Reflective Intercultural Education for Democratic Culture and Engaged Citizens
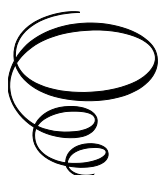
Reflective Intercultural Education for Democratic Culture and Engaged Citizens

By

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INTRODUCTION

HOSPITALITY AND LIQUID BORDERS

"If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them."
(F. Bacon, "Essays – Of Goodness and Goodness of Nature", 1625)

1. Hospitality: ancient and postmodern paradigms

Since the dawning of its creation, the authors of the EUFICCS approach have aimed at giving birth to an educational approach to teaching and learning a second language and culture that could suit the scenario of the XXI century. As the readers will realise going from chapter to chapter in this book, this has led to the development of an actual intercultural philosophy that has turned wide and global issues such as hospitality, relationships with the other, interculturality, engaged citizenship and many others into key and unavoidable pillars of teaching second languages and cultures. The country where all this originated is Italy: a well-known (sometimes abused) destination for tourists, travellers and students, famous in the world for its artistic and natural heritage; cradle to the ancient Roman civilisation and later on to the Renaissance art and humanities, Italy has for centuries represented *the* destination. Therefore, during the whole creation process, considerable reflection was given by the authors to this aspect of Italy as a privileged travel destination, together with the understanding of its tradition and practices of hospitality, and the ongoing crisis of the traditional paradigm of hospitality itself in the XXI century. The following quotes by Bauman (Bauman and Mauro 2015) seem to reflect quite well the understanding of the authors[i] in terms of relationships among diverse cultures, those relationships that seem to break the ancient sacred value of hospitality. The relentless movement of people and goods in the globalised era and the upheaval of the same concept of time and space due to the sudden and extremely fast development and spread in the use of technology has led, in the authors'

perspective, to a deep change in the paradigm of hospitality.

> "[...] tutto ciò che si muove, principalmente fra le frontiere (immigrati, capitali finanziari, globalizzazione, contaminazioni culturali, cosmopolitismo, istituzioni sovranazionali), intimorisce e spaventa chi sta fermo perché appare fuori controllo, senza governo e determina spaesamento di luogo, di tempo, d'identità[ii]." (Bauman and Mauro 2015, 51)

> "Lo straniero un tempo distante è diventato il vicino con il quale condividiamo strade, strutture pubbliche, scuole, luoghi di lavoro. E questa è una prossimità destabilizzante poiché dall'altro non sappiamo cosa aspettarci[iii]." (Bauman and Mauro 2015, 137)

This proximity to the other, so annoying and frightening in today's global world, has come to break fundamental values that have always been part of Western culture.

The paradigm of hospitality has, in fact, a long tradition and can be traced back to the time of ancient Greece, where hospitality was a value and an obligation protected by the god Zeus. At the core of hospitality, in all its forms, was the deep tie between those who stayed and those who travelled, between internal and external, between inside and outside.

In the ancient Greek language, there were different terms to define a person who was not part of the *polis* (the urban community, the city-state): *xenos*, *barbaros*, *allotropos*. The word *xenia* indicated the sacred pact that tied the local with the foreigner: *xenos* was in fact the person coming from a different place or born elsewhere, and was clearly distinguished from *barbaros* (originally meaning 'stutterer'), that referred to people who could not speak Greek and were therefore considered uneducated, uncouth and rude. Hospitality was given to the *xenos*, but not to the *barbaros*. *Allotropos* was, on the other hand, a foreigner and an enemy, coming from a hostile country or city-state. So the most important tie between the host and the guest in ancient Greece was the *xenia*, that was rigidly ruled by unwritten norms: the host and the guest had to show reciprocal respect, the host was supposed to offer food, drinks and the possibility of having a bath and wearing clean garments—and this before he could even ask for the guest's name. Violating these norms meant breaking the pact of *xenia* and its sacred value. The tradition of *xenia* was a way to have guests feel part of a community, at least for the time of their sojourn, but it also had social and political aims since it was used to establish alliances, to build relationships or vice versa to create conflicts (Marocci and Rovitto 2015).

The Greek tradition of hospitality was taken over by the ancient Romans and reflected in their language. In Latin *hostis* originally indicated the

foreigner or guest who was given the same rights as Roman citizens (while *peregrinus* referred to those who wandered outside the Roman territory); the concept of *hostis* was tightly linked to the values of equality and reciprocity and could also be found in the word *hostia*, which indicated 'the victim sacrificed to soothe the gods' rage', in contrast with the term *victima*, used for animals generally offered in a sacrifice. This tie of equality and reciprocity between the Roman citizen and the foreigner was at the basis of the very concept of hospitality. Later on, for social and political reasons, the word *hostis* came to acquire a negative meaning: 'foreigner' and, as such, 'enemy' and 'hostile'. From the overlapping of the words *hostis* ('foreigner, enemy') and *potis* ('lord, sir') there came the term *hospes*: with the relationships between the person who hosts and welcomes and the person who is hosted and welcomed being so tight, the word *hospes* came to mean both 'host' and 'guest', thus strongly emphasising the underlying concept of reciprocity[iv] (Marocci and Rovitto 2015).

  Recent historical, political and social events have rendered the XXI century a time when hospitality is not a value and a right any longer, as it was in the past. In our postmodern era it is not possible to position the relationships with the other in a fixed paradigm, since these same relationships are subject to the constant chaotic movements that characterise our time. Consequently, we are witnesses to an ever-changing development of new nuances of meaning, where the paradigm of hospitality is being transformed into one which is spinning, fluid and polysemous.

