on the Course <i>Effective School Leadership</i> (<i>Roberta Fantinato</i>)	43
Report on the Course <i>Discover the 7Cs: Learning for Life</i> (<i>and Work</i>) <i>in the 21st Century</i> (<i>Yvonne Rebecca Ingler-Deiken</i>)	47
Report on the Course <i>Environmental Stewardship:</i> <i>How to Reconnect with Nature</i> (<i>Cecilia Comani</i>)	55
Report on the Course <i>Coaching: A Powerful Tool</i> (<i>Zohra Bennamane</i>)	61
CHAPTER 5	69
Discussion (<i>Benedetta Toni</i>)	
Introduction	69
Research Question 1	69
Research Question 2	72
Research Question 3	74
Final Thoughts	75
Bibliography	76

INTRODUCTION

Carola Z. Gavazzi

In recent decades, Italian and European schools have made significant progress in aligning themselves with national and supranational directives in the area of school leadership consolidation, with the aim of strengthening shared and transformative educational practices in multilingual and multicultural contexts. This is a process that aims to promote maximum cohesion, even though it starts from different school systems that are deeply rooted in heterogeneous cultural contexts.

In the context of the constantly evolving school organisation, an approach to leadership must be considered a process of continuous change, which is not limited to a single individual but is distributed among all members of the school community.

In this perspective, transformational leadership finds a solid reference in the theories of Thomas J. Sergiovanni (1992), who emphasises the importance of moral and community leadership, capable of basing educational action on shared values, reciprocity and a sense of belonging.

Similarly, according to Karl E. Weick (1976), the school can be referred to as a “learning organisation”, a system that learns through perpetual interaction between its members, reflection on practices and constant adaptation to social and cultural changes.

From this integrated perspective, leadership is no longer a static or hierarchical role, but a collective and widespread action, oriented towards the construction of shared meanings and the steady improvement of the educational organisation. This allows the school to develop the flexibility necessary to face future challenges, supporting the professional and personal growth of both teacher and student.

Intended for school leaders, researchers and teachers, this volume is designed as an operational and reflective tool for developing innovative and participatory teaching that takes into account the most up-to-date leadership models. In particular, it aims to be a means of understanding the needs of school operators in the context of third millennium society, which continuously interacts with diverse value systems and cultures. Furthermore, it aims to stimulate reflection on the communication requirements that characterise an increasingly globalised world, within which educational practices must be guided by leadership that promotes collective growth.

The first chapter is dedicated to presenting the Erasmus+ project “Leading Learning” by the Accredited European School in Parma, a training programme for directors and teachers in various EU Member States, targeted at helping participants acquire skills in inclusive and intercultural educational leadership and innovative teaching methods that are open to the challenges of 21st-century globalisation. In summary, the research questions on the impact and repercussions of training abroad on teaching and learning at the Accredited European School in Parma are outlined.

The second chapter deals with the research methodology, based on narrative analysis and thematic analysis. It continues with a description of the narrative tools, an overview of the research design, a description of the participants and the procedures used for data collection and analysis.

The third chapter presents the results of the thematic analysis, referring to three central themes: “Holistic Understanding of Leadership”, “Teachers’ Agency”, and “Teachers’ Mobilities and Intercultural Competences”.

The fourth chapter documents, by way of example and through training reports, the experiences of two members of the management staff and three teachers, members from middle management.

The fifth chapter examines the findings and proposes a sustainable and resilient leadership model for directors and teachers, based on cooperation and continuous improvement and on the enhancement of coaching cultures and methodologies for staff and students.

The text continues with an analysis of teachers’ curricular agency skills and the global and intercultural skills acquired through the “Leading Learning” project.

An ideal teacher tends to standardise, at European level, the aspects that define their professionalism: ongoing training throughout their career, linguistic and methodological mastery, digital competence and the ability to act as a point of reference for learners.

Shared and transformational leadership, as defined by Sergiovanni and Weick, should therefore promote a climate of continued learning, where each

individual feels they have an active role to play in the educational process and contributes to the growth of the entire school organisation.

Far from being a finished product, this volume endeavours to stimulate a series of reflections in the field enabling distribution that may lead to the definition of innovative, flexible, permeable and ever-evolving teaching methods.

CHAPTER 1

The Erasmus+ *Leading Learning* Training Project

*Zohra Bennamane and Benedetta Toni*¹

The Context in which the Project was Born

The Accredited European School in Parma boasts a long-standing record in European project planning since it was awarded a European Erasmus Plus KA1 Project on educational innovation, “Two-year mobility project for teaching and administrative staff” (2016–2018) – Harvesting from young minds to build the future”. The project aimed to enhance a truly European ambience for skills, competences and qualifications to “build Europe” in an innovative, creative and inclusive way. Quality training has enriched our school system with inclusive, creative, student-centred and technological practices aimed at making our school an open community where innovation is embraced and encouraged. The planning of ten mobility programmes (uniting seven teachers from all cycles, the director, the head secretary and an educational adviser) identified in structured courses scheduled around various parts of Europe, was functional to a cross-cutting and progressive training process aimed at optimizing management of the Institute.

The second Erasmus+ project of the Accredited European School in Parma was the STAR Project “Screening Testing Activities and Research” KA2, which took place from 2017 to 2020 within the multilingual and multicultural contexts of the European Schools of Parma, Helsinki, Heraklion and the North Primary School and Nursery of Colchester in England. The project concerned a strategic

¹ This chapter is the result of joint work by the authors. Specifically, the first, second, sixth and seventh paragraphs are to be attributed to Zohra Bennamane, while the third, fourth, fifth, eighth and ninth paragraphs are to be attributed to Benedetta Toni.

partnership that benefited from the scientific support from the University of Parma in research and training related to the languages for communication and languages for study, and from the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in research and training on specific learning disorders in plurilingual contexts. The idea for the project arose from the need to create standardized tools for bilingual students with the aim of identifying suspected cases of specific learning disorders at an early stage and defining shared intervention procedures to ensure the educational success for all students.

Linguistic biographies and grids for observing and assessing linguistic skills were drawn up, standardised integrated diagnostic tests were created and administered, methodologies and protocols for reinforcement and intervention were developed through the synergy of all the institutions involved. Consequently, staff were trained in the innovative research areas of the project.

Isendoorn College in Warnsveld, the Netherlands, the Mattei Higher Education Institute in Fiorenzuola, and the Accredited European School in Parma, have successfully collaborated on another Erasmus+ KA2 project focused on intercultural exchange on such themes as food as the culture and education for sustainability. Students acquired intercultural, transversal, critical, creative, and IT skills.

Needs and Challenges of the Accredited European School in Parma

The mission of the European Schools is to provide a multilingual and multicultural education from early childhood to secondary school, both vertically and horizontally. The main objective of the philosophy of the European School is to promote language learning and intercultural education while respecting European citizens' native languages, the promotion and development of the key competences of the curriculum, and intercultural understanding.

“How can the Accredited European School in Parma build the culture for an authentic European citizenship?” In order to respond to this essential challenge, the school initiated a consultation process involving all stakeholders: students, teachers, parents, members of school collegial bodies, EFSA representatives and local businesses.

An event entitled World Café was organised with the support of experts in distributed leadership including the participation of the school management, the middle management staff and coordinators.

The themes addressed during the opening discussions were the following: sustainability; experiencing school through indoor and outdoor spaces; perspectives for developing the Parma model in other Italian contexts; relationships

between schools and the local community; school climate; opportunities worldwide post European Baccalaureate; inclusive teaching for active citizenship; and further possible visions.

The consultation produced key information for the Accredited European School in Parma's strategic document Multi-annual Plan 2022–2024. The needs analysis revealed several concrete examples, including: sustainable education activities; suggestions for enhancing the school's indoor and outdoor spaces, also with a view to promoting a positive atmosphere; proposals for the school's development perspectives and relations with the local area; discussion and sharing of good practices; activities to acquire useful skills for entering the world after school; opportunities for discussion within the school to implement inclusive teaching for active citizenship.

Following consultations with all stakeholders, it was concluded that, in order to respond adequately to the challenge of building a culture for an authentic European citizenship, it is necessary to activate training and, consequently, teaching initiatives that promote sustainable education, inclusion, socialisation, with international comparison of methodologies, contents and competences.

Project Objectives

The project had three objectives concerning areas of study and research: intercultural and inclusive leadership, the modernisation of the profiles of school leaders and teachers, and the agency of school leaders and teachers. These themes led to the research questions of this study, relating to the impact of Erasmus+ mobilities on the competences of various stakeholders.

Objective 1: Developing Intercultural and Inclusive Leadership Competences for Learning

In a society that is continuously changing, increasingly mobile, multicultural and digital, teachers and school leaders are to acquire a plurality of leadership and communication competences in relation to world transformation and a holistic development of students.

Educational leadership takes shape in the relationships between people and as a capacity for empowering all stakeholders. Intercultural and inclusive education provides fundamental tools to develop leadership competences integrated within a plural context: emotional intelligence, ethical competences, a democratic perspective, respect for differences and a sense of social justice.

To monitor and evaluate progress towards this objective, we referred to frameworks found in international scientific literature on evaluating educational leadership.

Objective 2: Aligning the Profiles of Teachers and School Leaders with Twenty-first-century Competences

The twenty-first century requires a modernisation of educators, teachers and school leaders' profiles in order to activate meaningful learning, rather than merely facilitating it. In the digital era, learning is connective, interdisciplinary, dynamic and contextual. Consequently, it is necessary to rethink teaching, learning environments, tools and methodologies for schooling, learning and living in the world. The school culture is therefore transformed in its educational infrastructures, such as spaces, curricula and teaching teams. Organisational, pedagogical and cultural value becomes global, innovative, sustainable and inclusive.

To monitor and assess progress towards this objective, we referred to the European Schools System Toolkit for the evaluation and self-evaluation of teachers' performance. The Toolkit is structured into three pedagogical standards categories: teaching and learning, enhanced professional responsibilities, and professional conduct and qualities.

Objective 3: Strengthening the Agency of Teachers and School Leaders to Address New Educational Paradigms

The professional development of teachers and school leaders is fundamental, especially in relation to the new educational paradigms that have emerged following the Covid-19 pandemic. Among these are environmental and nature education, positive education within schools and in their learning processes, and cooperation through coaching cultures education.

To monitor and assess progress towards these objectives, we referred to qualitative data derived from research tools such as interviews, narrative reports and logbooks.

Training Courses

To achieve the objectives of the project, 14 mobilities were planned in different European countries. The three leadership courses covered various strategic aspects

of educational leadership, both from a theoretical and practical point of view. In particular, in the first course, entitled “Effective School Leadership” techniques and strategies were explored positioning the Head as a learner within the stakeholders learning community. In the second course, entitled “Inclusive Leadership” the deputy director of nursery and primary cycles had the opportunity to acquire inclusive leadership competences through the analysis and discussion of case studies in different contexts. In the third course, entitled “Coaching and Mentoring to Support Teachers” the deputy director of secondary cycle deepened the pedagogical dimension of being a leader through mentoring and coaching techniques. In the course “Coaching: A Powerful Tool” the Erasmus+ coordinator explored theories, models and techniques of coaching. In the course “Digital Citizenship and Media Literacy: Sharing the Responsibility” the educational advisor studied the potential of new technologies both in society and in schools. In the course “Empowering Diversity in the Multicultural Classroom” the school Careers and Guidance coordinator acquired intercultural and inclusive techniques and experiences.

For the remaining eight mobilities, teachers across all school cycles were selected. The course “Discover the 7Cs: Learning for Life (and Work) in the 21st Century” dealt with learning scenarios based on a competence-based approach. The course “Teaching for a Sustainable World: Climate Change and Global Citizenship” addressed themes related to education for sustainable development, a new subject introduced within the European Schools’ secondary curriculum. The course “Environmental Stewardship: How to Reconnect with Nature” concerned environmental education from a transversal point of view. The course “Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) for Successful Schools” was structured as a coherent training path on the science of emotions. The course “Inclusive Differentiation for All” focused on differentiation techniques and inclusion strategies in line with strategic documents. The course “Effective Pedagogies for 21st-Century Learning” centred on methodological innovations characteristic of European Schools. The course “Deep Democracy: How to Manage Conflicts Building a Strong Classroom Culture” focused on possible classroom applications of the Lewis Method to Deep Democracy. Finally, the course “Cultivating the Entrepreneurial Mindset in Education” proposed pathways for acquiring entrepreneurial competences.

Expected Learning Outcomes of the Project

The director and the deputy directors deepened the core principles of pedagogical leadership, acquiring competences in sustainable and resilient leadership. The Erasmus Team teachers and those selected for the various mobilities experimented with new pedagogical, didactic and methodological models based both

on the eight key competences and on life competences, which are essential for the development of new learning scenarios within a European Schools system.

The challenges of digitalisation, interculturalism and climate change were the integrating themes of some mobility programmes aimed at acquiring responsible, innovation-oriented, reflective and proactive behaviours. Inclusion, Social and Emotional Learning, Coaching and Deep Democracy were the centre of the other group of mobilities, aimed at acquiring inclusive, emotional, listening and participatory competences, which are fundamental for the learning community.

The Contribution of the Planned Activities to the Project

The activities relating to leadership contributed to the first objective, as the selected courses served to broaden the horizons of educational figures in terms of leadership for innovation and, above all, for learning. Inclusion and interculturality are the challenges and defining features of our school, and can only be addressed through multiple leadership and communicative competences. The different mobilities contributed to the development of the second and third objectives concerning the modernisation of profiles and the agency of teachers and school leaders, as the competences acquired relate to the most recent theories on the design of teaching and learning. Learning can be organised epistemologically, physically and socially, yet pupils — with their own styles, languages and emotions — are always different and therefore educators require multifaceted and interdisciplinary preparation.

The competences acquired are socio-emotional, cognitive, affective and motivational. Professional development and training pathways were based on the following themes: active learning practices, reflective and self-evaluative practices, opportunities for feedback and mutual support. In this way, adaptability and resilience, autonomy and a sense of belonging were strengthened.

Selection Criteria for the Eight Teacher Mobilities

The teaching staff benefiting from the mobilities were identified through an application procedure. The project was presented to the General Teachers' Council and teachers from within all school cycles could apply if they met the following requirements:

- qualifications and experiences consistent with the project (in the case of equal merit, preference was given to the younger applicant);

- significant experience within the school as a coordinator;
- permanent position within the school and commitment to remain for the following two years;
- belonging to one of the following disciplinary areas: linguistic, humanistic, scientific, technological and/or economic;
- willingness to undertake training activities for colleagues;
- willingness to contribute, together with the Project Team, to dissemination activities within and outside the school;
- willingness to work in teams for activities functional to the implementation of the project.

