Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference of the Journal Scuola Democratica

REINVENTING EDUCATION

2-5 June 2021

VOLUME I

Citizenship, Work and The Global Age

ASSOCIAZIONE "PER SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA"

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Citizenship, Work and The Global Age

ASSOCIAZIONE "PER SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA"
Via Francesco Satolli, 30 – 00165 - Rome, Italy

Edited by

The Organizing Committee the 2nd International Conference of the Journal Scuola Democratica

https://www.rivisteweb.it/issn/1129-731X

Published by: ASSOCIAZIONE "PER SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA"

Via Francesco Satolli, 30 – 00165 – Rome, Italy

Published in Open Access

This book is digitally available at:

https://www.scuolademocratica-conference.net/proceedings-2/

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How to cite a proceeding from this Volume. APA citation system:

Author, N., Author, S., (2021). «Title», in *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference of the Journal Scuola Democratica "Reinventing Education",* **VOL. 1,** *Citizenship, Work and The Global Age,* **pp-pp**

ISBN 978-88-944888-6-9

Title **Proceedings of the Second International Conference of the Journal "Scuola Democratica" – Reinventing Education VOLUME I Citizenship, Work and The Global Age**

This volume contains papers presented in the 2nd International Conference of the Journal "Scuola Democratica" which took place online on 2-5 June 2021. The Conference was devoted to the needs and prospects of Reinventing Education.

The challenges posed by the contemporary world have long required a rethinking of educational concepts, policies and practices. The question about education 'for what' as well as 'how' and 'for whom' has become unavoidable and yet it largely remained elusive due to a tenacious attachment to the ideas and routines of the past which are now far off the radical transformations required of educational systems. Scenarios, reflections and practices fostering the possibility of change towards the reinvention of the educational field as a driver of more general and global changes have been centerstage topics at the Conference. Multidisciplinary approach from experts from different disciplinary communities, including sociology, pedagogy, psychology, economics, architecture, political science has brought together researchers, decision makers and educators from all around the world to investigate constraints and opportunities for reinventing education.

The Conference has been an opportunity to present and discuss empirical and theoretical works from a variety of disciplines and fields covering education and thus promoting a trans- and inter-disciplinary discussion on urgent topics; to foster debates among experts and professionals; to diffuse research findings all over international scientific networks and practitioners' mainstreams; to launch further strategies and networking alliances on local, national and international scale; to provide a new space for debate and evidences to educational policies. In this framework, more than 800 participants, including academics, educators, university students, had the opportunity to engage in a productive and fruitful dialogue based on research, analyses and critics, most of which have been published in this volume in their full version.

ISBN 978-88-944888-6-9

Citizenship, Work and The Global Age
A Premise

What is education for? This philosophical question cannot be answered ignoring contributions from social and educational sciences. The growing focus on learning outcomes should have prompted discussion on the values and aims in defining policy objectives and developing accountability systems and evidence-based approaches. Whereas for years public discourse on education has most frequently been confined to a merely sector-based perspective, without addressing the relationship (i.e., interdependency and/or autonomy) with globalised societies or to face the new challenges of contemporary's world. The relationship between education and society and the issue of aims can be observed in a new context which has seen the weakening of the society-nation equation and the strengthening of global dimensions.

The crisis born of the pandemic is more and more global and multidimensional. It inevitably obliges to ask what the post-pandemic socio-economic scenarios could be and what challenges might emerge from the transformations of education and training systems and policies. Many researchers and observers think that the most relevant of these challenges is that of inequalities between and within countries. The medium-long term nature of many of these challenges poses a complex question: does the pandemic tend to widen or narrow the time-space horizons of people perceptions, rationalities, and decisions?