  In addition, hospitality means accepting to meet and welcome the other, and this acceptance implies that we are ready to change our perspectives and worldviews according to what the other is bringing us. It also means that we accept to modify what we are and transform our identities on the basis of different assumptions. After all, the construction of identity always starts with the confrontation with others and significant others in one's life: there is no "I" unless there is a "you" and a group to belong to and feel part of:

  "Non c'è identità senza metamorfosi, senza cambiamento, senza relazione anche conflittuale tra sé e altro, tra noi e voi, tra *idem* e *alius* [...] Non c'è identità senza l'altro. Non è un dato, è un processo nel quale è la relazione che produce l'identità. All'origine dell'identità c'è la relazione [...] È l'altro che ci aiuta a tessere la nostra identità, rivelandoci aspetti di noi stessi che noi ignoriamo[v]". (Marocci and Rovitto 2015, 16)

Therefore, hospitality comes to acquire a double face, almost becoming an oxymoron in its two-fold nature. It is an obligation, but it should also imply some pleasure; it entails trust, but is stained with suspicion:

> "L'ospitalità è dunque incontro e diffidenza, piacere e dovere insieme[vi]" (Marocci and Rovitto 2015, 17).

If identities are created in a dialogical manner, if we are defined by continuous confrontations with others, then travelling always implies questioning our identities and transforming ourselves: it always entails change, growth, development, enrichment:

> "Il viaggio mette in discussione l'idea che l'identità sia qualcosa di statico o legata all'individuo o che attenga all'ambito sociale. L'identità e il suo *alter ego*, ospitalità, producono riflessi, scambi, dissimulazioni, finzioni; ed è questo gioco che determina le identità e dunque le ospitalità[vii]" (Marocci and Rovitto 2015, 74).

Consequently, travelling implies learning: in the first place learning about ourselves, and only secondly learning about the other. The EUFICCS approach guides students through a journey both inside themselves and into another culture, hand in hand with their failures and their successes, along a path that will help them to become globally engaged citizens.

2. A journey into knowledge: from the *clerici vagantes* to contemporary study abroad

The concept of the journey as a source of knowledge and personal growth is neither new nor modern. On the other hand, contemporary travellers seem to have forgotten what the primary aim of travelling was. Todays' travellers can be roughly divided into two categories: those who travel for fun and pleasure, and those who travel for need and necessity (Bauman and Mauro 2015). Probably neither of them identifies travelling with learning, even if learning is always implied.

Going backwards through the centuries, it is possible to trace in the medieval tradition of travelling the origin of what a student-traveller may be today: the first prototype of contemporary students studying abroad can be found in the *clerici vagantes*. *Clerici vagantes* or *vagabundi* is a medieval Latin term meaning 'wandering clergy', applied in early canon law to those clergy who led a wandering life either because they had no

benefice or because they had deserted the church to which they had been attached. The term referred also to wandering students, ex-students, and even professors, moving from town to town in search of learning and adventure, nominally clerks but often leading very secular lives. They used to travel all around Europe and find rest in *xenodochia*. The term *xenodochium* stands for a medieval house for the care of the poor, strangers, pilgrims, or the sick. In the early Middle Ages, a *xenodochium* (from the ancient Greek x*enodokheion* meaning a 'place for strangers, inn, guesthouse') was either a hostel or a hospital, usually dedicated to foreigners or pilgrims, although the term could refer to charitable institutions in general. When Christianity was officially accepted, the first Ecumenical Council of Nicea ordered every bishop to build a *xenodochium* in his diocese. In French-speaking countries, there was another term, *hôtel-Dieu* (hostel of God), that was originally a hospital for the poor and needy, run by the Catholic Church.

Moving forward into the XVII century, we find another incipient tradition that would have a large echo in Europe: the *Grand Tour*. The offspring of aristocratic and wealthy families (mainly male and usually from Northern European regions) would set off to travel to Central and Southern Europe (most often to Italy) in order to complete their education[viii].

The term *Grand Tour* was first coined by the clergy man Richard Lassels in his work *The Voyage of Italy*, published in Paris in 1670, where he recounted and described the places he visited during his five journeys to Italy. In his work he also suggested that every single student of architecture, ancient humanities, classical antiquity and art could not but visit Italy, its cities and amenities. Only by travelling and personally experiencing different realities could the young lords enhance their culture, learn about the different political, social and economic aspects of Italy, and indeed those of Europe in general. The neologism *Grand Tour* was soon universally accepted to indicate a journey to South Europe, specifically to Italy, undertaken by noble and rich young men as a part of their education and as a rite of passage to adult life.

At the same time, John Locke (1632-1704) explained very well what the benefits and purposes of travelling were, especially concerning educational aims:

> "The last part usually in education is travel, which is commonly thought to finish the work, and complete the gentleman. I confess travel into foreign countries has great advantages, [...]. Those which are propos'd, as to the main of them, may be reduced to these two: first, language, secondly, an improvement in wisdom and prudence, by seeing men, and conversing

with people of tempers, customs and ways of living, different from one
another, and especially from those of his parish and neighbourhood."
(Locke 1692, Section 212)

"But yet his [the young man's] going abroad is to little purpose, if travel
does not sometimes open his eyes, make him cautious and wary, and
accustom him to look beyond the outside, and, under the inoffensive guard
of a civil and obliging carriage, keep himself free and safe in his
conversation with strangers and all sorts of people without forfeiting their
good opinion." (Locke 1692, Section 215)[ix]

During their journeys, *Grand Tour* travellers often accompanied their
experiences with the writing of a journal, a sort of daily record of the most
important events occurring during their trip. This tradition of journaling
resulted in some of the best pages of modern literature and permits us to
understand the essence and aims of the journey itself.