Implementation of the Results in Daily Practice

We worked closely with all members of the school community to disseminate and integrate the results achieved during the mobility activities. In particular, with regard to the first objective relating to the development of intercultural and inclusive leadership skills for learning, thanks to the leadership skills acquired, updates will be made both as a Leadership Team and as a Middle Management team, in all the areas requiring expertise to manage and coordinate in European Schools. Specifically, we have integrated best practices in communication, relationships, conflict management and inclusion into the day-to-day management of the administration and educational provision. We have also valued experiences of innovation and intercultural practice in order to strengthen the professional skills of an open-minded and flexible learning community.

With regard to the second objective concerning the alignment of teacher and school leaders' profiles with 21st century skills, thanks to the experiences acquired, we have continued the process of systematically incorporating key competences into the teaching and learning processes of everyday teaching, in line with European Schools' policy documents. The modernisation of teacher and school leaders' profiles has made it possible to identify teaching and learning best practices, continuously referencing the competence-based approach of the European Schools. With regard to school leaders and teachers' professional development, the educational impact of mobility experiences on deep learning, long-term learning and lifelong learning can be observed.

Concerning the third objective of strengthening the agency of teachers and school leaders to address new educational paradigms, we have drawn on lessons learned to enrich traditional curricula with meaningful practices on well-being at school, ecological education, citizenship education and coaching.

We are also developing further the common citizenship curriculum required by European Schools, enhancing the additions and/or changes in European curricula on Science, Ethics and Philosophy, the interdisciplinary project for the final two years of secondary school, ICT and Education for sustainable development, which is being taught as a subject for the first time. We have developed learning scenarios that have allowed these new educational paradigms to be put into practice and that can also be disseminated through seminars bringing together different educational systems, the Italian national system and that of the European Schools.

Research Design

Erasmus+ mobilities have been identified as excellent ways to promote the development of professional skills among school leaders and teachers (Ivasciuc, Marinescu & Ispas, 2025; Martins, Tinoca & Alves, 2024; Mouraz, Doyle & Serra, 2023). Internationalisation is undoubtedly a key aspect of training education professionals which, in turn, has a knock-on effect on school culture and curriculum innovation.

This topic has not been a subject of much research in the recent literature thus this qualitative research aims to add a perspective to the field in order to develop future policies on education for internationalisation. The objectives of the study are as follows:

- to explore the impact of Erasmus+ mobilities within the “Leading Learning” project on the holistic understanding of educational leadership inside the Accredited European School in Parma;
- to explore the impact of Erasmus+ mobilities within the “Leading Learning” project on the agency of teachers at the Accredited European School in Parma;
- to explore the impact of Erasmus+ mobilities within the “Leading Learning” project on the intercultural competences of teachers working for the Accredited European School in Parma.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

Benedetta Toni

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research methodology, which was designed to raise awareness of educational leadership, agency and teachers' intercultural competences. Included is a description of the narrative tools, an overview of the research design, a description of the participants and the procedures used for data collection and analysis.

Narrative Tools

Using a qualitative approach, this research explored the perceptions—in relation to the themes of educational leadership, agency, mobilities and intercultural competences—of teachers, middle management, and directors following training mobilities within the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project. Participants were invited to take part in an individual interview and wrote logbooks and reports of their experiences.

Logbooks are educational, reflective and transformative tools that allow us to keep track of our educational journey and review it in light of professional events. The main functions of the logbook are to pause and observe, keep track, document, make sense of, plan, prepare new actions and share by building knowledge together (Benelli & Broglia, 2024; 2025).

Methodological notes can be recorded: the planning, theoretical notes: what insights emerged, and critical notes: problems and alternatives (Benelli & Broglia, 2025). A logbook or training diary is a multimodal tool that can be

enriched with iconic languages that allow for greater feedback on both internalisation and emotions (Benelli & Broglia, 2025).

Narrative reports and interviews recounting professional and life experiences are useful data for narrative inquiry. They are tools for knowledge and enable a new relationship between researcher and participant: a co-construction of knowledge (Huber et al., 2013). Experience, narration and life are inseparable, and personal experiences are at the heart of research (Huber et al., 2013). Narratives can take multimodal forms: visual, written, digital, emotional, and every word carries emotions and meanings. Diaries and autobiographies help people to express themselves and grow (Demetrio, 2025). Listening and storytelling create authentic connections, while storytelling is a tool for relationships and well-being (Demetrio, 2025).

Narrative is a tool for understanding and transforming educational practices. Researchers engage in dialogue with participants, bearing in mind three dimensions: time, sociality and place. Narrative allows education professionals to be co-constructors of the curriculum, which is based on real stories in different training courses and different educational paradigms (Huber et al., 2013).

Research Project and Questions

This research explored perceptions of the educational leadership of directors and middle managers, teachers' agency and intercultural competences inside the Accredited European School in Parma, following the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project mobility programme.

Participants were asked to take part in semi-structured interviews, which were conducted in person. Participation was entirely confidential, and pseudonyms were used in all transcripts and documentation.

The researcher adopted an exploratory design, linking the experiences, perspectives and interpretations of reality of the participants (Terry et al., 2017). The following research questions were used.

1. What is the Impact of the Erasmus+ Leading Learning Project Mobilities on the Educational Leadership of Directors and Middle Leaders at the Accredited European School in Parma?
2. What is the Impact of the Erasmus+ Leading Learning Project Mobilities on the Curricular Agency of Teachers at the Accredited European School in Parma?
3. What Intercultural and Global Competences did Teachers at the Accredited European School in Parma Acquire as a Result of the Erasmus+ Leading Learning Project Mobility Programme?

Description of the Context and Participants

The context, where the study was conducted, was the Accredited European School in Parma. Fourteen participants were recruited to take part in this study: the director and deputy director, the educational adviser, and teachers who were members of middle management staff. There were three men and eleven women. The participants took part in the project's mobility programmes both as project staff and as teachers recruited through public selection notices.

The participants had extensive previous experience of Erasmus+ initiatives, as well as participation in internationalisation and training initiatives within the European Schools System. The selection of participants was carried out as follows: the management and middle management staff involved in European projects and guidance participated in the courses defined during the application phase, while the remaining eight mobility programmes were carried out through two public notices.

The project was approved by resolutions of the General Council of Teachers and the Council of Administration. The criteria for selecting staff to participate in the mobility programmes were defined by the School's Technical and Scientific Committee. Numerous applications were submitted, and the selection process, carried out by a committee appointed by the director, was conducted with absolute transparency. The participants in the mobility programme were prepared by the project staff and were assisted in defining the learning programmes, providing materials and sharing content useful for the various mobility activities.

The selection process for the mobility activities was carefully designed to ensure transparency, fairness and inclusion, ensuring the participation of the most suitable candidates in line with the project's objectives and the needs of the institution. To participate in the selection process, each candidate had to submit a motivated application, demonstrating clear objectives consistent with the training programme offered. Interested teaching staff had to meet certain specific requirements, including holding a two-year contract, having a minimum of two years' service at the Accredited European School in Parma and a university degree in languages, humanities, science, technology or economics.

These criteria were defined to ensure that participants not only had the necessary skills, but also a professional perspective suited to the nature and objectives of the mobility project. The selection was based on a thorough assessment of the candidates' qualifications, previous experience and roles, with particular attention paid to teachers with coordination responsibilities.

To ensure a fair and meritocratic process, a scoring system was adopted that objectively evaluated the experience gained within the school. The entire selection process was managed by a specially appointed committee composed of competent and impartial figures. This committee carefully examined the applications, applying pre-established and documented criteria, thus ensuring a clear, straightforward and objective evaluation process.

The selected teachers undertook to comply with specific conditions relating to their participation in the mobility programme. In particular, they guaranteed their attendance during the course on the established dates, the organisation of training sessions for their colleagues upon their return, and collaboration with the project team in dissemination activities both inside and outside the school. Before departure and upon return from the mobilities, participants took part in project meetings aimed at defining the learning agreement, a document that established the objectives and content of the training course. In addition, in agreement with the director and coordinators, they discussed and approved any organisational changes relating to the course.

At the end of the experience, they wrote a report documenting the results achieved and the added value this had towards their professional growth. A key aspect of the process was the sharing of the knowledge acquired. Teachers shared materials and skills, actively participating in training and discussion meetings with colleagues. This maximised the impact of the mobilities, encouraging the adoption of new teaching methods and innovative approaches.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher chose to use semi-structured interviews and reports relating to the training courses of the various mobility programmes. There were two types of interviews: one with leaders for learning and one with teachers.

Interview Questions on Educational Leadership

1. What educational leadership skills did you acquire during the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project training course?
2. What educational leadership styles were proposed during the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project training course and which one(s) do you identify with most?
3. What challenges in relation to educational leadership were highlighted during the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project training course?

Interview Questions on Teacher Agency

1. How do you think the Erasmus+ Leading Learning training course has impacted your intellectual agency?
2. How do you think the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project training course has impacted your entrepreneurial agency?
3. How do you think the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project training course has impacted your curricular agency?
4. What intercultural and global competences have you acquired as a result of the Erasmus+ Leading Learning project training course?

The researcher chose the interview topics by referring to existing scientific literature on the impact of Erasmus+ KA1 projects for the continuing education of directors and teachers (Ivasciuc, Marinescu & Ispas, 2025; Martins, Tinoca & Alves, 2024; Mouraz, Doyle & Serra, 2023).

Data Analysis

The approaches used for data analysis were narrative analysis and thematic analysis. Narrative analysis is divided into four strands of investigation: thematic, relating to the main themes; structural, concerning the structure of the narratives and stories; dialogic-performative, highlighting the narrator-listener interaction; visual: concerning narration through iconic languages (Riessman, 2001).

The characteristics of the narratives can be defined as either: whole life stories, short stories limited in time, or a set of long stories involving constructive dialogue between interviewer and interviewee. The narratives drawn from the interviews were short stories limited in time, as were the logbooks and research reports. The researcher's stance in narrative analysis is critical, dialogical and reflective: it is possible to reread and relisten to the data for new interpretations and corrections (Riessman, 2001).

The researcher conducted a thematic narrative analysis of the variety of narrative texts (interviews, documents, reports, logbooks), seeking to maintain a "focus on individual cases" (Riessman, 2001; Pagani, 2020). A reflective thematic analysis was then carried out using the inductive method, starting from the data to develop codes and capture the explicit meanings connected to the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Pagani, 2020). The thematic analysis is linked to the critical realist approach (Willig, 2013). The coding was open and inclusive and brought to light what the researcher considered relevant, also in relation to scientific literature. After the codes were created, the themes were

conceived, seen as stories and narratives themselves of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Pagani, 2020).

Finally, a dialogic and performance analysis was carried out, seeing as the narratives derived from the interviews and reports as stories situated and directed at someone. An attempt was made to analyse the contexts through the principles of interaction and continuity by observing the elements of interaction, continuity and situation. The techniques used were expansion, deepening and reconstruction to bring out the research text (Pagani, 2020).

CHAPTER 3

Results

Benedetta Toni

Introduction

The following chapter presents the results of the research. Overall, the analysis identified three central themes, nine themes and eighteen sub-themes, which will be described in detail and accompanied by quotations from narratives transcripts in the form of reports, logbooks, semi-structured interviews and thematic maps.

The three central themes generated by the analysis are as follows: “Holistic Understanding of Leadership”; “Teachers’ Agency”; “Teachers’ Mobilities and Intercultural Competences.”.

Central Theme 1. Holistic Understanding of Leadership

The data relating to this topic covers various subjects that were mainly linked to the respondents’ holistic understanding of leadership (Figure 3.1). These included the skills acquired in educational leadership as directors (directors and deputy directors) and as middle managers, the leadership styles proposed by the various courses; with which professional most identified as; and the challenges that each learning leader believes they must face in relation to the topics covered in the course.

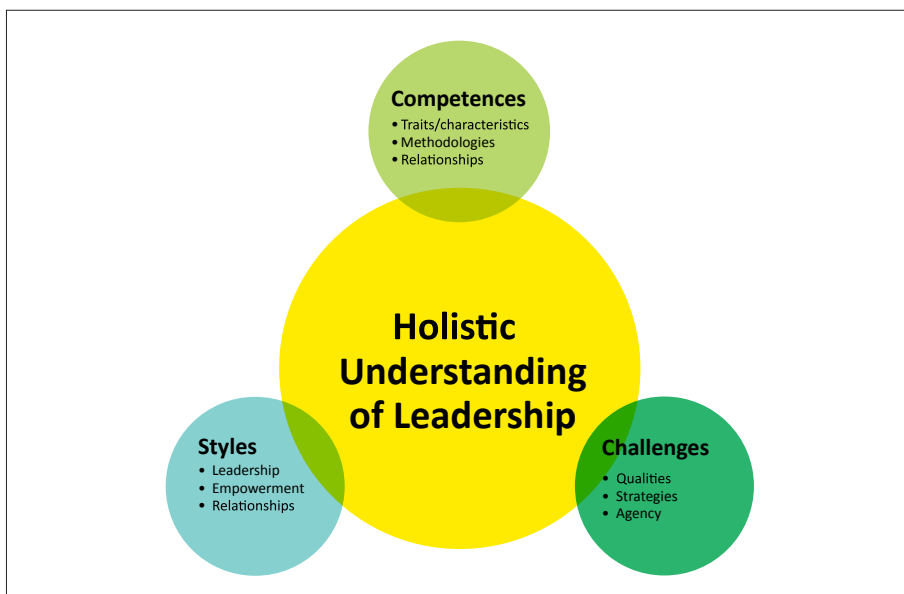


Fig. 3.1 Holistic Understanding of Leadership.