For decades, the field of education and training has witnessed continuous growth in globalization and internationalization: just think of the role of the large-scale assessment surveys and the increasing influence of international organisations. Phenomena and concepts such as policy mobility (lending and borrowing) or – within another field of research – policy learning, as well as global scaling up, global-local hybridization and policy assemblage might find a useful opportunity of debate and in-depth analysis in this stream. This might also be true of the related issue regarding how comparative research must be carried out and of the relationship between some government 'technologies' adopted in the latest cycle of policies – for example, quasi-market, evaluation, and autonomy of schools and universities – and the ever more criticized neo-liberal paradigm. In this framework, without any revival of the political or methodological nationalism, a critical rethinking of the national dimension, perhaps too hurriedly assumed to be 'obsolete', can be useful also for a comparative reflection. As to our continent we are in the presence not only of globalization of educational policies, but also of their Europeanisation, due to the extent of the European Commission's strategy and its Open Method of Coordination. Beyond the official distinction between formal, non-formal, and unformal learning, it seems European initiatives and programmes shape a new policy world preparing the future of education, particularly through different expert networks, new ways of conceptualizing knowledge, and disseminating standards. On these issues there is no lack of reflections and research, some of which very critical indeed, whose results deserve to be broadly shared and discussed, too.

The equipping of the new generations with the tools – knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values – to live in a plural and interconnected world is delicate matter indeed in Europe. It is the issue at stake for the encounters – and at times clashes – between old and new visions and

forms of pluralism and secularism. Around this theme are developed educational policies and strongly heterogeneous curricula. Such topic is linked also to the variability in young people's competences and attitudes towards 'cultural otherness'.

Life-long learning is another question of notable importance at international level as it implies both a diverse temporal horizon for education and its link to the dimensions of work. And a different approach to the relationship between school and extra-scholastic (life-wide) learning is also implied. From this stems the necessity of greater investment for example in both the early years (ECEC) and the adult education. We might ask, however, how much has been done to achieve this goal, and whether it risks remaining a fascinating but largely unfinished project for a long time.

Within a general rethinking of the aims and the means at the disposal of education systems, many papers ask whether until now enough has been done to educate towards citizenship and democracy and whether various national educational systems have adopted this issue as their core mission.

A second group of questions derives from some crucial challenges – such as the dramatic deterioration of the biosphere, the climate, and the health – which impose both the necessity of rethinking this mission in a planetary context and redefining the 'citizenship' as a concept not merely national, but multi-level, that is ranging from global to local; and in our continent European, too. How deeply are our nations presently involved in the task of educating their citizens in terms of knowledge of global and trans-national issues? And are they striving to build a collective common consciousness in Europe? What help is being given in this sense by proposals elaborated and experiences promoted by international organizations or the EU?

Finally, starting from infant and primary schools, what weight does citizenship education have in schools, what approaches are adopted and what have shown to be the most effective? What didactics are applied and what seem to be the most promising experiences? To what extent are teachers prepared and motivated and students interested in it? Universities and adult education should also play a role in citizenship education. What proposals and significant experiences can be described and examined?

The Volume also includes contributions on the relationship between education and economic systems which is a classic subject of social science. During the twentieth century, the functionalist perspective established a close link between 'school for the masses' and the construction of individuals personalities conforming to values and social objectives. Professions have then become more and more specialized and therefore requiring ever more targeted skills. Hence, the insistence on the need to train future workers in technical and technological skills, as well as more recently in the 'soft skills' climate, increasingly necessary in certain sectors of the economy (Industry 4.0). The alliance between the functionalist perspective and the neoliberal visions finds its conceptual and practical pivot in the employability conceptual frame. On the other hand, since the 1970s, critical research has highlighted that formal education system contributes to the reproduction of inequalities, confirming and strengthening hierarchies and power relations between different actors of the economic system. These lines of investigation have underlined the weight of cultural and social capital in determining school performance, but also the inflation of educational credentials as a combined effect of mass schooling and changes in the economic system. In more recent times, the fragmentation of the educational and training systems, because of the

multiplication of public and private agencies in charge of training citizens, in addition to the explosion of the non-formal and informal as learning places (e.g., on the Internet), challenges the school to maintain its primacy as a place responsible for training workers. Moreover, it questions its ability to continue to represent a social elevator and / or a place of social justice.