Study abroad students have partly inherited such a tradition: they retain
the educational aspect, they share the same curiosity, they meet diversity,
they learn through direct experience and they reason about intercultural
encounters thanks to reflection. Travelling is not only moving from one
place to another: it also means moving emotions, transforming identities
and changing perspectives. Leaving and arriving are a simplified way of
describing a journey:

"il viaggio può essere concepito come una successione di tre momenti:
partire, transitare, arrivare. Partenza, transito, arrivo. Le partenze stimolano
il bisogno di distacco, di individualità e di autonomia. Il transito è il
momento durante il quale vecchi bisogni e vecchi desideri sono messi in
discussione mentre ancora non si intravede nulla di nuovo. Sovente nel
transito c'è stanchezza, confusione, paura, smarrimento. L'arrivo infine è il
momento dove sembra di aver costruito nuove appartenenze, nuove
identità ma è anche l'istante nel quale abbiamo preparato il terreno per una
nuova partenza[x]" (Leed E. J. 1992, quoted in Marocci and Rovitto 2015,
73).

Similarly, study abroad is not only a mere conjunction of travelling and
learning: students actually travel and certainly learn, yet what happens in
their study abroad experience can go farther beyond those labels. This is
probably the reason why study abroad and student mobility in general still
lacks a complete, deep and insightful theorisation, especially (and
paradoxically) in Europe, the continent where the university was born and
where academic knowledge has been spread and shared for centuries (also
thanks to study abroad students *ante litteram* as mentioned before):

"[...] the mid-1990s in Europe witnessed the start of disciplinary interest in post-secondary student mobility. The Zeitgeist of interest in the last and current decades in particular led to fast-developing repositories of knowledge, but with it also came fragmentation and polarisation of understandings (Premise I). […] The contributions by interested disciplines have tended to specialise in different parts and/or variables of student mobility without necessarily looking at the totality of the study abroad experience" (Almeida 2020, in press).

   The central issue is therefore the understanding of what study abroad is in the XXI century and what it means for students of the XXI century: this has been the main concern of the authors' research and reflection from the very beginning.

"Fostering synergies between diverse perspectives and systematising multiple pockets of knowledge is crucial to advance an agenda for theorising student mobility as an area of study and professional practice" (Almeida 2020, in press).

   This seems to be the right direction in which to frame a successful (in terms of students' learning and personal growth) study abroad experience: interdisciplinarity and transversality. Being a comprehensive and multifaceted approach, EUFFICS very well represents this aspect of learning and teaching in study abroad: its holistic nature—taking care of the many aspects of learners as human beings other than simply students—is based on the numerous inspirations it has absorbed from different pedagogies[xi] and allows for interdisciplinarity and multiple perspectives. The same experience lived by students abroad ranges from traditional teaching and learning to volunteering in the community, from sharing everyday life with a local family to opening up to contemporary European and global issues.

Fig. 0.1. Emil Brack (1860–1905) - *Planning the Grand Tour* [xii]

3. Liquid culture

Probably one of the biggest challenges any expert of interculturality encounters in our postmodern era is the difficulty of framing the same concept of modernity. Mediating among cultures has always meant to understand the concept of modernity, to know what has become old-fashioned and by what it has been replaced. The intercultural mediator of every era needs to be on the cutting edge in all circumstances while also being aware of and understanding the past. As clearly stated and defined in the following words by Bauman, we live in the times of "liquid modernity", where there is no perfection we strive for and where change and permanence overlap. This fluidity turns the job of any scholar, expert or practitioner of interculturality into an even more difficult one. Developing an approach to teach language and culture and designing its curriculum is a very difficult task in itself because—as extensively analysed in the chapters of this book—it means dealing with the very elusive concept of culture. Nowadays, this has become even more complicated and at the same time fascinating. In this "liquid modernity" the additional challenge for the interculturalist is mediating changes and accepting this new notion of change.

> "Forms of modern life may differ in quite a few respects – but what unites them all is precisely their fragility, temporariness, vulnerability and inclination to constant change. To 'be modern' means to modernize – compulsively, obsessively; not so much just 'to be', let alone to keep its

identity intact, but forever 'becoming', avoiding completion, staying underdefined. Each new structure which replaces the previous one as soon as it is declared old-fashioned and past its use-by date is only another momentary settlement – acknowledged as temporary and 'until further notice'. Being always, at any stage and at all times, 'post-something' is also an undetachable feature of modernity. As time flows on, 'modernity' changes its forms in the manner of the legendary Proteus [...] What was some time ago dubbed (erroneously) 'post-modernity' and what I've chosen to call, more to the point, 'liquid modernity', is the growing conviction that change is the only permanence, and uncertainty the only certainty. A hundred years ago 'to be modern' meant to chase 'the final state of perfection' - now it means an infinity of improvement, with no 'final state' in sight and none desired." (Bauman 2012, viii)

According to the authors, the concept of liquid modernity flows naturally and necessarily into that of 'liquid culture': change and lack of borders do not only characterise political, social and economic structures but are essential constituencies of everyday life, communications and cultural norms.