Competences

This theme relates to a portion of the data that captures participants' perceptions of the leadership skills acquired during the courses. The factors discussed were mainly associated with inclusive, authentic, ethical, democratic and participatory leadership. Participants discussed the benefits of distributed leadership, the importance of support within the leadership team and collaboration. These considerations can be inferred from the following quotes:

I reinforced the idea that you can be an authoritative reference point without being directive in management... and I further developed my ability to use effective questions to make others more autonomous in their thinking... I learned strategies that encourage people to find their own solutions... (Director 1)

The course was based on various possible skills and knowledge related to educational leadership, with a specific focus on inclusive and authentic leadership. (Director 2)

During the course, I developed a set of essential leadership skills based on reflection, ethics and collaboration. The philosophical approach encouraged me to think critically about my role as a leader in education. I strengthened my reflective and ethical leadership, learning to guide others with integrity, empathy and awareness of human vulnerability... (Middle Manager 1)

The course made me think a lot, again, about leadership. And the type of leadership that was promoted was democratic and participatory. Which means that, of course, there is a leader, but the leader tries to involve the whole team in the decision-making process... (Middle Manager 2)

Some participants mentioned techniques they had learned, such as the experiential method and coaching methodology. These are expressed in the following excerpts:

First of all, we started with a working method. The method was to start from experiences, from experiential activities, and then, through experience and group activities, to reflect on different leadership paradigms. Therefore, each activity was first carried out at an experiential level and then reflected upon. Methodologically speaking, we worked on the methodology of coaching and the four types of listening... (Director 2)

Coaching is certainly a very valuable ally of leadership... (Middle Manager 3)

Some participants referred to empathetic, relational and intercultural leadership towards all community stakeholders, with particular attention to students and parents. The following quotes support these views:

I have gained a deeper understanding of educational leadership, understood not as the exercise of authority, but as the ability to inspire, guide and value diversity. More than anything else, I have learned to be a leader in school, which means creating the conditions for every student to feel part of the learning process, respecting cultural, cognitive and emotional differences... (Middle Manager 4)

The course taught me that active listening is essential. When a parent talks to me and tells me about their problems, I try to listen and understand... I have to make sure I think about the well-being of the school, the well-being of the pupils and the teachers... (Middle Manager 6)

Leadership Styles

This theme refers to excerpts — from the data collection — in which participants identified different leadership styles. Most stakeholders emphasised leadership styles that emphasise the importance of relationships between leaders and followers: collaborative, relational, empathetic and inclusive. The following considerations are proposed in this regard:

We have developed relational leadership above all, and I identify strongly with this style, which encourages empathy... which is built through dialogue and shared reflection... (Director 1)

...Servant leadership, i.e. care, empathy, responsibility towards others and towards the planet. (Middle Manager 1)

So leadership was based on listening to others... it was about knowing how to listen to others, putting yourself in their shoes and seeing what limits we can set for ourselves and others... leadership must be collaborative... we were taught techniques to include colleagues more in our decisions... (Middle Manager 5)

My leadership style is to try to understand people's ideas and try to understand people's perspectives... I am open to other people's ideas and I try to value other people's perspectives... (Middle Manager 6)

Some participants spoke about leadership potential and transformational leadership. The following quotes were reported:

We worked hard on leadership potential rather than leadership style and on discovering our leadership potential... more suited to our skills and our individual identities. (Director 2)

We worked on leadership centred on the person, on potential, on staff growth, so to speak, and not just on performance. We could call it transformative leadership, leadership based on empowerment, of course. (Middle Manager 3)

And I understood the importance of balancing guidance and freedom, structure and flexibility, to allow everyone to express their potential. That's what I try to do in the classroom now. (Middle Manager 4)

Challenges

This theme is related to participants' responses contained in the data, in which stakeholders highlighted possible challenges regarding educational leadership. Among the most significant challenges are: distributed leadership, flexibility and inclusive leadership, intercultural and transformational leadership, coaching training and the possibility of integrating coaching into everyday teaching, and the creation of a truly inclusive environment. See the perceptions of leaders on this subject:

At the leadership level, one challenge is to carry out constructive work with teachers who have different levels of motivation and skills, so it is important to be able to identify the skills and motivation of each individual in order to assign the right tasks to them. (Director 1)

We must always bear in mind that, in reality, leaders need to be very flexible in order to carry out different activities simultaneously and solve different problems. Inclusive leadership is a challenge... (Director 2)

Integrating global perspectives into national curricula requires careful planning and collaboration. Resistance to change within institutions still represents a significant obstacle to promoting innovative approaches to teaching. (Middle Manager 1)

The main challenge, in my opinion, is to provide specific training to effectively integrate coaching into everyday teaching. (Middle Manager 3)

Yes, well, the main challenge is definitely the ability to build a truly inclusive environment where diversity is not only accepted but also becomes a resource for shared learning. Managing a multicultural class, as we have many in this school, requires empathy, listening and the ability to adapt teaching and communication strategies to different educational needs. It is therefore a type of leadership that requires constant reflection and self-assessment, which is perhaps the biggest challenge. (Middle Manager 4)

Central Theme 2. Teachers' Agency

Participants' opinions on intellectual, entrepreneurial and curricular agency were assembled in this theme. The theme revolved around several sub-themes: educational action and critical thinking, entrepreneurial action and creativity, curricular action and teaching (Figure 3.2).

Intellectual Agency

This theme represented participants' opinions on the skills acquired in terms of critical thinking, self-examination on their work as teachers, the development of critical thinking, reflection, investigation and research skills, including on behalf of students:

Yes, the course encouraged me to reflect on my teaching practices using all the tools we studied during the course, particularly the observation tools used in classrooms for assessment. As a teacher, I reflected: I asked myself questions. So I reflected on the effectiveness, as they say, of my lessons, but also on my role as a guide in the learning process... (Teacher 1)

I learned to question assumptions, explore multiple points of view, and address abstract concepts related to ethics, humanism, and sustainability. (Teacher 2)

My thinking has changed, my way of seeing the relationship between school and the local area, in the sense that I saw how the commitment on the part of schools integrated with the projects promoted by the municipality of Nice. (Teacher 4)

I experimented with the use of open-ended, reflective questions to stimulate self-awareness and critical analysis... I also saw a nice transformation in assessment, in the sense that assessment became more of a dialogue, a collaborative dialogue to better focus on problem-solving skills. (Teacher 5)

The course prompted me to reflect on the role of culture in learning and on my own unconscious biases... I was better able to guide students towards a critical and multi-perspective reading of historical and social events. (Teacher 6)

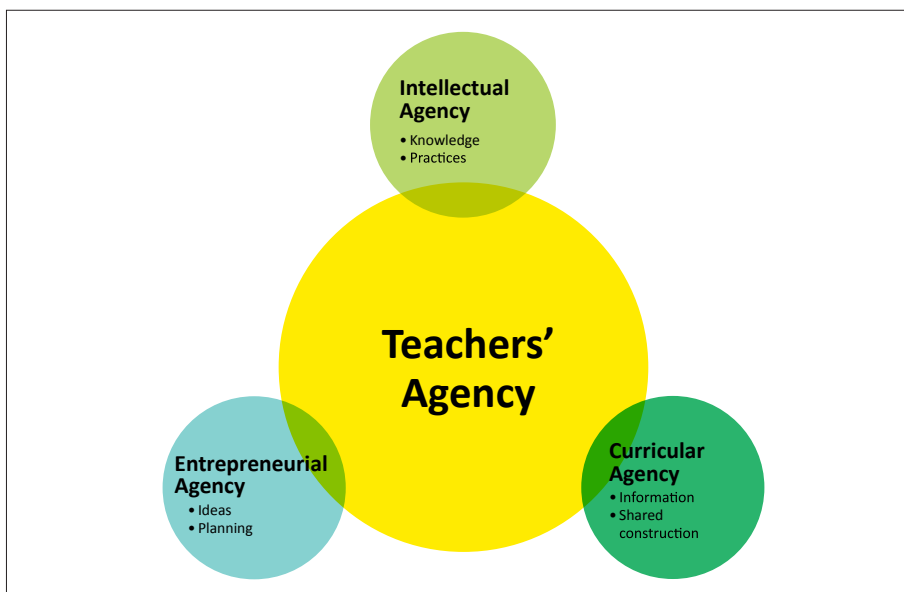


Fig. 3.2 Teachers' Agency.

The course in general, and the workshop activities in particular, encouraged me above all to analyse situations from multiple perspectives and therefore motivated me to stimulate debate among students and promote intellectual curiosity, also with a view to guiding them towards more independent and critical thinking. (Teacher 9)

The course included many activities that put me in the position of students with special educational needs... So I tried to incorporate the difficulties that students might encounter into my lessons and my planning. (Teacher 10)

Deep democracy serves to give space to minority opinions that, perhaps, in the self-assessment that everyone makes of themselves, would be unlikely to emerge, due to unconscious "self-protection". The course gave me ideas for reading about this type of implicit dynamic and how to bring it out so that I can analyse it critically, both on my own as a teacher and together with the class. (Teacher 11)

Entrepreneurial Agency

This theme brings together participants' points of view on creativity in teaching; in designing teaching methods and spaces; on the acquisition of social and emotional skills; on promoting students' argumentative, practical and creative skills; on developing teachers' agency in proactivity and in discussions with colleagues; and on valuing diversity in dialogue and discussion:

It definitely taught me to diversify activities more, starting from the motivation and competence of the pupils. (Teacher 1)

So, the course inspired me to integrate creativity into teaching in new ways. The idea of turning challenges into opportunities prompted me to design project-based learning activities that connect real-world issues, such as climate change, to students' questions and research. In addition, discussions about classroom architecture and learning environments sparked ideas for flexible, imaginative spaces that foster collaboration, experimentation and emotional well-being. (Teacher 2)

Yes, one strength is authentic listening, the enhancement of active listening. For example, there is a technique called echoing, which is basically paraphrasing. I started putting it into practice and it is very effective, creating immediate trust with the student and also strengthening empathy... I also try to strengthen social and collaborative skills by integrating peer coaching. A few years ago, I also set up mission tables in the classroom, where each pupil has their own role and feels valued. It is an exchange of skills that obviously leads to shared and therefore collaborative reflection. (Teacher 5)

Yes, definitely, because we did lots of theatre games, simulations and collaborative activities in which I rediscovered the importance of the body, emotions and direct experience in learning. The introduction of innovative tools, such as artificial intelligence, or techniques such as Chalk Talk, where the students move around the classroom and write answers in silence, was also very useful. (Teacher 6)

I always come back to the workshop activities because they were at the heart of the course and I believe they helped me to take on a proactive role, to make quick decisions that in everyday teaching translate into a greater willingness to experiment and think outside the box, not only in conveying content but above all in facilitating the cognitive process of the pupils, thus allowing them to take centre stage and you, as a teacher, to become more of a facilitator. Furthermore, discussions with colleagues have strengthened my confidence in expressing my ideas and generally valuing those of others. (Teacher 9)

I think the course really inspired or motivated me to be more proactive at school and to share my ideas with my colleagues. (Teacher 10)

Deep democracy suggests giving voice to all voices, exploiting their facets, understood as richness rather than diversity. As a teacher, the course encouraged me to try to use differences as a basis on which to build something common, even with resourcefulness: conflict thus becomes a resource to be addressed with creativity rather than avoided or endured. (Teacher 11)

Curricular Agency

This theme gathered participants' perceptions regarding a collection of information to improve the curriculum, adapting it and enriching it with innovative activities on sustainability education and the construction and management of emotions.

Teachers' participation in the co-construction of the curriculum involved proposing creative activities that influence the school climate and culture, digital practices such as the use of podcasts in the humanities, intercultural experiences related to students' lives, interdisciplinary activities and cooperative learning.

Yes, during Mentorship with students, for conflict management and study methods, I improved the curricular agency. (Teacher 1)

Based on this experience, I intend to adapt my curriculum in several ways. One is to integrate global citizenship education by including sustainability, empathy and ethical reflection in daily lessons. Another is to promote inquiry-based learning, encouraging questioning, dialogue and reflection as teaching tools... fostering emotional and ethical development by helping students understand vulnerability, cooperation and responsibility, and redesigning learning spaces by creating a classroom atmosphere that reflects trust, flexibility and creativity. (Teacher 2)

It had an immediate impact because I implemented many of the exercises we did straight away in my class and also shared them with other colleagues in my team, in my language, but also with other teachers of different subjects. Some of the methods were very creative. Among these was the very complex podcast activity, and we implemented the writing and recording, as well as the publication of the podcast, in our daily teaching. (Teacher 3)

So this experience helped me to understand and also suggest outdoor activities to my colleagues. (Teacher 4)

So, in terms of how I teach history and geography, the course provided new tools for connecting subject content with students' personal and intercultural experiences. I think the Universal Design for Learning approach taught me to offer materials and activities in different forms, even more than I was already doing... this has definitely made my lessons more inclusive, engaging and meaningful. (Teacher 6)

Yes, I think I have improved my relationship building this year, mainly because I have reflected a lot on my SEL course, socio-emotional learning course, and I realised that, especially for all students, but especially for the younger ones, starting the day with circle time and making sure that at the beginning of the year everyone knows each other's names and making sure that we understand the different people, the different components of our class, is very important. (Teacher 8)

But more than anything else, in my opinion, I had confirmation, in the sense that it stimulated me to rethink, to place skills increasingly at the centre of the curriculum and not just content. I have implemented cooperative learning activities so that students feel increasingly at the centre of the learning process, and I have tried to develop a more interdisciplinary approach, which is also very characteristic of my school, for a more stimulating curriculum. (Teacher 9)

I have learned how to make assessment more inclusive. (Teacher 10)

Central Theme 3. Teachers' Mobilities and Intercultural Competences

This theme concerns a portion of data referring to the qualities acquired in relation to intercultural competences, intercultural experiences in different contexts, and strategies and methodologies of intercultural impact following a mobility (Figure 3.3).

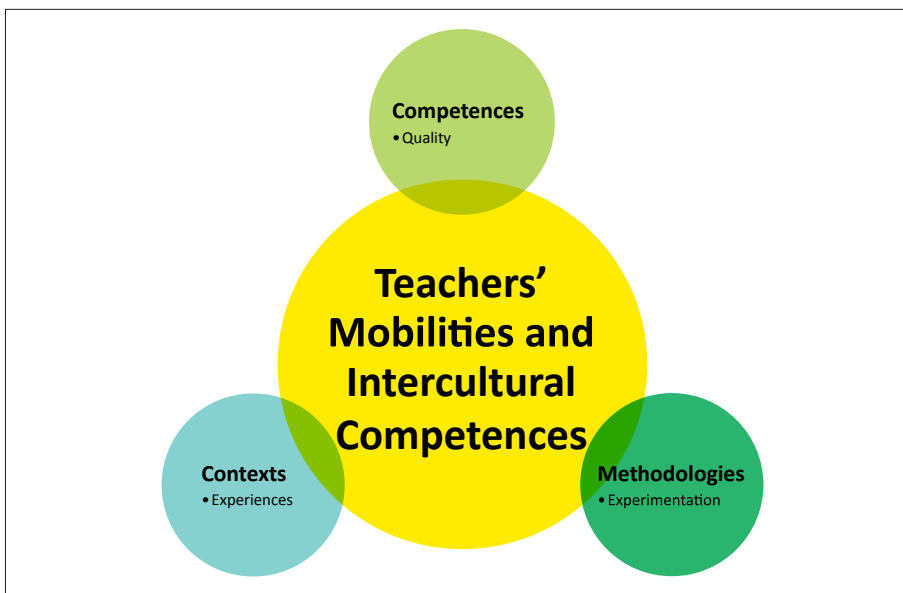


Fig. 3.3 Teachers' Mobilities and Intercultural Competences.