The issue of the reproduction of inequalities and differential returns of educational qualifications fuels lively and stimulating interdisciplinary debates: economic stagnation, mass unemployment and job instability affect the inclusion of young generations in the labour market. Recently, in the context of lifelong learning policies, the relationship between training and work has become increasingly central, but the definition of the goals of these policies is not neutral: in the neoliberal mantra it is a question of guaranteeing the adaptability, employability and autonomy of each individual, so that one can occupy a place in society according to the dominant values. There is no shortage of critical voices about this individualistic and functionalist interpretation of the Lifelong Learning vision. On the other hand, even the supporters of neoliberal-inspired policies want an inclusive training offer (from a meritocratic perspective), as it is essential for recruiting resources and supporting flexible production systems focused on knowledge.

The attention of scholars focuses on the effects of the 'knowledge society' in the educational system of European countries. In this perspective, several studies have focused attention on the orientation processes that contribute to the reproduction of inequalities as the students from the lower classes tend to orient themselves, and are oriented by their teachers, towards the vocational paths, stigmatized within the educational systems.

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Linguistic Pluralism and Minorities in a New Global Perspective. Education and Linguistic Policies

Maintenance and Use of Heritage Languages and Italian *lingua filiale* by Second Generation Students with Migration Background

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ABSTRACT: *Impact FVG 2018-20 is a research project which involved more than 1,000 students with migration background attending primary and middle schools in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, north-eastern Italy. During the field phase, in school year 2018-19, a sociolinguistic questionnaire was distributed between the students with at least one foreign parent attending G4 to G8, in order to collect data about language repertoires, uses in the family and with friends, maintenance or loss of the Heritage Languages, perceptions about Italy and plurilingualism. As already appeared in previous and similar studies in different environments, the results show a regression in the competence and uses of the language of origins to favour a parallel extension of the domains of Italian, a code that for these second-generation pupils cannot be considered a second language anymore. The reasons behind this shift might be different, and some between these factors are presented in these pages with the support of recent data. Notwithstanding the situation, the research subject affirms to share positive perceptions about the importance and usefulness of all the resources available to them, in their plurilingual repertoires. They also seem to be willing to study and improve their abilities in the languages inherited by their migrant parents.*

KEYWORDS: *Migration, Primary School, Heritage Languages, Shift, Influential Factors*

Introduction

According to statistical data presented by ISMU foundation, in 2020 the foreign population of Italy stabilized around 6,190,000 units (Blangiardo, Ortensi, 2021, 73). Ministry of Instruction reports for the same year that 10,0% of the students in the national educational system have a migration background, which means that they are either born abroad or in a family where at least one parent is not an Italian native (Santagati, 2021,143-4). During the second semester of school year 2018-19 (s.y. from now on). the *Impact FVG 2018-20* project, under the direction of Professor Fabiana Fusco of University of Udine, studied this growing presence in primary and middle schools in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, in the north-eastern corner of the country.

With a foreign population unevenly distributed on its territory, Friuli Venezia Giulia in s.y. 2018-19 ranks 8th between the other Italian Regions for the number of students with non-Italian citizenship (or Cni) (MIUR, 2020, 15). Significant differences, however, exist both between different school cycles and at a territorial level: the highest percentages are reached in preschools and primary schools (14.1% and 14.2% respectively). and in the Provinces of Pordenone and Gorizia (14.3% and 12.8%) (MIUR, 2019). Different factors have an influence on these percentages: on the one side students with a migration background seem still to make different choices for their future, therefore their number is lower at the higher levels of the educational system, on the other their presence on the territory follows the pattern of the settlement of the immigrant families in the area, and is therefore related to socio-economic factors like job availability, cost of living, access to affordable housing (Attanasio, 2020).