Therefore, the social actors of the XXI century stage need to acquire the skills that are necessary to live in this ever-changing world, described by Bauman as a "supranational space" of liquid modernity:

"E tu hai ragione a dire che o impariamo ad abitare politicamente lo spazio sovranazionale o siamo perduti[xiii]" (Bauman and Mauro 2015, 22).

The ultimate goal, in Bauman's words, is that of re-defining a common space, going beyond a simplistic multicultural attitude, overcoming a "multiculturalismo superficiale [...] con una debole fascinazione per la diversità, semplici flirt con ciò che appare esotico, in un sistema che riconosce la legittimità di culture diverse dalla nostra, ma ignora o rifiuta quanto vi è di sacro e non negoziabile in tali culture. Lo sforzo titanico, eppur necessario, diventa quello di rinegoziare un nuovo spazio comune[xiv]" (Bauman and Mauro 2015, 139).

In this common space, local and global seem to touch and overlap. Paradoxically in this liquid modernity with no borders, being deeply engaged in the local community is the first step to becoming a global citizen. Local engagement together with the sensitivity to adapt it to the different cultural context is what the authors of this volume call 'glocal acting', something attesting to a high level of reflective intercultural competence[xv]. In the authors' perspective the glocal actor can be considered the global citizen *par excellence,* because he/she overcomes the simplistic multicultural attitude described above by Bauman and is ready

to engage deeply in different local communities.

Without the appropriate set of intercultural skills the risk of feeling lost and becoming marginalised grows at an unstoppable pace. The authors' desire in this book is to design a path to allow students to acquire this set of delicate skills and, probably even more importantly, to acquire awareness of this new mindset that is necessary to face the challenge of liquid modernity and liquid culture; to feel comfortable in a supranational space with no borders, where we live with the illusion of being in an eternal present. The desired outcome of this educational approach is to help the youth to become globally engaged and interculturally competent citizens. In liquid modernity culture shock has lost its initial 'romantic' connotation of disorientation caused by the encounter with another unfamiliar culture, instead becoming a permanent state caused by the inexorable flow of change. Global citizens are the only ones who can avoid this permanent state of anxiety and who are prepared for selecting and appreciating this constant flow of real and mediatic instant shots, transforming them into personal acquisition.

4. EUFICCS

Through the pages of this publication the acronym EUFICCS (European Use of Full-Immersion, Culture, Content and Service) will be paired with several other terms that are at times, in everyday communication, used as synonyms but, on the contrary, retain specific meanings in the educational field: philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, approach, methodology, and (study abroad) programme.

EUFICCS can be considered a philosophy since it questions and reasons about the fundamental essence of philosophical concepts such as knowledge, values and language. The EUFICCS philosophy is inspired by democracy, inclusion, equality, and openness to diversity, and is aimed at quality education through the means of these values.

EUFICCS is also a pedagogy because it deals with the theory and practice of learning and how the process of learning can affect the development of students and can be affected by their political, social, individual and psychological aspects.

The word curriculum usually indicates the courses, lessons and academic content taught in a school or at university. Along this line, EUFICCS can be easily defined as a curriculum since the courses and lessons implemented and activated are officially organised and structured. Going more in depth, learning standards, learning objectives and assessment criteria are also clearly stated and communicated to students through the

many syllabi available for EUFICCS courses.

EUFICCS is an approach in that it describes the way in which students can be drawn closer to specific dimensions of language (and content) education: an approach "va [...] discusso in termini di coerenza tra premesse teoriche e proposte avanzate" (Balboni 1998, 2-3)[xvi.]

An approach is the educational level on which both the main objectives of linguistic education and the language teaching goals on which such objectives are based are determined, as well as being the level on which scientific coordinates are defined and methods are proposed (Balboni 1994).

EUFICCS can also be defined as a methodology, i.e. a system of methods used in a specific area of study, being the method "un piano generale per la realizzazione operativa di un approccio. Un metodo include dunque criteri di selezione del corpus, opzioni a favore di alcuni modelli operativi a preferenza di altri, indicazioni sull'uso ed il ruolo delle glottotecnologie"[xvii] (Balboni 1998, 3).

The method represents the practical realisation of an approach and is the level on which theory becomes practice. In other words, the approach is an overarching structure and can be put into effect by different methods as long as they are coherent to the approach. From the acronym EUFICCS one can immediately understand the primary objectives of language learning, the absorption of another culture, and the teaching and learning of specific content. One can also understand the scientific coordinates through which one needs to pass this content: full immersion in the host language and culture, service-learning, and social interaction in the local community.

Finally the EUFICCS label can be applied to the phrase 'study abroad programme', thus referring to the entirety of arrangements, facilities, courses, internships, service and other kind of activities organised for students in a foreign country: the same students also learn the local language, attend academic courses and are granted credits for these courses.

5. How this book is structured

This introductory chapter has sought to provide a historical and somewhat philosophical overview of the background themes that are interwoven with education, intercultural encounters and studying abroad. The authors believe that providing mindful and meaningful higher education experiences in today's world can neither prescind from nor disregard what education has meant in past centuries, and that shaping

engaged citizens implies knowledge and awareness of past mistakes and successes. This consciousness should be the starting point for the reading of the following pages.