See the following quotations in this regard:

Yes, it made me reflect on the importance of adapting mentoring and coaching strategies to different cultural contexts. If we pay attention to that dimension, we work better. (Teacher 1)

The international composition of the group, with participants from the Netherlands, Greece and Hungary, provided a rich and stimulating intercultural learning experience. Through collaboration and dialogue, I deepened my intercultural understanding, appreciating the different education systems and cultural contexts represented. The course strengthened my sense of European citizenship, emphasising shared values such as democracy, inclusiveness, sustainability and cooperation across national borders. (Teacher 2)

First of all, we were not in Italy, so we went to a different culture, where even the teachers who taught us came from two other cultures, meeting teachers from other European countries and also from other school systems. Yes, it opened

my mind even more and also made me realise that the values we have at school are very similar. (Teacher 3)

So, it was interesting for me to meet teachers from other countries, particularly from Northern Europe, where they certainly have more established traditions in terms of caring for the environment. It was an opportunity for discussion and therefore for developing skills, in the sense of understanding how a school can organise itself around an issue of this kind and how important it can be in general in a person's education. In countries such as Sweden, for example, but also Lithuania, which were present, there is a very strong awareness, a very strong sensitivity towards the environment, which is cultural, so it becomes a public priority, so to speak. (Teacher 4)

I have enriched my intercultural competences and used the intercultural portfolio, which is a tool that obviously enhances the identity and integration of the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our pupils. (Teacher 5)

Well, first of all, working with colleagues from different countries, I was forced to deal with very different pedagogical approaches, even compared to the nationalities of the colleagues we have here. For example, there were many Finnish and Danish colleagues there, and they helped me to reconsider my way of leading a class group, for example, and today I feel more confident in promoting collaboration and shared responsibility in a climate of mutual trust. (Teacher 6)

So yes, there were only a few of us, all women, but it was very interesting because we came from very different countries. It was very interesting because there were people my age and people much younger, so seeing how they dealt with certain issues in class from a cultural perspective helped me to see other points of view. (Teacher 7)

Yes, this Erasmus experience was very important for me because, basically, I think, and I learned this from my studies in general, that meeting lots of people is very important for self-improvement. And I have kept in touch with my fellow students. And every time there is a topic or something that I feel I want to share with my group of colleagues who attended the course with me, I write it down and send a message, and my colleagues from all over the world, in a sense, give me their ideas and feedback. (Teacher 8)

The need to communicate in English was wonderful for me. It improved my fluency and certainly my ability to interact in international contexts. The exchange with colleagues was very enriching on a professional level, helping me to recognise and appreciate teaching approaches different from my own. I also felt part of an international community and, in any case, a democratic community with which I share important educational values. (Teacher 9)

Yes, I learned a lot about where the focus is in the school systems of other European countries. In my course, there were teachers from Lithuania and Croatia, and we compared school timetables, school buildings, weather and budgets. I learned that many schools are investing heavily in becoming more inclusive in terms of the equipment they purchase for students. (Teacher 10)

A classroom may also include children from different cultural backgrounds with whom to engage in inclusive, empathetic and respectful dialogue. Deep de-

mocracy provides tools for managing diversity in a conscious and inclusive way, using different cultural perspectives as a field of “conflict” and then agreement, in which everyone accepts compromises because they are close to their own sensibilities, even if they do not fully reflect them. (Teacher 11)

Below is a summary table (Table 3.1) providing the results for the central themes, themes, sub-themes and reference codes taken from the extracts of the survey materials.

TABLE 3.1
Central themes, themes, sub-themes and references

Central themes	Themes	Sub-themes	References
Holistic Understanding of Leadership	Competences	Traits/ Characteristics	Authority = D1 Support= D1 Inclusive and authentic leadership= D2 Reflection, ethics and collaboration = MM1 Democratic and participatory leadership= MM2
		Methodologies	Experiential method= D2 Four types of listening= D2 Coaching methodology= D2 Coaching methodology= D1 Coaching methodology= MM3
		Relationships	Ability to value diversity = MM4 Thinking about everyone's well-being = MM6
	Styles	Leadership	Relational leadership= D1 Servant leadership = MM1 Listening and collaboration = MM5 Understanding people's perspectives = MM6
		Empowerment	Bringing out leadership potential = D2 Empowerment leadership = MM3 Person-centred, potential-centred, growth-centred leadership= MM3
		Relationships	Valuing people = MM3 Enabling everyone to express their potential = MM4
	Challenges	Qualities	Flexibility = D2 Collaboration = MM1 Inclusive leadership =D2 Distributed leadership = D1 Empathy and listening = MM4
		Strategies	Reflection and self-assessment = MM4 Careful planning = MM1 Ability to adapt teaching and communication strategies to different educational needs = MM4
		Agency	Agency Training to integrate coaching into daily teaching = MM4 Creating an inclusive environment = MM4

Teachers' Agency	Intellectual Agency	Knowledge	Reflection = T1; T6 Questioning oneself = T1 Questioning one's assumptions = T2 Changing the way, one views the relationship between school and community = T4 Multi-perspective analysis of situations = T9
		Practices	Open questions = T5 Transformation of assessment/collaborative dialogue = T5 Critical and multi-perspective reading of historical and social factors = T6 Incorporating students' difficulties into lessons and planning = T10 Deep democracy = T11
	Entrepreneurial Agency	Ideas	Flexible and innovative spaces = T2 Authentic and active listening = T5 New techniques and methodologies = T6 Understanding people's perspectives = T6
		Planning	Diversification of activities = T1 Integrating creativity into teaching = T1 Peer coaching = T5 Shared and collaborative reflection = T5 Proactive role with colleagues and in teaching = T9; T10 Deep democracy: diversity and conflict are resources = T11
	Curricular Agency	Information	Creative exercises and methods = T3 Outdoor activities = T4 New tools = T6 Relationship building = T8 Competences at the heart of the curriculum = T9
		Shared Construction	Integrating global citizenship education into curricula = T2 Podcasts and humanities = T3 Connecting curricula to pupils' experiences = T6 Universal Design for Learning in everyday teaching = T6 Cooperative Learning and Interdisciplinary Teaching = T9 Making assessment more inclusive = T10
Teachers' Mobilities and Intercultural Competences	Competences	Quality	Sense of European citizenship = T2 Open-mindedness = T3 Comparison and growth of competences = T4
	Contexts	Experiences	Intercultural learning experience = T2 Different culture = T3 Northern Europe = T4 Sweden and Lithuania = T4 Different pedagogical approaches = T6 International community = From T1 to T11 Investment in inclusive equipment = T10
	Methodologies	Experimentation	Adapting mentoring and coaching to different cultural contexts = T1 Sensitivity to environmental education = T4 Intercultural portfolio = T5 Intercultural leadership = T6; T7 Comparison and interaction in the international community = T8; T9 Managing diversity in a conscious and inclusive way = T11

CHAPTER 4

Narratives from Leaders and Teachers

Benedetta Toni

Introduction

In this chapter some reports are presented by directors and teachers written in the form of diaries, descriptions and examination of their experiences, which were used by the researcher as sources of data in relation to the research questions, the themes and sub-themes identified.

Report on the Course *Inclusive Leadership* (Benedetta Toni)

Inclusive and Authentic Leadership

During the current academic year, our school submitted an application to participate in the Leading Learning project, which aims to train directors and teachers through short periods of mobility abroad alongside structured courses, as part of the Erasmus+ programme. The application was approved and, having already gained experience in European projects, we focused our attention on training workshops and seminars on life skills, both for directors, deputies and for teachers from Nursery school to Secondary school.

As deputy director, I attended the first training seminar in Vienna at the Alp Activate Leadership Potential Association from 6th to 10th November 2023. The title of the seminar was *Inclusive Leadership* and while it was primarily aimed at directors and deputy directors, also teachers from schools of all levels were invited. The focus of the course was on acquiring inclusive and authentic leadership in its broadest sense.

Inclusive and authentic leadership is based on recognising and valuing diversity, including everyone and enabling innovation and change thanks to people's contributions. Through the Inclusive Leadership Approach, directors and teachers connect to the community with fair and horizontal relationships. All stakeholders are involved through listening, dialogue, communication, sharing and collaboration.

The Experiential Learning Methodology

During the course, various individual and group activities were carried out, inspired by the theories of mindfulness and experiential learning. The experience-reflection-learning process theorised by John Dewey and continued by David Allen Kolb formed the basis for various activities such as: knowledge games, courses and activities on Gardner's multiple intelligences, reflections on inclusive leadership, games with metaphorical challenges for resilient leadership, creative activities for building an inclusive school, and coaching experiences for solving case studies in school management. Learning assumed as an experiential process in a group, theorised by Lewin and continued by Kolb, was certainly effective in developing concepts useful not only for individuals but for the entire school community (Kolb, 1994). During the course, we discussed real-life cases and activities. Opportunities were had to reflect on experiences and devise conclusions based on concrete and shared ideas. Finally, we discussed how to apply the new conclusions in our work contexts. In the activities carried out and in the search for our own leadership style, also through the contribution of others, we valued collective emotional intelligence.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences for Leadership Development

To understand our leadership potential, a workshop was organised based on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1991). The workshop was conducted in groups, and each group experienced different types of intelligence: linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, spatial intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. Our group, in experimenting with bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, carried out some activities with origami, juggling balls, and the game Mikado. In discovering musical intelligence, we listened to a song and created an accompanying rhythm. With

regard to linguistic intelligence, we created poems about leadership and stories based on pictures or dice with images. Concerning interpersonal intelligence, someone taught a song and a game to different members of the group, and we reflected on and took note of our emotions and feelings while carrying out the activity. The workshop strengthened our individual identity, group identity, and leadership potential. We discovered the types of intelligence that are most congenial and akin to us; we also identified the importance of how certain types of intelligence are very effective in relationships with people and with the environment. Lastly, we understood how our strengths, qualities, skills and talents can be used to guide our learning leadership in schools and educational contexts.

The Coaching Methodology and the Four Types of Listening

During the course, we gained experience in resolving a clinical case using coaching methodology and the U theory developed by Otto Scharmer, professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management in Boston (Scharmer, 2018). Specifically, a case study was presented highlighting the difficulties collaborating between newly hired teachers and more experienced teachers with regard to sharing lesson plans, discussing lesson implementation, classroom management, and so on. The case was specific to one school, nonetheless it could be generalised to all schools. Scharmer's U theory concerns the practice of listening, afformentioned as a primary skill for leaders. The first step of listening is defined as downloading, i.e. listening to reconfirm what one already knows. The second step of listening, which requires an open mind without prejudices, is defined as factual listening. Thus, referring to the analysis of the data presented yet cannot generate real change. The third step of listening is defined as empathic listening. In this case, there is an emotional connection with the person through an open heart and feelings of compassion. There is the possibility of putting oneself in the other person's shoes and thus, through coaching, being able to provide solutions by entering into a relationship, feeling the emotions of others and mirroring oneself in the situations experienced by others. The fourth step of listening is called generative listening and, through dialogue, open-mindedness and courage, it allows us to provide solutions and increase our knowledge of the other person (Scharmer, 2018). The particular experience was significant: everyone identified with the difficulties of starting school and proposed solutions involving meetings, collaboration and the exchange of skills between experienced teachers and newly hired teachers.

Visiting a School, Comparing Education Systems

The course also included a school visit to the Alberto Magnus School in Vienna. The institute is a comprehensive school from primary to secondary level, and we were welcomed by the headmistress of the primary school, Sabina Mugrauer. The experience was very engaging and in line with the theme of inclusive leadership. The headmistress, who was very welcoming, presented the school's organisation and gave us a tour of the building: each primary school classroom has its own outdoor space for recreation, and there is a theatre, a gym, a library, a courtyard and a school canteen. Compared to European and Italian schools, the sewing activity included in the curriculum is very interesting, plus there is also space for digital, musical and artistic training.

Follow Up: Empathetic, Compassionate and Humane Leadership

Thinking about the educational system in which I work, an intercultural and multilingual school where diversity is a source of richness can at the same time lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations or preconceptions, I believe the leadership styles that best enable change, school well-being and inclusion are those that are empathetic, compassionate and humane (Riley, 2022). Even after the experience of the pandemic and lockdown, schools have become places where people can recognise and support each other with compassion, connection and communication. New listening methods are essential for education leaders and students alike. Leadership thus regains its educational and moral value and is contextualised in the school environment, where there is a sense of belonging and community. These are the theories of Leadership of Place and Leadership for School Belonging by Kathryn Riley, Professor of Urban Education at UCL in London. The director nurtures relationships and connections between people, promotes the agency of teachers and students, and cares for the physical and emotional spaces within the school. Inclusive leadership thus becomes caring leadership, which provides space to the human dimension, to a sense of togetherness, to peace and harmony in independence and relationships, while encouraging growth and change for all.

A Year and a Half Later...

The leadership course highlighted the significant contribution of a repertoire of leadership styles, including the different domains of relational, symbolic

and cultural leadership that characterise, among other things, the inclusive and intercultural leadership of European Schools.

I was able to benefit from and discuss the leadership theories and practices covered: theories on inclusive, empathic and compassionate leadership through multiple intelligences, coaching methodology, empathic and generative listening, as well as the sense of belonging to a place, a culture and a community; theories of distributed, transformative and innovative leadership: discovering one's leadership potential through relationships with oneself and with different stakeholders, different leadership strategies to improve organisation and communication, valuing one's authenticity and, at the same time, being aware of the innovation of different leadership styles; human leadership linked to mentoring and, above all, coaching skills: non-directive support, educational and constructive dialogue and interaction as in a support setting, the symbolic dimension of the leader's presence, psychological support, mentoring as a strategy for motivation and empowerment to accompany change and the construction of a supportive school culture.

I put the skills I acquired into practice through a systemic approach: organising meetings at different levels with stakeholders, promoting the European and intercultural spirit of the school, involving students in democratic participation and decision-making processes through their representatives and in education councils, valuing everyone's professionalism and commitment, providing positive role models, and creating collaborative cultures.

Some specific activities related to inclusion and well-being — in primary school, educational support activities for gifted pupils and prevention protocols for pupils with serious behavioural issues, and in secondary school, bullying prevention activities — have been explored, improved and expanded. With regard to coaching and mentoring skills, each activity is increasingly handled through the circularity of information and the support of working groups and team activities. There are supervision meetings for the nursery and primary cycles and middle management staff meetings, in which followers are motivated and the principle of distributed leadership is applied.

Inclusive leadership was also discussed at the directors training course at the European School in Alicante in March 2025; at the Educational Support Coordinators training seminar in Brussels in March 2025, where a report by the Accredited European School in Parma on the management of pupils with serious behavioural issues was presented; at the training course held by the author at the European School in Brindisi in May 2025; and at the conference of Accredited European Schools in The Hague in September 2025. This demonstrates that the journey towards inclusive and authentic leadership is a lifelong and wide learning process and is well anchored within the European Schools' education system.