In this multifaceted environment, *Impact 2018-20* focuses on the linguistic aspects of the new plurilingualism of Italian schools. During s.y. 2018-19 two research fellows, Federico Salvaggio and the author of this contribution, visited 11 Comprehensive Institutes and 1 CPIA (Centre for Adult Education) in Friuli Venezia Giulia, for a total of 31 primary and 16 middle schools, located in different areas of the Region: part in the main cities, like Trieste, Udine or Pordenone, part in smaller towns and villages, from the northern mountains of Carnia to the coasts of the Adriatic Sea. The project objectives are to analyse the peculiarities and forms of the new plurilingualism in Italian schools, in order to achieve a better understanding of the perceptions, the choices and the future objectives of this growing component of the students' population[1].

The specific aspects of bilingual and plurilingual behaviors which are dealt with in these pages have already been extensively discussed by Chini (2018). which focuses on the language repertoires and uses of students with a migration background in the Province of Pavia (Lombardy). After two surveys at a ten years distance, in 2002 and 2012, the research group directed by professor Chini registers a significant reduction in the use of the languages of origins in different domains, mainly in the family and with friends (Chini, 2004; Chini, Andorno, 2018). Chini (2018, 154-7) identifies a number of factors which might specifically favor this shift from the Heritage Languages to Italian: between them gender, parents' country of origins, generation, and place of residence. Evidence from the data collected by *Impact FVG 2018-20* is here presented, in order to find out whether these recent research results support these observations.

[1] More details about *Impact FVG 2018-20* and about its results can be found in the first project monography (Fusco, 2021a) as well as on the project webpage, which is hosted by the Friuli Venezia Giulia official servers:
https://www.regione.fvg.it/rafvg/cms/RAFVG/cultura-sport/immigrazione/FOGLIA8/

1. The Research and the Subjects

During the field phase, the researchers visited the schools and collected quantitative and qualitative data from the students, the main subjects of the study, but also from teachers, parents, school administration and direction. The sociolinguistic questionnaire used for the survey is an adaptation of the one designed by Chini for her 2002 research in the Province of Pavia (Chini, 2004). The same tool was used again, ten years later, by the group coordinated by Chini and Andorno (2018). extending the scope to the urban area of Turin, Piedmont. More recent and closer to Friuli Venezia Giulia applications are the 2008 to 2013 study on adult immigrants attending second language courses in former CTPs (now CPIAs) in the Province of Udine, directed by Fusco (2017). as well as the 2017 survey in primary, middle and high schools of Udine, still under the supervision of Fusco (2021b). Lastly, another project worth mentioning in this context, as it is similar in the use of an adaptation of the same questionnaire, is the s.y. 2018-19 research coordinated by Professor Chiara Gianollo in a number of primary schools of the city of Bologna, Emilia Romagna (Gianollo, Fiorentini, 2020).

The sociolinguistic questionnaire used by *Impact FVG 2018-20*, 67 questions long and divided into 8 sections, allowed to collect information about the subjects, their repertoires both in Italy and in the country of origins, language uses in various domains and with different interlocutors, proficiency, use of the Heritage Languages to study and at school, perceptions about Italy, about the country of origins, and about plurilingualism, perspectives and projects for the future (for more information see Fusco, 2021a; Baldo, 2021; Baldo and Salvaggio, in print). Since the beginning of the field phase in February and until its end in June 2019, 1,081 sociolinguistic questionnaires were collected: 280 in G4 and 231 in G5 of primary schools; 179 in G6, 191 in G7 and 200 in G8 of middle schools.