Chapter 1 gives an overview of pedagogies and methodologies that, in some way or another, have been of inspiration to the development of the EUFICCS approach. Originating from the very root of Service-Learning pedagogy and experiential learning together with reflective education, in the course of time, EUFICCS has come to be enriched by contributions from several pedagogies and approaches, namely Cooperative Learning, the use of narration in circles, the Sentipensante pedagogy, therapeutic journaling, the Lexical Approach, and content teaching instruction. Chapter 1 explains in details how EUFICCS has benefitted from all these different approaches.

Chapter 2 presents the EUFICCS approach in all its components. The acronym itself reveals how this methodology relies on some fundamental elements: full-immersion, culture, content and service. Nevertheless, there are equally essential components that, for their inner nature, come to be transversal to the EUFICCS experience and thus ever-present: language and reflection. Chapter 2 describes all these different elements, how they are structured and organised inside the EUFICCS curriculum, and what their contributions are to students' learning and personal growth.

Chapter 3 focuses on those features that can be considered as more innovative and ground-breaking in the EUFICCS curriculum and in the educational panorama: reflection and NOLC instruction. In fact, if on the one hand the EUFICCS methodology can be labelled as more 'traditional' in terms of language teaching, on the other hand what distinguishes it from other study abroad programmes is the fundamental role it gives to reflection practice in order to process intercultural experiences and the innovative content teaching methodology that it addresses to students with heterogeneous language competences.

Chapter 4 is entirely dedicated to one of the most important accomplishments derived from the EUFICCS methodology, namely the development of an assessment tool that can be used to evaluate students' reflective intercultural competence. The elaboration of the RICA (Reflective Intercultural Competence Assessment) Model has been a natural consequence of the observation (on the authors' part) that students revealed many aspects of their intercultural competence by writing in their journals; efforts were then made to systematise and give a theoretical frame to the assessment of this reflective intercultural competence.

Chapter 5 deals with the latest developments and consequences of the encounter between the EUFICCS approach and one of the most important

and recent outcomes of the Council of Europe's activity, namely the RFCDC (Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture). The topics and aims of the reflection course and the competences envisioned by the RFCDC share many common points and the EUFICCS curriculum offers many learning opportunities that contribute to the development of such competences. Therefore, the union between the two seemed to be a natural consequence and a promising combination.

In the Conclusions the authors present future mid-term and long-term developments of the EUFICCS approach that open up the possibilities of expanding and adjusting the methodology and its foundational components to other fields and contexts.

Finally, some further materials are provided in the Appendices, where readers can find a general presentation of courses and activities of the study abroad programme, two samples of journal assessment, one table summarising an intercultural competence level assignment and a graph representing students' development of intercultural competence.

Notes

[i] The present publication has by no means any political affiliation or aim: the perspective endorsed by the authors simply reflects their being educators and education practitioners in contemporary Europe and their awareness of the many social and political issues of our time.

[ii] "Everything that is moving, mainly across borders (immigrants, financial capitals, globalisation, cultural contaminations, cosmopolitanism, supranational institutions), scares and frightens those who stand still, since it appears to be out of control, without any rule, and entails disorientation in terms of space, time, identity."

[iii] "The foreigner, who was once distant, has become the neighbour with whom we share streets, public structures, schools, work places, and this proximity is destabilising because we don't know what to expect from the other."

[iv] In the Italian language there are many words that stem from this Latin term, all of them are linked in some way or another to the idea of welcoming someone and taking care of him/her. From *hospes*, in Italian there come *ospedale* (hospital), *ospizio* (a place where old people are taken care of, elderly home), *ospitare* (to host), *ospitalità* (hospitality), *ospite* (guest, but also host), *hospice* (a place where terminally ill people are taken care of, usually a part of a hospital), *ostello* (youth hostel), *osteria* (a sort of restaurant), *oste* (the owner of the osteria); also the word *hotel*, now internationally used, stems from the same root through the French *hôtel*. These are only a few examples that could be extended to many Romance languages (and not only).

[v] "There is no identity without metamorphosis, without change, without conflicting relationships between the self and the other, between us and you, between *idem*

and *alius* (the same and the other). [...] There is no identity without the other. It is not a fact, it is a process in which relationship produces identity. Relationship gives birth to identity.[...] The other helps us weaving our identity by revealing aspects of ourselves that we ignore."

vi "Therefore, hospitality is both encounter and suspicion, pleasure and obligation at the same time".

vii "The journey questions the idea that identity is something static or linked to the individual or pertinent to the social environment. Identity and its *alter ego*, hospitality, generate reflections, exchanges, dissimulations, fakes; this game determines identities and subsequently hospitalities."

viii The tradition of the *Grand Tour* lasted for almost two centuries.

ix It is worth quoting the entire section where Locke describes the seventeenth-century conception of travel and education.