Report on the Course *Effective School Leadership* (Roberta Fantinato)

The Erasmus course week in Nice, held from 18th to 24th February 2024, was a unique learning experience focused on effective school leadership as a vehicle for promoting continuous learning for school communities. The opportunity to explore innovative approaches to leadership in an international context greatly enriched my professional development as well as my language skills, as the working language was English.

The report follows an in-depth reflection on the activities, the leadership topics examined, the collaborative approach adopted and the innovative methodologies employed, with the aim of outlining the prospects and strategies for my future professional practice.

Innovative and Cooperative Approach

The week stood out for its adoption of innovative and cooperative methods aimed at emphasising active learning and teamwork. The working group, composed of three Italian executives, an Italian executive assistant, a Latvian executive and a middle management teacher from the Budapest Conservatory, embodied a diversity of experiences and perspectives. The synergy between the participants stimulated a rich and constructive dialogue, which was fundamental for exploring effective and sustainable leadership strategies.

In the early stages of the course, participants were invited to get to know each other and introduce themselves both as individuals and as leaders through the Think Pair Share technique. From the outset, the lecturer assigned to us emphasised the importance of active listening and general listening skills for any leader who aspires to guide an evolving and learning professional community. The exchange of positive and negative leadership experiences also allowed participants to get to know each other better while reflecting on their own leadership styles and the relationships between their approaches to school management and the school climate. Finally, identifying their own motto as leaders allowed each participant to reflect on their work and how they live and exercise their role.

This first session ended with the realisation that personal authenticity is fundamental for an effective school leader.

Innovative and Stimulating Methodologies

The teacher introduced innovative strategies for conducting meetings, which I am slowly incorporating into my routine as a school principal.

In particular, among the various strategies proposed, I appreciated the following.

- «*Stir the room*» as a tool to encourage active and empathetic communication in meetings and/or working groups.
- *Strength cards* ‘at my best’ as an extraordinary icebreaker for meetings.
- *Professional learning protocols*, i.e. professional conversations aimed at solving problems or achieving specific objectives. Of particular interest are probing protocols to help explore issues without providing sterile recommendations or, worse still, judgements of merit; success analysis protocols to celebrate successes and understand the reasons for them; and fishbowl protocols for authentic and interactive communication exchanges. I have repeatedly tested the probing protocol for active problem solving, which is based on active listening and paraphrasing as a tool for mediation and encounter, in various school settings.

Leadership Topics Explored

There has been much debate about the type of leadership that best promotes continuous learning among teachers: how can we become leaders of learners? We analysed newspaper articles and quotes from internationally renowned leaders.

Firstly, we agreed that knowing which leadership style works best for you is part of being a good leader. Developing a distinctive style with the ability to adapt other styles depending on the situation can help to improve leadership effectiveness. For this reason, we sought to understand the different styles, i.e. to familiarise ourselves with the repertoire of leadership styles that may work best in any given situation, with a keen eye on the new skills to be developed at this historic moment characterised by the Copernican revolution of artificial intelligence.

We therefore began to become aware of our dominant leadership style, which must be authentic and not contrived: in fact, people can smell a fake leadership style a mile away. Hence authenticity is the rule for every leader. After a long debate, we agreed that there is no one leadership style that suits all situations: in fact, it is necessary to develop a sort of leadership agility. Traditional leadership styles are still relevant in today’s workplace, but they may need to be combined with new approaches in line with the definition of leadership in the 21st century.

As far as I am concerned, I have always been inspired by leadership that is partly distributed and partly transformative. Obviously, there are no solutions

that are suitable for all schools, however leadership that promotes meaningful organisational learning is strategic in any case. Leaders can truly be agents of positive change within a school community. In our discussion on leadership, we explored topics such as strategic vision, human and material resource management, and the importance of building a school culture based on respect, mutual support and continuous learning. In particular, we reflected on the fact that when teachers learn, students also learn, and therefore an effective and shared training plan is a strategic hub within the learning organisation.

How to Create an Effective Training Plan for a School

In the closing part of the course, we worked on the stages involved in creating an effective training plan for school teachers.

In particular, we were invited to brainstorm the cornerstones of a well-constructed training plan, namely:

- type and characteristics of the learning community;
- leaders;
- resources;
- data on which we base the construction of the plan (this is a very important element for the plan to be authentically data-based);
- learning design;
- implementation;
- outcomes (for the outcomes of educators, we used the KASAB model, i.e. Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills, Aspirations and Behaviours);
- impact on the school community (this is another key element when designing an effective training plan).

It is advisable to give this professional training plan a title that contains the key words of the plan so that it is immediately clear for the whole community what direction it is taking. Each of us has therefore drawn up a training plan for our own school to be implemented upon returning from the course.

Learning Outcomes

The experience in Nice has, on the one hand, reinforced some of my convictions, while on the other, it has led me to examine and pursue new avenues and working strategies. In particular, I have consolidated my idea of the

director as a changemaker, since a director who wants to learn continuously and at the same time wants to be at the centre of their teachers' professional learning obviously has a very different impact on the school organisation than a director who is immersed only in sterile bureaucratic issues. Who we are and how we behave plays a fundamental role in school organisation.

I am also increasingly convinced that school leadership must be visionary, innovative and collaborative, and that only leadership that is open to change and capable of effectively guiding the educational process can be effective in an increasingly complex and ever challenging social and geopolitical context. I have also learned that when designing a training plan for the teaching community, it is always necessary to set realistic and impactful goals for staff professional development, consistent with strategies for measuring and evaluating the outcomes of said professional development.

In conclusion, for leadership that implements learning for all, it is essential to follow the recommendations contained in the NCLE's 2015 report *Building Literacy Capacity: The Conditions for Effective Standards Implementation*, listed below.

- *Establish a vision for high-quality education:* leaders involve staff and colleagues in refining this vision so it translates into what happens in the teaching-learning process.
- *Share leadership on key issues that impact education:* leaders include teachers in reviewing data, determine priorities based on the analysis, and identify the professional learning they need most to achieve the outcomes desired for students.
- *Leverage the expertise of their best teachers:* leaders recognise that solutions to the most challenging problems may lie within their staff, so they should look there first. If additional expertise is needed, staff should be involved in deciding where to look
- *Make collaboration time a priority and remove barriers to it:* leaders are to find ways to create schedules that prioritise collaborative learning time and provide support so that teachers can use learning time wisely to solve problems related to student learning priorities.

Last, but not Least

A good leader must act as a role model, behaving as the chief learner and, in particular, engaging in professional learning with teachers. It would also seem to be strategic to seek learning opportunities with other leaders, just as we did during this course.

Activities and Cultural Immersion

Participating in cultural visits and meetings with European education professionals provided valuable opportunities for learning and cultural exchange. These experiences enriched my understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with educational leadership in different cultural contexts and school systems.

A Year and a Half Later...

Upon returning to Italy, I immediately had the opportunity to successfully experiment with what I had learned during the training week in Nice, first at the Accredited European School in Parma and then at an Italian high school I now run, integrating some of the leadership methodologies and strategies explored into everyday school life. In particular, I introduced facilitation tools such as probing protocols and strength cards into working groups, reformulated the teacher training plan on a data-informed basis, and relaunched spaces for collaboration and discussion inspired by professional learning communities. These elements have fostered a more participatory, reflective and continuous learning-oriented climate, confirming the value of the Erasmus experience not only as individual enrichment, but as a strategic lever for innovation across an entire school organisation.

As Italo Calvino wrote: “Taking the craft of living seriously means considering every experience as part of a continuous learning process”. It is in this spirit that I have transformed my Erasmus training into a concrete opportunity for improvement for my school community.

Report on the Course *Discover the 7Cs: Learning for Life (and Work) in the 21st Century* (Yvonne Rebecca Ingler-Detken)

The Structure of the Training Course

The training course was exceptionally well structured and the two trainers proved to be extremely open, competent and responded individually to the specific questions and suggestions from the course participants. The participants came from secondary schools (S1 to S7) from various European countries: Croatia, Spain, Estonia, Greece, Czech Republic, Poland and Italy. The course concept was based on actively developing the 7 Cs - critical thinking, creativ-

ity, collaboration, communication, computer competence (IT competence), cross-cultural understanding and career competences - in order to be able to implement them directly into the classroom. (See the attached PDFs for the specific course of the days and the methods practised).

Challenges and changes in education! On the first day, we looked at the theory of the 7Cs for the 21st Century and discussed how education has changed over time and what existing and future challenges teachers face, in addition to group cooperation tasks.

Can we do a podcast in class? On the second day, we learnt different methods to improve our communication skills, creativity, collaboration and computer literacy. We were introduced to the different types of podcasts, learnt about the technical aspects of podcast production and then collaborated with other group members to create our own podcast using Spotify for Podcaster. We have developed concrete teaching units for our classes with which we can create a podcast.

How to motivate pupils? The third day was dedicated to creativity and critical thinking. We tried out various methods such as the tower challenge, creative writing, PowerPoint karaoke, reverse brainstorming, the 6 thinking hats for problem solving, brainwriting and improvisation games to counteract a lack of motivation.

We are our culture? On the fourth day, we worked intensively on our individual and cultural identity and practised intercultural understanding. We were given various materials (see appendix) and became creative again. A particular focus was on professional careers, as successful working and communicating in an international team is only possible if you know the cultural characteristics of the different countries.

Use IT to become creative! On the fifth day, we actively experimented with how IT tools can be used effectively in the classroom. These included applications such as ChatGPT, MindMeister, and games such as GRIS, Neurodeck and Sizeable. We discussed and practised how these tools can be meaningfully integrated into a series of lessons.

Introduction: The 7Cs of the 21st Century

As educators in the 21st century, we are facing a lot of challenges and must ask ourselves how we can best prepare our students for future jobs that don't yet exist and careers that haven't been invented? How can we teach the necessary skills to help them thrive and navigate the complex, unpredictable world of 2030, 2050, and beyond, as responsible citizens leading and living fulfilling lives?

New occupations like social media managers, digital content creators, and cyber security consultants have only emerged since the 2000s and the 21st-century work culture is rapidly evolving. A popular estimate suggests that 65% of children entering primary school today will eventually hold jobs that currently do not exist. We must prepare the students for the demands of a contemporary society and a global economy.

Implementing the concept of “The 7Cs for the 21st Century” in our teaching can foster essential skills for our students. These seven competences are: Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, Computing (ICT Literacy), Cross cultural understanding and Career and Learning Self-Reliance.

The 7Cs of the 21st Century: A Framework for Modern Education

In the following segment, the main concepts of each competence will be explained.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to analyse and evaluate information or arguments in a disciplined and reflective manner. It involves logical reasoning, identifying biases, and making informed decisions. In the 21st Century, where information is abundant and often conflicting, critical thinking is crucial. Students are required to learn how to navigate a complex media landscape, discern credible sources from unreliable ones, and apply logic to problem-solving scenarios. According to the American Management Association, critical thinking skills are imperative for effective decision-making and problem-solving in professional environments (American Management Association, 2012). Furthermore, critical thinking is an important tool to combat misinformation and foster democratic participation (Fisher, 2016).

Creativity

Creativity involves thinking outside the box and generating innovative solutions. It is not limited to the arts but spans across all fields, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Creative thinking encourages students to explore possibilities, experiment with new ideas, and view challenges from multiple perspectives. Creativity is essential for economic growth and social advancement, as it drives innovation and adaptability (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2015) and is important for cultivating

entrepreneurial skills and fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation (Craft, 2005).

Collaboration

Collaboration is the ability to work effectively with others towards a common goal. In today's interconnected world, teamwork and cooperative problem-solving are vital. Collaborative skills include communication, conflict resolution, and the ability to leverage the strengths of diverse team members. Employers consistently rank teamwork as one of the most significant skills in the workplace, underscoring the need for educational systems to promote collaborative learning environments (National Education Association, 2014). Research has shown that collaborative learning can enhance student engagement and achievement by creating more dynamic and interactive educational experiences (Dillenbourg, 1999).

Communication

Effective communication encompasses both verbal and written skills, as well as the ability to listen actively and interpret non-verbal cues. In the digital age, communication also extends to various online platforms and multimedia. The ability to convey ideas clearly and persuasively is essential for academic success, professional advancement, and personal relationships. Research by the National Association of Colleges and Employers highlights that employees with strong communication skills are highly requested across all industries (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2020).

Computing (ICT Literacy)

Computing, or information and communication technology (ICT) literacy, refers to the ability to use digital tools and technologies effectively. This includes basic computer skills, understanding software applications, and navigating the internet safely and ethically. As technology becomes increasingly essential in all aspects of life, from education to employment to social interaction, ICT literacy is indispensable. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) outlines standards for ICT literacy that aim to prepare students for a digital world, emphasizing critical and creative use of technology (ISTE, 2016). European Union initiatives also highlight the importance of ICT literacy for fostering digital citizenship and ensuring equitable access to digital resources (European Commission, 2018).

Cross-cultural Understanding

Cross-cultural understanding fosters empathy and collaboration in increasingly diverse and globalized workplaces. This understanding involves recognizing and respecting cultural differences and effectively communicating across cultural boundaries. According to Cushner, McClelland, and Safford (2014), fostering cross-cultural competence enhances students' adaptability and teamwork abilities, essential for succeeding in a dynamic and interconnected world.

Career and Learning Self-Reliance

Career and learning self-reliance emphasize the ability to independently manage one's career and continuous learning journey. This includes skills such as self-assessment, goal-setting, and proactive learning strategies. Research by Brown and Lent (2016) highlights that self-reliance in career and learning cultivates resilience and lifelong employability. By developing these skills, students are better prepared to navigate and succeed in a rapidly evolving job market.

Conclusion

The 7Cs could be enriched further by two more Cs: Character and Citizenship:

Character

Character education focuses on developing ethical values and personal integrity. Traits such as responsibility, perseverance, empathy, and resilience are essential for personal and professional success. The importance of character education is supported by research indicating that social-emotional learning improves academic outcomes and prepares students for the complexities of adult life (Durlak et al., 2011). Studies also emphasize the role of character education in promoting social cohesion and mitigating social issues such as bullying and discrimination (Arthur, 2003).

Citizenship

Citizenship education prepares students to be informed, responsible, and active members of their communities and the world. This includes understanding civic rights and responsibilities, engaging in community service, and participating

in democratic processes. Global citizenship education also emphasizes cultural awareness and the importance of sustainable development. According to UNESCO, fostering a sense of global citizenship is essential for addressing global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and conflict (UNESCO, 2014).

By focusing on the critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, computing, cross-cultural understanding, career and self-reliance, character, and citizenship, teachers are able to equip students with the necessary skills and competences for success in both their personal and professional lives.

Implementing this framework requires a holistic approach to education.