Most of the students who participated to the survey (817, equal to 67.7% of the total) declared they were born in Italy by foreign parents, therefore belonging to what is usually defined as second generation. This feeling of belonging and their perceptions about nationality revealed however to be somehow undefine3d, as the subjects choose to respond differently to two related questions of the questionnaire: the first asked the place of birth, while the second was more focused on the idea of 'where are you from?', 'where do you belong?'. According to the latter perspective, only 277 (26.0%) of these students born and raised in Italy affirmed to feel exclusively Italian, and some preferred to define themselves as Italo-Chinese, Italo-Rumanian, Italo-Moroccan or with another double attribution, showing that the self-perceptions about identity are somehow unclear yet (Fusco, 2021a; Baldo, 2021).

Referring to their parents' nationality, a third point of view adopted by Chini (2004). Chini and Andorno (2018) and Fusco (2021b) as well, the first five and most represented countries of origin are: Albanian (15.1%). Rumanian (14.6%). Moroccan (6.6%). Chinese (6.0%). and Serbian (5.6%). The shows to be representative both of the main migration flows that interested Italy in the last decades, and of the specific distribution of communities at a local level, in Friuli Venezia Giulia (IDOS; 2020; Attanasio, 2020). In line with this introduction, the most frequently used languages in the family are Italian, which is present in 781 of the 1,081 families reached by the researchers (72.2%). and a conspicuous number of immigrant languages or dialects (Vedovelli, Barni, 2014): Albanian (15.4%). Rumanian (14.8%). English (14.4%). Serbian (8.4%). and different varieties of Arabic (7.4%). only to quote the first. In all, 80 languages and 113 dialects are reported by the subject, this way exposing the extreme richness and diversity of the linguistic resources brought to the Italian schools by these emergent bilinguals with a migration background.

2. The Heritage Language and Italian

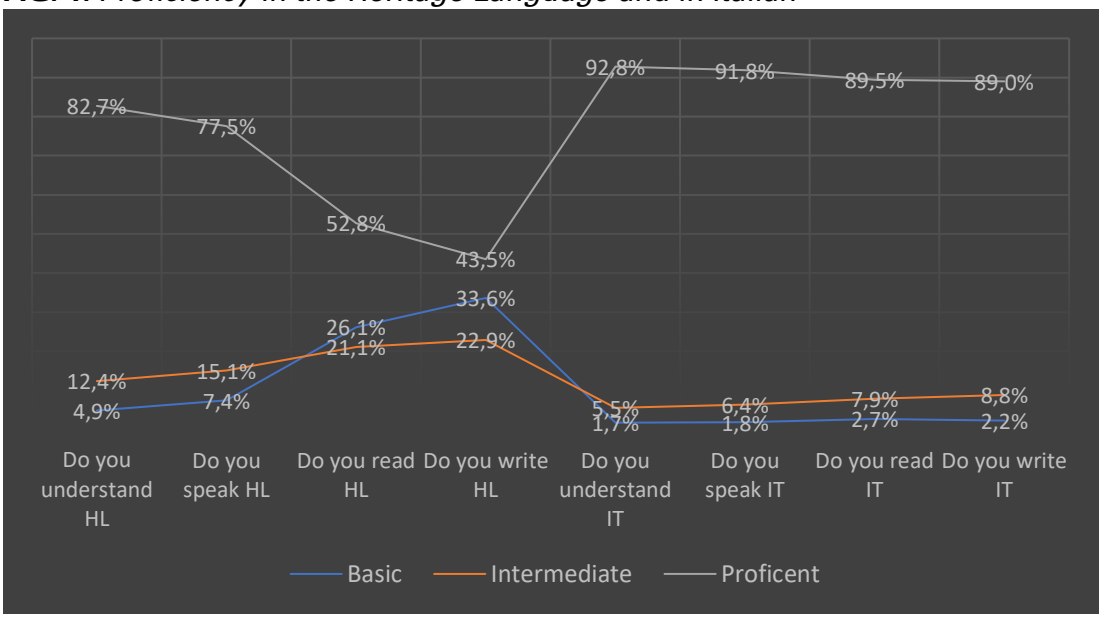
A group of questions of the questionnaire asks to the subjects to self-evaluate their proficiency in four linguistic skills – understanding, speaking, reading and listening – both in Italian and in the language of origins learnt from their parents. Students are asked to reflect upon the ways they use the linguistic resources in their repertoires and to assign themselves a mark, ranging from 1 to 10, where 1 represents the lower end of the scale and 10 a complete self-reliance on one's own proficiency. Data was subsequently recalculated defining as basic language users the subjects who self-assigned a mark between 1 and 4, intermediate those who declared abilities between 5 and 7, and as proficient only the pupils which affirmed a competence of 8 or more out of 10.