"Section 212. The last part usually in education is travel, which is commonly thought to finish the work, and complete the gentleman. I confess travel into foreign countries has great advantages, but the time usually chosen to send young men abroad, is, I think, of all other, that which renders their least capable of reaping those advantages. Those which are proposed, as to the main of them, may be reduced to these two: first, language, secondly, an improvement in wisdom and prudence, by seeing men, and conversing with people of tempers, customs and ways of living, different from one another, and especially from those of his parish and neighbourhood. But from sixteen to one and twenty, which is the ordinary time of travel, men are, of all their lives, the least suited to these improvements. The first season to get foreign languages, and form the tongue to their true accents, I should think, should be from seven to fourteen or sixteen, and then too a tutor with them is useful and necessary, who may with those languages teach them other things. But to put them out of their parents' view at a great distance under a governor, when they think themselves to be too much men to be governed by others, and yet have not prudence and experience enough to govern themselves, what is it, but to expose them to all the greatest dangers of their whole life, when they have the least fence and guard against them? 'Till that boiling boisterous part of life comes in, it may be hoped the tutor may have some authority: neither the stubbornness of age, nor the temptation or examples of others, can take him from his tutor's conduct till fifteen or sixteen; but then, when he begins to comfort himself with men, and thinks himself one; when he comes to relish and pride himself in manly vices, and thinks it a shame to be any longer under the control and conduct of another, what can be hoped from even the most careful and discreet governor, when neither he has power to compel, nor his pupil a disposition to be persuaded; but on the contrary, has the advice of warm blood and prevailing fashion, to hearken to the temptations of his companions, just as wise as himself, rather than to the persuasions of his tutor, who is now looked on as an enemy to his freedom? And when is a man so like to miscarry, as when at the same time he is both raw and unruly? This is the season of all his life that most requires the eye and authority of his parents and friends to govern it. The flexibleness of the former part of a man's age, not yet grown up to be headstrong, makes it more governable

and safe; and in the afterpart, reason and foresight begin a little to take place, and mind a man of his safety and improvement. The time therefore I should think the fittest for a young gentleman to be sent abroad, would be, either when he is younger, under a tutor, whom he might be the better for; or when he is some years older, without a governor; when he is of age to govern himself, and make observations of what he finds in other countries worthy his notice, and that might be of use to him after his return; and when too, being thoroughly acquainted with the laws and fashions, the natural and moral advantages and defects of his own country, he has something to exchange with those abroad, from whose conversation he hoped to reap any knowledge. [...]

Section 214. The ordering of travel otherwise, is that, I imagine, which makes so many young gentlemen come back so little improved by it. And if they do bring home with them any knowledge of the places and people they have seen, it is often an admiration of the worst and vainest practices they met with abroad; retaining a relish and memory of those things wherein their liberty took its first swing, rather than of what should make them better and wiser after their return. And indeed how can it be otherwise, going abroad at the age they do under the care of another, who is to provide their necessaries, and make their observations for them? Thus under the shelter and pretence of a governor, thinking themselves excused from standing upon their own legs or being accountable for their own conduct, they very seldom trouble themselves with enquiries or making useful observations of their own. Their thoughts run after play and pleasure, wherein they take it as a lessening to be controlled; but seldom trouble themselves to examine the designs, observe the address, and consider the arts, tempers, and inclinations of men they meet with; that so they may know how to comport themselves towards them. Here he that travels with them is to screen them; get them out when they have run themselves into the briars; and in all their miscarriages be answerable for them.

Section 215. I confess, the knowledge of men is so great a skill, that it is not to be expected a young man should presently be perfect in it. But yet his going abroad is to little purpose, if travel does not sometimes open his eyes, make him cautious and wary, and accustom him to look beyond the outside, and, under the inoffensive guard of a civil and obliging carriage, keep himself free and safe in his conversation with strangers and all sorts of people without forfeiting their good opinion. He that is sent out to travel at the age, and with the thoughts of a man designing to improve himself, may get into the conversation and acquaintance of persons of condition where he comes; which, tho' a thing of most advantage to a gentleman that travels, yet I ask, amongst our young men that go abroad under tutors, what one is there of a hundred, that ever visits any person of quality? Much less makes an acquaintance with such, from whose conversation he may learn what is good breeding in that country, and what is worth observation in it; tho' from such persons it is, one may learn more in one day, than in a year's rambling from one inn to another. Nor indeed, is it to be wondered; for men of worth and parts will not easily admit the familiarity of boys who yet need the care of a tutor; tho' a young gentleman and stranger, appearing like a man, and shewing a desire to inform himself in the customs, manners, laws, and government of the country he is in, will

find welcome assistance and entertainment amongst the best and most knowing persons every where, who will be ready to receive, encourage and countenance, an ingenuous and inquisitive foreigner.

    Section 216. This, how true soever it be, will not I fear alter the custom, which has cast the time of travel upon the worst part of a man's life; but for reasons not taken from their improvement. The young lad must not be ventured abroad at eight or ten, for fear of what may happen to the tender child, tho' he then runs ten times less risque than at sixteen or eighteen. Nor must he stay at home till that dangerous, heady age be over, because he must be back again by one and twenty, to marry and propagate. The father cannot stay any longer for the portion, nor the mother for a new set of babies to play with; and so my young master, whatever comes on it, must have a wife look'd out for him by that time he is of age; tho' it would be no prejudice to his strength, his parts, or his issue, if it were respited for some time, and he had leave to get, in years and knowledge, the start a little of his children, who are often found to tread too near upon the heels of their fathers, to the no great satisfaction either of son or father. But the young gentleman being got within view of matrimony, 'tis time to leave him to his mistress." (John Locke, 1692)

[x] "A journey can be conceived as a succession of three moments: leaving, travelling, arriving. Departure, travel, arrival. Departures stimulate the need for separation, individuality and autonomy. The travel itself is the moment when old needs and old desires are questioned while nothing new is yet on the horizon. There is often tiredness in the travelling, there are confusion, fear, disorientation. Finally, the arrival is the moment when it seems like we have built new affiliations, new identities, but it is also the time when we get ready for a new leaving."

[xi] See Chapter 1.

[xii] Oil on canvas, 71 x 88 cm, undated, in private possession. Source: http://www.artrenewal.org/pages/artist.php?artistid=6529.