Implementation of the 7Cs for the 21st Century in teaching

How can we integrate the 7Cs into our teaching and learning at the Accredited European School in Parma?

These 6 teaching strategies and methods help to adapt teaching for the challenges of the 21st Century:

1. Shifting the Mindset of Teaching (table 4.1)

TABLE 4.1
Traditional Teaching / 21st Century Teaching

Traditional Teaching	21st Century Teaching
Teacher-directed	Learner-centered
Direct instruction	Interactive exchange
Knowledge	Skills
Content	Process
Basic skills	Applied skills
Facts & principles	Questions and problems
Theory	Practice
Curriculum	Projects
Time-slotted	On-demand
One-size-fits-all	Personalized
Competitive	Collaborative
Classroom	Global community
Text-based	Web-based
Summative tests	Formative evaluations
Learning for school	Learning for life

Implementing the 7Cs in education emerges from teachers' mindsets. We can integrate the new balance (adapted from Trilling and Fadel, 2009) into our teaching today. The mindset shift motivates us to look for pedagogies that focus on developing students' thinking and skills, on top of the content being taught. It does not mean a shift directly from traditional teaching to a new style of teaching, instead slowly these two approaches can merge to motivate our students and prepare them better for the future.

2. Inviting Questions, not Answers

Using questions effectively is pivotal to fostering responsible, active, resourceful, and democratic citizenship in the 21st Century. Nurturing students' ability to question is fundamental to envisioning that future. The classroom is often described as the cradle of democracy, and teachers are among the most influential nurturers of the democratic process.

Reflect on how your classroom practices encourage questioning and reasoning. When you ask questions, do you typically expect "correct" answers, or do you aim to spark students' curiosity and prompt them to ask their own questions?

While it is normal to expect answers when we pose questions, our goal should be to develop students' critical thinking skills and creativity. The nature of our questions should differ depending on whether we are checking for understanding or encouraging deeper inquiry. Changing the way you ask questions can transform your classroom into an active space for inquiry, discussion, and debate, all of which contribute to building students' 7Cs.

Actionable Tip: Encourage open-ended questions and facilitate discussions that allow students to explore various perspectives. For example, instead of asking, "What is the capital of France?" ask, "How might the cultural and political landscape of France be different if its capital were Lyon instead of Paris?" This approach fosters critical thinking and creativity.

3. Create Opportunities for Connection

According to connectivism, learning in the digital age involves developing networks and connections, with knowledge being created through these connections, particularly via digital technologies. Consider your own experiences of learning something new via social media, online networks, blogs, or information databases. In today's information age, it is impossible to know everything, so we must communicate and collaborate to succeed.

To prepare students for this globally connected world, promote collaborative learning through group work, discussions, and activities that allow different viewpoints and perspectives in decision-making and problem-solving.

By creating opportunities connecting real life to that online, you help students develop their collaboration, communication, and information literacy skills.

Actionable Tip: Integrate technology into group projects and encourage students to connect with peers from different cultural backgrounds

4. Engage in Authentic Problem Solving

Solving authentic problems is a learning adventure that deepens understanding, hones skills, provides emotional satisfaction, and ignites creativity. Learning methods that provoke authentic problem-solving include inquiry-based learning, design-based learning, and project-based learning. These pedagogies present real-world, complex questions, problems, or challenges relevant to students' lives.

When students engage in solving real-world problems, they not only learn the knowledge but also its application. This makes learning relevant, practical, and useful beyond the classroom. Implementing these student-centered pedagogies prepares students to become problem solvers in any career.

Actionable Tip: Develop projects that address real-world issues, such as environmental sustainability. Encourage students to collaborate with local organizations or experts to source solutions, thus making their learning experience more authentic and impactful.

5. Foster Formative and Sustainable Assessment

Lifelong learning is an essential competence for a fulfilling life in the 21st Century. Formative assessment and sustainable assessment are effective tools to develop students' capacity for self-directed learning and self-regulation. Formative assessment provides feedback that guides learners toward their goals, while sustainable assessment helps learners meet future learning needs beyond the course's timeframe.

Formative assessments can be conducted by teachers, peers, or the learners themselves. Sustainable assessment often involves students using tools like rubrics to evaluate their performances. These assessments help students develop self-evaluation skills and the ability to set and achieve personal learning goals.

Actionable Tip: Incorporate regular self-assessment opportunities where students reflect on their learning progress and set goals for improvement. Provide clear rubrics and guide them in using these tools effectively.

6. Embrace Diversity through Cross-cultural Understanding

In today's interconnected world, understanding and appreciating cultural diversity is crucial. Promoting cross-cultural understanding helps students

develop empathy, adaptability, and global awareness. This can be achieved by incorporating diverse perspectives into the curriculum and encouraging students to explore and celebrate different cultures, European and non-European.

Actionable Tip: Design projects that require students to research and present on different cultural practices, traditions, or histories. Facilitate discussions on global issues and encourage students to share their own cultural experiences and perspectives.

Conclusion

In summary, the training course proved to be very beneficial for my teaching practice, enabling me to directly implement numerous methods into my classes. The attached PDFs from the training course contain useful exercises and games that are easily adaptable for classroom use. I have incorporated most of these exercises into my lessons in German, Geography and History and have observed positive outcomes.

Engaging in an exchange of ideas with educators from various countries was both motivating and inspiring. It highlighted the similarities and differences in our approaches, significantly broadening my perspective even further. This international interaction was particularly valuable, given that at the Accredited European School in Parma, I interact daily with students, parents, and colleagues from diverse cultural backgrounds.

A direct consequence of this training was the idea to start a podcast of the Accredited European School in Parma on Spotify. In the bibliography, there is link to this channel and to the different podcasts my students have created: the class S5 Geography DE on Urban Geography (Paris, Lagos, Rio de Janeiro and Los Angeles) and S6 Geography DE on Globalisation, inspired by and developed according to the principles of “The 7Cs of the 21st Century” training held in Prague.

Report on the Course *Environmental Stewardship: How to Reconnect with Nature* (Cecilia Comani)

Introduction

The seminar *Environmental Stewardship: How to reconnect with Nature*, held in Nice between 22nd and 27th April 2024, explored the relationship between schools, local educational bodies and city institutions, with the in-

tention of presenting Nice as a smart city that pursues medium and long-term environmental sustainability goals.

Nice's approach is integrated with the sustainability education objectives promoted by local schools, but more generally by the French state school system, acting as a facilitator for the acquisition of a sustainable culture and good practices by the younger generations. In synergy with the local area and its institutions, education for ecological transition becomes a goal for the whole community, which is directly or indirectly involved in projects for the care and respect of the urban environment, recovery and practices aimed at sustainability (recycling, repairing, reusing, reducing, etc.).

Intelligent transport systems (velo-taxis; light rail, city bike hire, electric vehicles), a dense network of cycle paths, smart waste collection, accessible composting facilities in every neighbourhood, energy-efficient public lighting, and the planting of an increasing number of trees in the city and surrounding areas are all actions that have had a positive impact on the well-being of the community and raised awareness that everyone's commitment can make a difference in building a city with a lower environmental impact.

Schools play a central role in this project, which is explicitly supported by the French government. In September 2020, the government introduced the role of *éco-délégué* in all middle and secondary school classes, who in turn liaise with lower-level schools.

The Interesting Role of the éco-délégué in French Schools

The eco-delegate is a pupil elected by their peers within the class, distinct from the class representative, a role performed by another pupil. They are coordinated by teachers and more experienced pupils and have a series of tasks in the ecological transition process that the school is required to carry out. The eco-delegate participates in and promotes projects throughout the school year and raises awareness among their peers on ecological transition issues, proposes concrete projects to combat waste at school and in the local area, and actively participates in national projects involving travel and experiences.

In France, there are 250,000 middle and high school classes (*collège* and *lycée*). This means that there is a community of 250,000 students aged between 14 and 18 who are called upon every year to engage in dialogue and undertake training, reflection and share experiences and actions with their peers on issues such as biodiversity, alternative energies, the fight against food waste, the climate emergency and environmental sustainability.

The students elected by their classmates in schools are part of a system that also includes national bodies and organises annual meetings to discuss and propose projects. They are ambassadors of critical, constructive and innovative thinking and contribute to the development of a healthy environmental awareness.

On the second day of the seminar, we met two eco-delegates from a middle school in Nice, the *École Henri Matisse*, which is particularly active compared to other national schools because it is part of a context that values and promotes an eco-sustainable culture. Their accounts of their experiences gave us a first-hand insight into the participatory culture of this school and showed us how effective the presence of such figures can be in every class in terms of planning and involvement. In particular, the students told us about a project promoted by the schools and the union of municipalities in Nice, *Ici commence la mer*, which aimed to raise students' awareness of the importance of seawater as a primary resource for nature and biodiversity, to be protected from all forms of pollution.

Once a year, on Earth Day, the school hosts classes from a local primary school and the students organise games and activities on environmental topics for the younger children.

On this day, the older children use games and entertainment to teach the younger ones how to recycle plastic, about the life cycle of plants and the importance of pollinating insects, and how to reduce food waste, for example in canteens.

With this in mind, it was interesting to note that this school's canteen separates bread for recycling. It is donated to a local farm, which collects it weekly to feed its donkeys. The canteen also collects organic waste. The motivation of eco-delegates as promoters of a sustainable culture is supported by the assessment and acquisition of training credits during the year. This encourages the children to carry out their tasks with the utmost commitment. National bodies recommend promoting integrated, multi-thematic projects that develop topics such as the environment and solidarity.

Among others, here are some topics that are being planned for proposal in schools:

- observation and preservation of biodiversity
- revegetation and redevelopment of the school playground;
- reduction, collection and sorting of waste;
- recycling, reuse and eco-solidarity;
- reduction of food waste;
- reduction of energy consumption.

These actions in Nice are carried out in synergy with local institutions, such as the Maison de l'Environnement.

The Maison de l'Environnement in Nice

The Maison de l'Environnement in Nice is a free public institution that promotes actions and projects to address the challenges of climate change and sustainable development and make Nice an exemplary city in the Mediterranean. The actions mainly involve projects aimed at citizens, particularly young citizens, as well as students of all levels.

The website openly states the idea behind it: “The ecological transition is a common issue for everyone, affecting our daily lives and requiring responsible and essential behaviour. We need to evolve towards a new economic and social model, a sustainable development model for consuming, producing, working and living together”.

La Maison is surrounded by a city park with native flora and fauna. It has an educational garden open to children from the age of 2 and adults with special educational needs, through workshops aimed at schools and families. The garden allows visitors to discover the ecosystem of plants and insects, i.e. biodiversity, and provides children with immersive experiences.

Every spring, La Maison organises an original and effective initiative: it distributes ladybird larvae to be placed in people's gardens. Ladybirds are important insects in horticulture because they feed on aphids and other insects that destroy vegetation.

La Maison maintains relationships with all schools in the area, especially nursery and primary schools, organising workshops and exhibitions.

During the seminar, there is an exhibition on butterflies curated by a university biology professor who has collected more than 400 specimens of butterflies in Nice over the past ten years, only 30 of which are diurnal. The exhibition focuses on the role of butterflies, both as pollinating insects and as a source of food for migratory bird species that arrive in Nice in spring, such as swallows.

However, the exhibition also highlights the presence of non-native butterflies from African countries and China. Their presence is seen as an effect of ongoing climate change. The exhibition is designed for children to accompany their visit to the Maison Park and their participation in horticultural workshops.

The Maison is also an organic waste collection centre for 500 families in the neighbourhood. The compost produced is made exclusively from plant-based

food waste and is monitored by Maison experts. It is used by citizens registered with the service and in the Maison's educational garden.

The Recyclerie des Moulins in Nice

Les Moulins is a suburb of Nice with a high rate of immigration, is undergoing urban regeneration through the construction of a public transport network and new buildings equipped with energy-saving systems. Among other initiatives to enhance the area, a recycling centre has been set up, which collects and distributes second-hand items. The centre is run by the municipality and a number of volunteers from the neighbourhood, also employs a number of women on six-month contracts who were previously unemployed and are looking for work or re-entering the labour market. Around La Recyclerie there are two educational gardens, also run by volunteers from the neighbourhood and open to children from the local school, who visit them every day.

La Recyclerie also has a composting centre that performs the same functions as the one at La Maison and other composting centres in the city, where neighbourhood residents can sign up to use it. After these two visits, it became clear how all the stakeholders in the area are working together to promote a culture of urban environmental sustainability and reduce costs in terms of waste, energy and citizens' well-being.

The most obvious action for those arriving in Nice today is the major redevelopment of the river area that starts at Place Massena and extends northwards.

Promenade du Paillon

The Promenade du Paillon is a 12-hectare green space in the heart of Nice.

This area has been undergoing redevelopment for some time and the project is not yet complete. The second phase, which involves creating an urban forest, is currently underway.

The project encompasses landscape, cultural and environmental sustainability perspectives. Nice, which launched an ambitious plan to repopulate the city with plants in March 2019, has since planted 104,350 new trees (as of 29th January 2024) and plans to plant one for every inhabitant by 2026, i.e. 280,000. In Nice, each inhabitant has 52 square metres of tree cover, and the entire wooded area covers 33% of the entire urban area. Over time,

the increase in plants will improve the quality of life of the inhabitants and reduce CO₂ production by 1.3 tonnes per year.

This public green space is obviously equipped to welcome children with large wooden play structures covering a vast area, where they can enjoy movement and climbing games. This project is also part of a broader, forward-looking plan to create a city that integrates human needs with those of environmental balance.

Conclusion

At the end of the course, we were asked to work in small groups to discuss a broad outline of a project to propose to our school upon our return. There were many ideas, but in the end we decided to focus on food waste.

Treasure or Trash?

The aim is to raise students' awareness of food waste in the canteen and promote sustainability by recovering uneaten tomato seeds or unused fruit from snacks, to be replanted in the school's plant and vegetable growing boxes.

The project offers students a practical and meaningful experience to understand the problem of food waste. It is an opportunity to reflect on their eating habits, opens a dialogue with those who prepare meals on a daily basis, helps them discover the importance of caring for plants in order to obtain vegetables and fruit, and encourages students to think about how they can contribute to reducing food waste and adopt sustainable practices such as seed recovery and vegetable cultivation.

It was only on the last day that I realised what the aim of our course was. Initially, I thought I was in a group of ecotourists and that I was discovering the city in that way. Then I understood how an environmental sustainability project cannot be separated from the existence of a broader plan designed and managed by an institution such as a municipality or a school. While it is true that everyone's contribution can make a difference, it is equally true that the initiative of a single individual is too little to have an environmental impact.

It is therefore essential to build a network of institutions that work synergistically towards a common goal, and Nice is a concrete example of this. Schools play a privileged role because they work for and with future adult citizens, but the willingness of local councils and authorities is also needed to develop feasible and concrete projects in the field of ecological transition.