Italian, the code shared by the vast majority of the subjects, widely spread and spoken in 72.2% of their families, in the conceptual framework of this contribution appears to be closer to a *lingua filiale* than to a second language (L2): «con il tempo sarà il figlio, sempre più competente in L2 e orientato verso il bilinguismo, a esercitare un'influenza linguistica sull'ambiente familiare» (Favaro, 2020, 296)[2]. On the other hand, the codes mostly learnt in spontaneous daily interactions with the parents, with other members of the family or people else way connected with the country of origins, can be intended as Heritage Languages, therefore minority and immigrant languages

[2] In time it will be the sons and daughters, every day more skilled in Italian second language and more oriented towards bilingualism, to influence at a linguistic level the family domain (my translation).

learned at home, but not fully developed because of the insufficient input from the environment (Montrul, 2008, 216-33).

FIG. 1. *Proficiency in the Heritage Language and in Italian*



Source: *Impact FVG 2018-20*

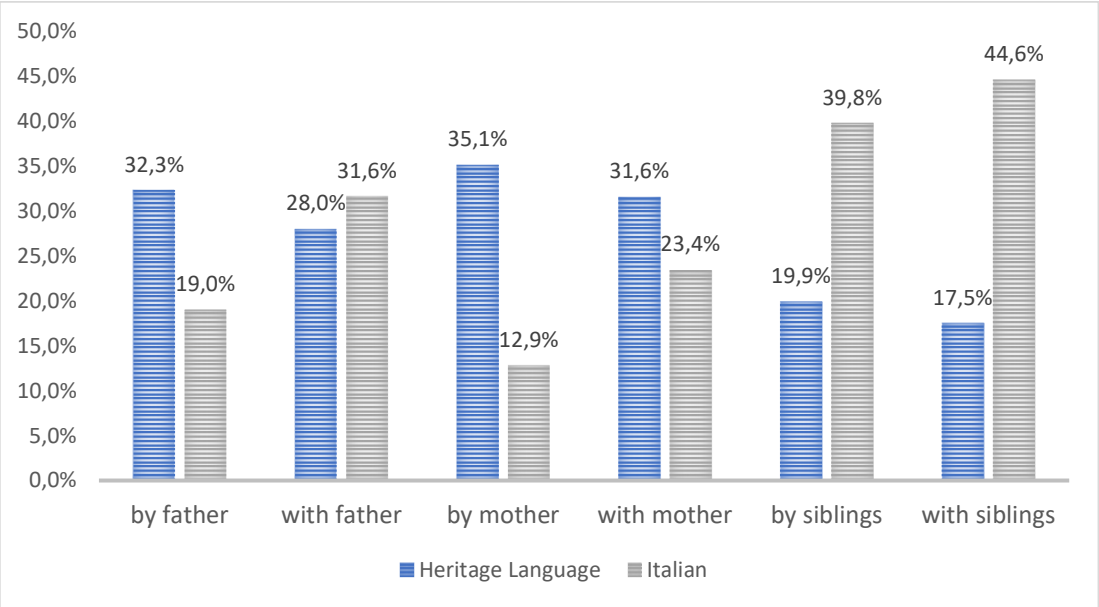
The evidence collected by *Impact FVG 2018-20* seem actually to enforce this point of observation, as:

- the highest levels of proficiency in the Heritage Language are achieved in spoken skills, while written abilities rank considerably lower;
- the competence in Heritage Language abilities is usually lower than in the corresponding skills in Italian (with a 10,1 percentage points gap in receptive oral comprehension, 14,3 in productive oral interaction, 36,7 in reading and a broad 45,5 in writing);
- the overall percentage of students with an insufficient perception of their communicative skill, the basic users, is considerably higher in the Heritage Language than it is in Italian.