[xiii] "And you are right when you say that either we learn to politically live the supranational space or we are lost."

[xiv] "superficial multiculturalism […] with a weak fascination for diversity, merely flirts with what appears to be exotic, in a system that recognises the legitimacy of cultures other than ours, but ignores or refuses what is sacred and not negotiable in those cultures. The titanic, yet necessary, effort is that of re-negotiating a new common space."

[xv] See Chapter 4.

[xvi] "needs to be discussed in terms of coherence between theoretical conditions and advanced proposals".

[xvii] "a general plan for the operational realisation of an approach. Therefore, a method includes criteria to select the corpus, options that favour certain operational models instead of others, and indications about the use and role of language teaching technologies."

CHAPTER 1

EUFICCS PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY: PEDAGOGICAL AND DIDACTIC BACKGROUND

"I stood like one bewitched. I drank in it, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me and I had never seen anything like this. [...] This sun means that we are going to have wind tomorrow; that floating log means the river is rising; those tumbling boils show a dissolving bar and a changing channel. No, the romance and beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish."
(M. Twain, "Life on the Mississippi", 1883)

1.1 From FICCS to EUFICCS, from Italy to Europe

The history of the EUFICCS approach dates back to the beginning of this century when the first pioneer programme of service-learning was developed by Lavinia Bracci in Siena. At the time the concept and pedagogy of service-learning was absolutely unknown in the European educational panorama, even though the dimension of volunteerism was (and still is) traditionally ingrained in the history of Europe and of Italy in particular[1]. The study abroad programme Siena Italian Studies officially saw its inception in the year 2004 and the following year it acquired its definite identity as a full-immersion experience where service-learning, study abroad and international education combined and were integrated by the practice of structured and guided reflection as the glue of the entire student experience:

> "To extend the use of reflection across all three domains (i.e. Service learning, study abroad, international education) provides a powerful method for thinking systematically about the learning objectives for each domain and for the integration in ISL" (Bringle, Hatcher and Jones 2001, 17).

Since 2004, service-learning has been explored and implemented by several other Italian and European institutions of higher education: the

LUMSA (Libera Università Maria Santissima Assunta), the European project Europe Engage (2014-2017) and its further developments (EASLHE, European Association of Service Learning and Higher Education, and EOSLHE, European Observatory of Service Learning and Higher Education), to mention just a few.

Right from the start faculty at Siena Italian Studies began research work that would validate the programme and its theoretical and methodological background: the years 2004-2006 were particularly proficuous because the FICCS (Full-Immersion: Culture, Content and Service) approach was developed and elaborated.

In the constant effort to improve the educational quality of the programme, faculty worked on the conceptualisation and definition of Reflective Intercultural Competence (RIC) as the main objective of studying abroad. While in other mobility experiences students develop a set of several competences (linguistic, social, communicative, etc.), this unique competence, which is developed and witnessed thanks to structured reflection, is clearly inherent to this approach. Successively (since 2008), research was dedicated to the elaboration of a tool that could assess this competence, namely the RICA (Reflective Intercultural Competence Assessment) Model[2]. This has also allowed an ongoing evaluation of programme quality and of the integrity of goals achieved.

The FICCS approach found one of its most important opportunities in the funding by the European Union of the EUFICCS (European Use of Full-Immersion, Culture, Content and Service) Project (2011-2014), co-financed under the umbrella of a lifelong learning programme. The project involved three EU countries and allowed the implementation of this methodology in different contexts (namely, Spain and Portugal).

The EUFICCS project opened the way for the programme to acquire a European dimension, while maintaining and reinforcing the concept of the local: what was born as an immersion in a foreign culture started to become an attempt to 'integrate' the plurilingual and pluricultural identity of Europe into the EUFICCS curriculum. In fact, since 2015 students have had the opportunity to participate in a multi-destination option that combines Italy (Siena) and either Belgium (Brussels) or Cameroon (Yaoundé). At the same time, following the work of the Council of Europe, this European dimension has been fostered by the implementation of the RFCDC into the curriculum of EUFICCS students[3].

While keeping an eye on Europe, faculty has continued research focusing on RIC and its assessment: the extended analysis of students' journals demanded that a more detailed assessment and specific

descriptors for each level of competence in terms of a list of rubrics (attitudes, skills, knowledge and outcomes) be compiled.

Starting from 2008 with the conference "Service Learning in Italy: Exploring the Connection between Volunteerism & Academic Institutions", the faculty and research team in Siena has had the chance to constantly engage in the international debate in the field of service-learning and the development of intercultural competence through a series of conferences and meetings organised by Siena Italian Studies and Associazione Culturale Ulisse in partnership with other American and European institutions both in Europe and overseas[4].

1.2 The history of service-learning and its leading to the EUFICCS approach

"The beauty of service-learning is that it is not antithetical to personal advancement nor does it ask the university to forsake its mission of thinking, reasoning, research and care for the precision of words. Rather it suggests that in partnering […] with those who are expert in providing service, the academy may do what it does well and the agency what it does well. Service-learning brings into a working collaboration two of the great institutions in our societies, the service sector and the higher education" (Chisholm 2005, 99).