Thinking about our school and the difficulty of constructive dialogue with the local authorities to finance a project to plant trees and shrubs in courtyard areas, which would already be an important and concrete goal, I believe that only the synergy between the school bodies, management, teachers, students and families could make it possible to achieve anything. Focus on the benefits we would all gain.

With the *Promenade du Paillon* and the planting of trees, the municipality of Nice plans to reduce the perceived temperature in that area by 5°C. The benefits in terms of energy savings and reduced use of air conditioning in summer are a direct consequence of this. Plants can do so much, and the best thing is that they are almost cost-free.

Report on the Course *Coaching: A Powerful Tool* (Zohra Bennamane)

We live in a constantly evolving world, characterised by rapid and profound transformations that make education a crucial lever for preparing new generations to face the complexities of the future.

Teachers, at the heart of this mission, must continually adapt to meet the diverse needs of students, combining knowledge transfer with personal development support. In this scenario, coaching proves to be a powerful and effective tool, capable of supporting not only students, but also teachers, school leaders and families.

The seminar “Coaching: A Powerful Tool”, held in Porto from 24th to 29th November 2024 at the Learning Together – Sinerconsult association, is part of the Erasmus+ project “Leading Learning”. This project aims to modernise the profiles of educational actors, promoting empowerment and agency within the learning community.

During the course, the fundamental principles of coaching were explored, such as observation, constructive feedback, effective questioning, active listening, promoting awareness and building authentic relationships. Particular attention was paid to the application of coaching tools and strategies in education, with a focus on practical solutions to be integrated into everyday classrooms.

Among the advanced techniques covered, the GROW model and emotional freedom practices stood out, offering an in-depth overview of the main operational frameworks. The highly interactive training activities included workshops, simulations of real-life scenarios, role-playing sessions and moments of collective reflection, ensuring an engaging and practical experience for participants.

Coaching in Education

Coaching, initially developed for the corporate world, has gradually expanded its scope, finding application in various contexts, including education. Over the last ten years, this methodology has taken on an increasingly central role in schools around the world, thanks to its versatility and ability to adapt to different needs and situations.

In the school context, coaching is a person-centred practice aimed at enhancing individuals' potential and overcoming both internal and external obstacles.

The main objective is not only to improve academic performance, but also to promote the development of students' emotional and relational skills, creating an educational environment that fosters harmonious and comprehensive growth. Coaching thus stands out in its ability to support not only the cognitive aspects of students, but also their psychological and social well-being.

Coaching in education can be applied in four main areas. First off, it supports educational leadership, helping school administrators and industry leaders develop management skills, strengthen strategic vision, and improve leadership abilities. Secondly, it promotes the improvement of teachers' professional practice, providing tools to refine teaching skills and encouraging an innovative, student-centred approach.

Another area of intervention concerns direct support for students, through personalised programmes that strengthen self-esteem and help them overcome academic and personal challenges.

Finally, coaching facilitates dialogue between educational institutions and communities, stimulating integration between schools, families and the local area.

This approach encourages the creation of a support network that values education as an integral part of a broader system.

Coaching and Teaching: Coaching Strategies in the Classroom

The application of coaching strategies in the classroom redefines the role of the teacher, who is no longer simply a transmitter of knowledge but a facilitator of the learning process.

This approach helps to create a stimulating and collaborative environment where students can develop autonomy, skills and awareness. Below are some practical coaching strategies that can be applied in the classroom, which were explored in depth during the course.

Active listening and questioning techniques: the key skills of educational coaching

Active listening is an essential skill for building trust and gathering valuable information concerning students' goals. By using tools such as eye contact, body language and clarifying questions, teachers can create open and meaningful dialogues. One effective technique is "echoing", which involves repeating or paraphrasing students' statements, improving understanding and empathy. Open-ended, reflective and probing questions help to stimulate critical thinking and explore strengths and areas for improvement. Examples of:

- open-ended questions: 'What are your main goals?'
- follow-up questions: 'How did you tackle that challenge?'
- reflective questions: 'How did you feel after tackling that challenge?'

Apply the GROW Model (one of the main coaching tools)

The GROW model is a versatile method for planning and achieving goals. It encompasses four stages:

1. *goals*: defining the desired outcome
2. *reality*: analysing the current situation
3. *options*: exploring alternatives and strategies
4. *will*: committing to concrete actions.

This model is a structured guide for defining and achieving objectives that helps students and teachers plan in a structured yet motivating way.

Create SMART Objectives

Setting Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) goals enables students to monitor their progress and improve their time management. An example of a SMART goal is: "Complete the group project by Friday, dedicating at least 30 minutes per day". This strategy increases motivation and makes the learning process more personalised.

Adapting Learning Styles (VAK)

The VAK model identifies three main learning styles: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. Adapting lessons with these in mind helps to make teaching

more inclusive, respecting individual differences. Visual learners learn best with graphs and diagrams, auditory learners prefer oral explanations, while kinaesthetic learners benefit from practical activities.

Constructive Feedback

Effective feedback is specific, respectful and focused on improvement. For example: “You did an excellent job researching sources; you could improve by organising the paragraphs better.” This moment should be a collaborative exchange, a shared reflection where the student evaluates their work and identifies new opportunities for growth.

Promoting Emotional Awareness

The teacher-coach encourages students to recognise and manage emotions through activities such as mindfulness and team building. Openly discussing successes and difficulties helps to develop empathy, resilience and a greater self-awareness overall.

Facilitating Peer Coaching

Peer learning activities encourage mutual support among students, improving social skills and autonomy. Creating pairs or groups to discuss, give feedback and share ideas helps to build a collaborative and inclusive environment.

Use of Visual and Organisational Tools

Timelines and SWOT Analysis help students plan and reflect.

Timelines: this tool encourages students to reflect on the past, present and future in order to develop awareness and planning skills. This tool can be defined as a “Goal Development Plan”.

SWOT Analysis: this is a method that helps teachers and students alike identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, which is also useful for meetings with parents or setting personal goals.

Integration with Teaching

- Incorporate coaching activities into lessons, such as brainstorming sessions or simulations, to encourage active participation.

- Offer practical activities where students can take on different roles, developing empathy, problem solving and interpersonal skills in realistic contexts.
- Transform teaching moments into collaborative dialogues, encouraging students to reflect and propose solutions.
- Integrate feedback moments during activities, focusing on what students have done well and suggestions for improvement.

Educational Coaching Model

The coaching techniques described can be easily adapted to different age groups and school contexts. In primary schools, strategies such as active listening with simple questions, short-term SMART goals and practical activities based on learning styles (VAK) help to develop confidence and awareness.

In secondary schools, more complex approaches such as the GROW model for planning personal goals, constructive analytical feedback and problem-solving simulations promote autonomy and critical thinking. Tools such as mindfulness and peer coaching are cross-cutting and can be adapted to stimulate empathy and resilience at all ages.

Benefits of Applying Coaching in the Classroom

The integration of coaching into education, and in particular into everyday teaching activities, represents an innovative approach that can significantly transform both students' learning and their personal development.

One of the main advantages of coaching in the classroom is the promotion of autonomy and responsibility. Students are encouraged to reflect on their choices, make informed decisions and effectively manage their own learning path. Tools such as self-assessment and goal planning allow them to develop independence and a greater sense of responsibility.

Another important aspect is the enhancement of soft skills, i.e. fundamental transferable skills such as effective communication and collaboration. Through active listening and constructive dialogue techniques, students learn to express their ideas clearly, respect others' points of view and build stronger interpersonal relationships. At the same time, coaching helps them to better manage their study load, optimising time and improving their personal organisation.

Increased motivation is another significant benefit of coaching. Thanks to targeted, personalised support, teachers can stimulate students' interest and increase their determination to achieve goals. Continuous, constructive feedback plays a key role in strengthening students' confidence, making them more likely to overcome difficulties.

On an emotional level, coaching benefits students' well-being by reducing anxiety and pressure related to academic performance. This approach supports them in developing a resilient mindset, and seeing obstacles as opportunities for personal growth.

From a cognitive perspective, coaching promotes the development of analytical, creative and problem-solving skills. Students are guided to reflect on their progress, learning to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, as well as explore new ideas and innovative solutions.

A supplementary benefit is the strengthening of relationships between students and teachers. Coaching transforms traditional relationships into more collaborative and less hierarchical interaction, creating dialogue based on mutual respect. Feedback thus becomes a tool for shared growth and for building a positive and inclusive learning environment.

Finally, coaching prepares students for their future by providing them with fundamental skills such as relationship management, adaptability to change and problem solving, all of which are transferable qualities that are particularly valued in the workplace and in personal life.

Although it requires specific training for teachers, the adoption of coaching in the classroom can lead to extraordinary results. Not only do students improve their academic performance, they also become more independent, confident individuals who are able to successfully face the challenges of tomorrow.

Synergy between Coaching and European Educational Values

In line with European values, which promote an inclusive and equitable vision of education, educational coaching can be seen as a tool for reducing educational inequalities, fostering social integration and helping individuals develop key transferable skills for life and work. The method focuses on enhancing an individual's internal resources, paying attention to the person as a whole and building a more inclusive and well-being-oriented society

Key Competences and Coaching

The key competences established by the European Union, such as critical thinking, the ability to "learn to learn", digital competence, social and civic skills and cultural awareness, find a powerful ally for their development in coaching.

Coaching stands out for its fundamental role in strengthening social and civic competences, creating spaces for dialogue and collaboration that promote mutual respect and constructive conflict management. Through these practices,

students learn to work together, contribute positively in the community and develop self-awareness as active and responsible citizens.

In addition, coaching promotes the “learning to learn” skill by encouraging students to reflect on their own learning processes. This approach promotes growth in autonomy and encourages a mindset geared towards continuous improvement, which will accompany students throughout their educational and professional careers.

Digital competence is another area in which coaching plays a crucial role. Through the use of innovative tools and methodologies, coaching promotes the conscious use of technology, educating students to use it critically and productively. This approach responds to the challenges of an increasingly digitalised and interconnected world.

Educational coaching is not limited to preparing students for academic or professional success, instead also helping them build a broader and more conscious view of themselves and their role within society.

The Portfolio, a Self-assessment and Coaching Tool

The portfolio is a fundamental tool for both self-assessment and coaching, with the dual purpose of supporting students’ personal and educational development. As a self-assessment tool, the portfolio allows students to reflect on their progress, their successes and areas for improvement. It enables them to continuously and consciously monitor the development of their skills, facilitating them in identifying their strengths and areas for improvement. This process of self-analysis promotes self-awareness and responsibility, key elements for effective and lasting learning.

At the same time, as a coaching tool, the portfolio becomes an active means of accompanying students in planning and achieving their personal and academic goals. Coaching through the portfolio is not limited to recording results, but stimulates deep reflection on one’s learning path, the approach to challenges and the strategies to be adopted to overcome them. In this context, the portfolio helps students set clear goals, monitor their progress and review their strategies on an ongoing basis, developing a proactive and growth-oriented approach.

This dual role of the portfolio, as a tool for self-assessment and coaching, fits perfectly with the key competences promoted by the European Union, such as the ability to learn independently, critical reflection, change management and self-discipline. In diverse educational environments, such as European Schools, the portfolio also becomes a tool for inclusiveness, as it permits students to value their own identity, share experiences and chart a path that respects and integrates cultural, linguistic and personal differences.

Coaching, an Ally of Diversity and Multiculturalism

With their extraordinary linguistic and cultural diversity, European Schools are the ideal setting for educational coaching. This personalized approach promotes an inclusive environment and encourages the integration of students from different backgrounds. Every student, regardless of their origin or native language, finds concrete support in coaching, helping them feel as an active member of the school community.

Coaching also encourages intercultural dialogue, stimulating the sharing of personal experiences that help students understand and appreciate diversity. In this context, diversity is not only accepted but transformed into a valuable resource, contributing to the creation of meaningful bonds based upon respect and collaboration.

Conclusion

In conclusion, educational coaching has established itself as a strategic ally in European education, enhancing the educational approach and promoting the development of conscious, resilient individuals who are ready to actively contribute in an inclusive and sustainable society. Thanks to its ability to support autonomy, critical thinking and social skills, coaching enriches the educational experience, creating a positive impact that goes beyond simple academic preparation. This synergy helps to consolidate the role of European Schools as true laboratories of global citizenship, influencing not only the evolution of students, but also the well-being and integration of the entire school community.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Benedetta Toni

Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the results in relation to the research questions. For each question, the results of the thematic analysis will be summarised and references and links to recent literature on educational leadership, teacher agency and global and intercultural competences following the implementation of European and internationalisation projects will be explained.

Research Question 1: What is the Impact of the Erasmus+ Leading Learning Project Mobilities on the Educational Leadership of Directors and Middle Leaders at the Accredited European School in Parma?

The data relating to this research question was limited to one central theme, ‘Holistic Understanding of Leadership’, and three sub-themes: ‘Skills’, ‘Styles’ and ‘Challenges’. The following subheadings and paragraphs summarise the main points drawn from the data in relation to the first question of this research.

Competences

The analysis suggests that mobility and study stakeholders conceptualise the skills acquired in terms of educational leadership by considering three sub-themes: the traits and characteristics of the leader’s personality, the methodologies

that enable the leader to reflect and act in the context in which they operate, and the relationships between the people who are part of the learning community.

These findings share some considerations with the scientific literature on authentic, inclusive and intercultural leadership in the European Schools system (Toni, 2022). The path of educational leadership is one of continuous learning, an inner search by the leader within a context and in relation to the actors in that context. In an intercultural setting, leadership is a path of self-knowledge, sensitivity and techniques for action within an intercultural context rich in values, orientations and beliefs (Walker & Shuangye, 2007). In intercultural contexts, there is an indispensable mix of values and leaders are faced with continuous cultural hybridisation. The process towards authenticity is interactive and continuous: it requires global skills and sensitivity to intercultural influences in order to serve as a model for diversity inclusion (Walker & Shuangye, 2007).

With regard to methodologies, the coaching methodology is undoubtedly linked to studies on the impact of coaching on leadership and management experiences (Wales, 2002), (Gavin, 2018). Coaching is fundamental to inclusive leadership, as scientific literature shows that this practice brings benefits in terms of school management and leadership, assertiveness, understanding difference, stress management and work-life balance (Wales, 2002).

Coaching is an internal and external research model that encourages leaders to acquire inner qualities such as self-awareness and confidence. Self-awareness allows leaders to recognise their past and its possible influences on the present, to be open to their own feelings and those of others, to reflect on situations before acting on the context, and to make appropriate choices (Wales, 2002).