The term 'service-learning' was first coined by educators R. Sigmon and W. Ramsey in collaboration with the Southern Regional Education Board in 1967 (Sigmon 1990; Marks 1973) in order to describe a conscious educational growth while accomplishing tasks that meet genuine human needs. However, the theoretical grounding of service-learning dates back to the work of W. James (1890), J. Dewey and others in the early 20th century who promoted experiential models of "learning by doing" and education through service linked to social and personal growth, as a result of a larger cycle of education and social change movements of the late 1800s and early 1900s (Dewey 1916, 1933, 1938; Stanton, Giles & Cruz 1999). In fact, for Dewey (1916, 1938) education must be *active* and *progressive*. Education should be *active* in that students, faced with the difficulties that the world affords them, act upon those difficulties and react to the resulting consequences of their actions; they put strategies into place and verify or reject their hypotheses. Education should also be *progressive* in that the activity that takes place within schools and universities, implies a progressive development. School represents a social environment for students who develop step by step, starting from the educational experience in family life and the environment in which they

live. For Dewey, therefore, the educational experience needs to begin with the everyday experience of the individual: the experience is educational in the moment in which it produces the expansion and the enrichment of the individual, bringing learners towards the betterment and improvement of their self and the environment. The entire school of thought developed by Dewey is known as Experiential Learning and it has been implemented worldwide in several educational settings.

For Dewey the *thought* of an individual derives from *experience* (understood as social experience); in service-learning the *learning* derives from the *service* shared, lived and experienced in the community.

Howard Berry, founder of the International Partnership for Service-Learning and Leadership (IPSL) defines service-learning as "the union of public and community service with structured and intentional learning" (Berry 1988, 3).

> "Service-learning unites academic study and volunteer community service in mutually reinforced ways. The service makes the study immediate, applicable and relevant; the study, through knowledge, analysis and reflection, informs the service" (Chisholm 2005, 339).

The service aspect can involve projects in a wide array of activities that contribute to the well-being of individuals, communities and beyond; the academic study may be related to a wide range of disciplines in the liberal arts and education for relevant professions (Chisholm 2005).

Learning through service is carried out thanks to the implementation of Kolb's cycle (1984), which combines experience, reflection and knowledge in a circular and harmonious process.

Fig. 1.1 – Kolb's Cycle
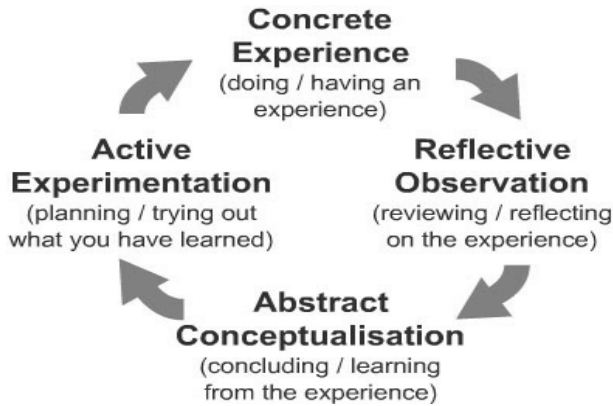
A student's path in a service-learning curriculum can be well described by a metaphor of ecology. Service-learning students are actors in a social system that is interwoven, dynamic, ever-changing and consequently in a constant process of balancing; thus, such a metaphor broadens the common meaning given to ecology, intended as the study of environment, to the study of interactions taking place in the context we live in and of which we are part. In fact:

> "By ecology I do not mean environmental. Although related, environmental issues are of a different, and narrower, type. Indeed, environmentalists often take a reductionist tack, ignoring the ecological situation for the sake of specific interests.
> An ecology is an organic, dynamic system, and an ecological perspective means thinking systemically. Partly this is related to the work of Ludwig von Bertalanffy and his General Systems Theory. The author of his biography, Mark Davidson, says, "the characteristics of a system emerge not only from his parts but also and more importantly from the way the parts are arranged and the way they interact. Bertalanffy therefore urged that we learn to think [of] 'interaction' in all aspects of our lives. […] The key word in all this is "interaction". Touch an ecology in one place and the whole system changes. But not only is "interaction" the key word, interaction is the system that is, and this is crucial to grasp, to think ecologically is not merely to see parts that interact – that continue the mechanistic approach – but to perceive that the primary reality and motivator is interaction" (Berry 2005, 40-41).

> "The participants [...] retain their identity but relate interactively. Both aspects are necessary to the existence of the wholeness and the health of the ecological system. The pedagogy of service-learning, as it emerges, seems to be based on the same relatedness. A relation between knower and doer, a relation between the knower and the known, a relation between the student and the society, a relation between student, faculty and subject. All in a dynamic ecology. […] For service-learning offers them [students] a chance. A chance to engage in the participatory universe. A chance to be present at their own education. And a chance – if only that – to encounter a moral dimension in education" (Berry 2005, 64).

This systemic approach reinforces the need to hyphenate the term service-learning since students' experience must be seen as a whole:

> "As a starting point, the term itself is important, and the hyphen is crucial. Service-learning implies an ecology, a totality, a symbiosis, a living, participatory relationship between the doing and the knowing, between action and reflection" (Berry 2005, 57).

As Furco (1996) elaborates, service-learning programmes and experiences are distinguished by an intentional balance between the learning that takes place and the service that is being provided, equally benefitting the recipient of the service and the provider of the service. Furco argues that no experiential learning approach is static, but rather evolves along a continuum of experience. As it appears clearly in the following diagram, the distinctive feature of service-learning, when compared to community service, volunteerism, and internship, is that it relies on the balance between its two central components: on the one hand in community service and volunteerism obviously the learning is not excluded, and on the other service is part of internships. What makes service-learning unique is an almost perfect balance (Furco 1996).