Coaching is part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to leadership development that influences school organisation through four stages: leaders acquire personal focus, build resilient interpersonal relationships, create alignment between teams, groups or networks, and enable change at individual and system levels. Coaching helps develop emotional intelligence and enables leaders to have more realistic expectations, reduce stress and harmonise interactions (Gavin, 2018).

Styles

The project participants identified leadership styles by considering three sub-themes: the facets of inclusive leadership, the concept of empowerment linked to the concepts of person and leadership potential, and, once again, the relationships and maieutic techniques used by leaders to bring out individuals' talents with a view to relational and service-oriented leadership.

All these principles are then linked to literature on leadership for learning and sustainable leadership (Early, 2011; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). School leadership can be based on various theories, among which, according to our study, learning-centred leadership stands out: it connects leadership, pedagogy and adult learning; it is based on collaboration, continuous learning, leadership networks and professional development.

Leaders play a key role in influencing the culture of learning: they create the conditions for collective learning and learn alongside others by focusing on relationships, embodying a love of learning, valuing teachers' motivation and passion so it can be passed on to students, fostering an ethical climate and involving everyone in professional growth (Early, 2011).

Sustainable leadership is nothing more than profound learning for everyone: we must preserve, promote and protect in an education what enriches us all. Educational leadership has a moral mission and is sustainable if it is value-based, long-lasting and enduring over time. Particular attention must be paid to leadership succession. It requires breadth and wide learning, must be distributed to enhance everyone's human capital and extended towards a sense of responsibility and social justice, must capture and promote cohesive diversity with a wealth of human and material resources, and must aim to preserve the goodness and wisdom of the past (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004).

Challenges

Participants discussed challenges and potential obstacles in relation to three sub-themes: the qualities of empathetic, inclusive and distributed leadership; strategies that are not easy to implement, such as careful planning, adaptation to different educational needs, reflection and self-assessment; and the leader's agency in promoting training initiatives on coaching to be integrated into daily teaching and on creating a truly inclusive educational environment.

These reflections are linked to the scientific literature on the elements of leadership in excellent schools (Sergiovanni, 1983), the dimensions of social intelligence in leadership (Goleman, 2000), and relational leadership (Wallace, Acker-Hocevar & Sweatt, 2001).

In excellent schools, leadership develops through five stages: technical leadership is linked to the vision of the school's organisational culture; human leadership, which concerns the supervision of human relations and refers to the leader's interpersonal skills; educational leadership, which is related to teaching

effectiveness, programmes and clinical supervision; symbolic leadership, which is transformational and proactive on the one hand and a symbolic model for the learning community on the other; cultural leadership, which takes into account the climate and culture of the school and is visionary, ideological, social and value-based (Sergiovanni, 1984).

Cultural leadership is linked to relational leadership: shared values and ideals are promoted to develop learning systems, reflection, interaction and the building of positive relationships are encouraged, teachers and parents are involved in decisions, and the school culture and everyone's educational learning are proactively influenced (Wallace, Acker-Hocevar & Sweatt, 2001).

Research Question 2. What is the Impact of the Erasmus+ Leading Learning Project Mobilites on the Curricular Agency of Teachers at the Accredited European School in Parma?

The data relating to this research question concerned a central theme, "Teachers' Agency", and three sub-themes: "Intellectual Agency", "Entrepreneurial Agency" and "Curricular Agency". The following paragraphs summarise the main points drawn from the data in relation to question two of this research.

Intellectual Agency

Overall, stakeholders emphasised the importance of developing critical thinking in reflection, questioning one's assumptions, seeing things and situations from different perspectives, and practices of intellectual agency: constructing open questions, transforming assessment into collaborative dialogue, taking a critical and inclusive approach to lesson planning, and developing deep democracy.

Entrepreneurial Agency

Participants in this study considered entrepreneurial agency in the development of ideas and techniques: rethinking spaces and architectures in terms of flexibility and innovation, practising authentic and active listening, applying new techniques and methodologies, and understanding people's different outlooks.

In addition, creative agency develops in terms of design: activity diversification, integration of creativity into teaching, peer coaching, shared reflection and collaboration, proactivity towards colleagues and students, deep democracy for the enhancement of diversity and conflict resolution.

Curricular Agency

All stakeholders gathered various information on curricular agency: creative exercises and methods, outdoor activities, new tools, relationship building, and skills at the heart of the curriculum.

Furthermore, curricular agency is expressed in the co-construction of the curriculum with varied activities: integrating global citizenship education into curricula, creating cultural podcasts with and for students, connecting curricula to students' experiences, applying Universal Design for Learning in daily practice, enhancing cooperative learning and interdisciplinary teaching, and making assessment more inclusive.

These results are linked, on the one hand, to scientific studies concerning teachers' agency on a systemic level with respect to continuing education (Urbani, 2023) and, on the other hand, studies on the impact of Erasmus+ mobilities on curricular agency and the co-construction of the curriculum (Mouraz, Doyle & Serra, 2023).

Agency is a teacher's ability to act in a conscious, intentional and responsible manner, influencing their working environment. The collaborative dimension of agency is fundamental for getting to know each other and improving practices together. From both an intellectual and entrepreneurial point of view, there was talk of deep democracy, implying the importance of the collaborative dimension of agency. Innovation and creativity were then discussed, inviting reflection on the transformative, pragmatic and pioneering dimension of teachers' agency. Teachers' agency is epistemic in that it concerns the participatory construction of new knowledge (Urbani, 2023).

Curricular agency is the ability to execute actively the construction of the curriculum: it is iterative, i.e. it draws on past experiences and accumulated knowledge; it is projective, meaning it is pertinent to one's ability to imagine and plan future actions; it is practical and evaluative because it concerns the ability to make concrete decisions instantaneously, assessing what can be done in any given context.

It combines the professional identity of teachers and their capacity for initiative in the co-construction of the curriculum (Mouraz, Doyle & Serra, 2023). In previous international mobility experiences, such as ours, there has

been impacts on teaching renewal, professional collaboration, the possibility of transferring new ideas, student learning, professional identity and teachers' skills (Mouraz, Doyle & Serra, 2023).

Research Question 3: What Intercultural and Global Competences did Teachers at the Accredited European School in Parma Acquire as a Result of the Erasmus+ Leading Learning Project Mobility Programme?

The data relating to this research question concerned a central theme, 'Mobilities and intercultural Competences of Teachers', and three sub-themes: 'Competences', 'Methodologies' and 'Contexts'. Below are the main points drawn from the data in relation to question three of this research.

Erasmus+ mobility programmes have certainly had an impact on teachers' global and intercultural competences: development of European citizenship and an open mind; discovery of different pedagogical approaches in different cultures and from trainers of different nationalities; creation of spaces and environments open to diversity and inclusion; participation in international communities ready for discussion and support; implementation of projects for cross-curricular education on environmental care; experimentation with methodologies to support teachers and pupils such as mentoring and coaching applied in different contexts; experience of managing diversity in a conscious manner; acquisition and practice of self-assessment and documentation tools such as the intercultural portfolio.

These results are consistent with those of scientific studies on the impact of Erasmus+ mobilities concerning the growth of teachers' skills (Ivasciuc, Marinescu & Ispas, 2025; Martins, Tinoca & Alves, 2024) and those on European policies and meaningful learning in teacher training (Caena, 2016; Caena et al., 2021).

Erasmus+ mobilities has had a direct impact on the professional, pedagogical and personal growth of educators: participation in international mobilities promotes reflective teaching practices and supports inclusive, student-centred approaches, enhances partnership and international exchange, encourages student engagement with active methods and global perspectives, broadens pedagogical skills and develops intercultural skills, promoting educational quality and inclusion (Ivasciuc, Marinescu & Ispas, 2025).

European policies emphasise the importance of continuous and collaborative training for teachers and directors in order to cultivate 21st-century skills: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, problem solving and social engagement.

Leadership must be distributed and promote a collaborative culture to encourage a re-schooling scenario so that schools can become learning and social cohesion hubs (Caena, 2016).

Final Thoughts

The implications of these findings were discussed in relation to the continuing education of directors and teachers and the sustainable leadership of intercultural schools. In the 21st century, there is an increasing need for management and teaching skills that open up to cross-cutting horizons and new educational paradigms for the promotion of well-being, the development of innovation, education in ethics towards people and the environment, and the cultural and inner nourishment of students and European citizens around the world.

The outcome of the experience has been extremely positive, and the expectation is that new internationalisation projects for schools will enrich the wealth of experience and good practices available to the educational community while offer further ideas and considerations for scientific research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- American Management Association (2020). *AMA Critical Skills Survey: Workers Need Higher Level Skills to Succeed in the 21st Century*, <https://www.amanet.org/articles/ama-critical-skills-survey-workers-need-higher-level-skills-to-succeed-in-the-21st-century/>
- Arthur, J. (2003). *Education with character: The moral economy of schooling*. London: Routledge.
- Benelli, C. & Broglia, L. (2024). Tenere traccia, riflettere, progettare. Il diario di bordo nell'agire educativo, *Lifelong Lifewide Learning*, 22(45), 96–105.
- Benelli, C. & Broglia, L. (2025). Scrivere il pensare. Sul valore formativo e trasformativo delle pratiche narrative, *Graphos*, IV(1), 67–79.
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Brown, S. D. & Lent, R. W. (2013). *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Caena, F. (2016). *Visible learning vs education and training practices in Europe: Policy as discourse? Formazione & Insegnamento*, 14(2), 55–62.
- Caena, F. & Vuorikari, R. (2021). Teacher learning and innovative professional development through the lens of the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn European key competence, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 45(4), 456–475.
- Craft, A. (2005). *Creativity in schools: Tensions and dilemmas*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Costa, A. & Garmston, R. (1994). *Cognitive coaching: A foundation for Renaissance schools*, Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.
- Cushner, K. H., McClelland, A. & Safford, P. (2019). *Human diversity in education: An intercultural approach*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Demetrio, D. (2025). Per un narrare educativo. *Autobiografie*, 6, 14–24.
- Dillenbourg, P. (ed.) (1999), *Collaborative learning: Cognitive and computational approaches*, Bingley, Emerald.
- Dix, P. (2017), *When the adults change, everything changes: Seismic shifts in school behaviour*, Carmarthen, Independent Thinking Press.
- Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D. & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405–432.
- Early, P. (2011). *Lo sviluppo di leader con capacità di leadership in campo educativo e centrati sull'apprendimento*. In G. Domenici e G. Moretti (a cura di), *Leadership educativa e autonomia scolastica. Il governo dei processi formativi e gestionali nella scuola di oggi*. Roma: Armando, 95–120.
- Easton, L. B. (2009). *Protocols for professional learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Fisher, A. (2007). *Critical thinking: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gardner, H. (1991). *Formae mentis. Saggio sulla pluralità dell'intelligenza*. Milano: Feltrinelli.
- Gavin, C. (2018). The impact of leadership development using coaching, *Journal of Practical Consulting*, 6(1), 137–147.
- Goleman, D. (2006). The socially intelligent leader, *Educational Leadership: Journal of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development, N.E.A.*, 64(1), 76–81.
- Hargreaves A. & Fink D. (2004). The seven principles of sustainable leadership. *Educational Leadership: Journal of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development, N.E.A.*, 61(7), 8–13.
- Huber, J., Caine, V., Huber, M. & Steeves, P. (2013). Narrative inquiry as pedagogy in education. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(1), 212–242.
- ISTE Standards: For Students (2016), <https://www.iste.org/standards/for-students>
- Ivasciuc, I. S., Marinescu, N. & Ispas, A. (2025). Unlocking new horizons: Teacher mobility and competence growth via Erasmus Exchange Programs, *Education Sciences*, 15(6).
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Lewin, K., Lippitt, R. & White, R. K. (1939). Patterns of aggressive behavior in experimentally created «social climates». *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 10, 271–299.
- Lewis R. D. (1996). *When cultures collide: Managing successfully across cultures*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Martins, P. C., Tinoca L. & Alves, M.G. (2024). On the effects of Erasmus+ KA 1 mobilities for continuing professional development in teachers' biographies: A qualitative research approach with teachers in Portugal. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 7.
- Meyer E. (2015). *The culture map: Decoding how people think, lead, and get things done across cultures*, New York, NY: PublicAffairs.
- Mouraz, A., Doyle, A. & Serra, I. (2023). The effects of international mobility on teachers' power of curriculum agency. *The Curriculum Journal*, 35(2), 237–253.
- National Association of Colleges and Employers (2020). *Job Outlook 2020 Survey*, <https://in.nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/204/2020-nace-job-outlook.pdf>
- National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2018). *Understanding motivation: Building the brain architecture that supports learning, health, and community participation*. Working Paper 14, Cambridge, MA: Center of Developing Child, Harvard University.
- Pagani, V. (2020). *Dare voce ai dati. L'analisi dei dati testuali nella ricerca educativa*. Parma: Junior.
- Palmer P. J. (2017). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Partnership for 21st Century Learning® Frameworks & Resources (2015), <http://www.battelle-forkids.org/networks/p21>
- Riessman, C.K. (2001). *Analysis of personal narratives*. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context & method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Riley, K. (2022). *Compassionate leadership for school belonging*. London: UCL Press.
- Robinson, K. (2011). *Out of our minds: Learning to be creative*. Chichester: Capstone Publishing.
- Scharmer, O. (2018). *Teoria U. I fondamentali. Principi e applicazioni*. Milano: Guerini Next.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1984). *Leadership and excellence in schooling*. *Educational Leadership*, 41(5), 4–13.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). *Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V. & Braun, V. (2017). *Thematic analysis*. In C. Willig & W. Stainton Rogers (eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE Publications, 17–37.
- Toni, B. (2022). *Apprendimento interculturale e leadership educativa nel sistema scolastico delle Scuole Europee*. Trento, Erickson.
- Trilling, B. & Fadel, C. (2009). *21st Century skills: Learning for life in our times*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- UNESCO (2014). *Global citizenship education: Preparing learners for the challenges of the 21st century*, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000227729>
- Urbani C. (2024). Teacher agency and epistemic approaches: Research's outlooks on teacher education. *Italian Journal of Educational Research*, 32, 91–99.
- Usunier J. & Lee J. A. (2013). *Marketing across cultures*. London: Pearson.
- Wales, S. (2002). Why coaching?, *Journal of Change Management*, 3(3), 275–282.
- Walker, A. & Shuangye, C. (2007). Leader authenticity in intercultural school contexts. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 35(2), 185–204.
- Wallace, S., Acker-Hocevar, M. & Sweatt, O. (2001). Developing an open systems view for assessing educational leadership. *Journal of School Leadership*, 11(3).
- Weick, K. E. (1976). Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21(1), 1–19.
- Whitmore, J. (2009). *Coaching for performance: GROWing human potential and purpose. The Principles and Practice of Coaching and Leadership*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.



www.erickson.it