In synthesis, the Heritage Language maintenance seems to be endangered, while a gradual process of erosion and shift towards Italian clearly appears, as already evidenced in a different environment by Chini (2018) and Chini, Andorno and Sordella (2018, 269-74). Italian is already the language these students seem to master at a higher level, a *lingua filiale* which they use, speak and write, better than their parents. Other sections in the questionnaire confirm that the subjects are used to helping out their parents, especially their mothers, with Italian and especially in dealing with the written forms of the language (Fusco, 2021a). A different group of questions was structured and used to study the language uses of the subject with different interlocutors and in various domains. The students were asked to list all the languages which they usually choose to speak to or which they are spoken by the other members of their families, friends from different countries of

origins, classmates and teachers, other adults in Italy or in the country of origins. With some approximation, it was this way possible to make a hypothesis on the strategies adopted by the speakers when they access to the rich resources in their repertories.

FIG. 2. *Exclusive use of the Heritage Language and Italian by or with family members*



Source: *Impact FVG 2018-20*

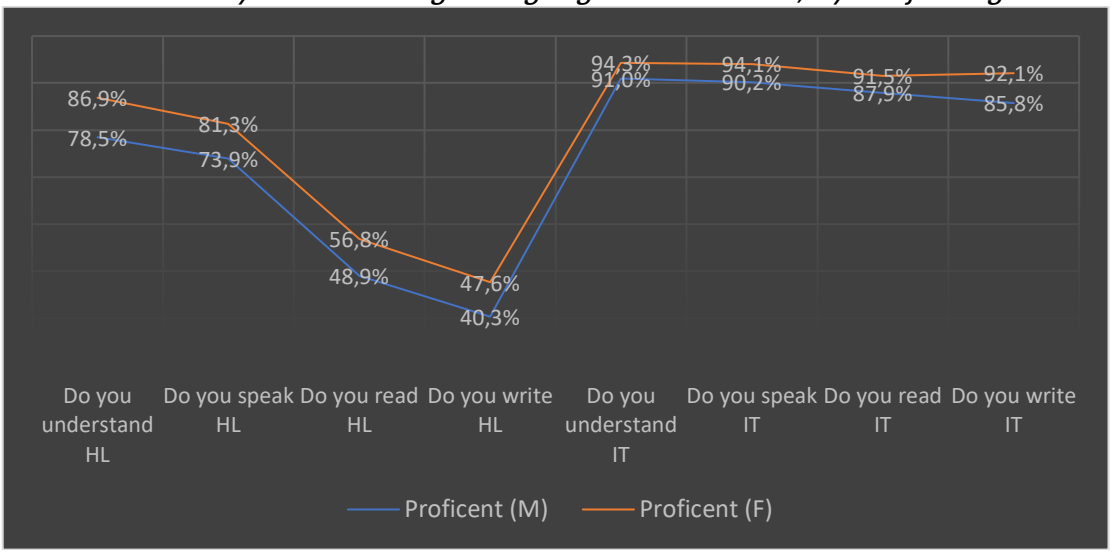
Following a trend already registered in chronological order by Chini (2004). Chini and Andorno (2018) and Fusco (2021b). the language uses in the family domain show in the new generations a progressive process of shift from the Heritage Language to Italian. The code connected to the origins appears to be a resource mostly registered in receptive uses, while the majority language of the country of residence seems to be preferred in the opposite direction of the interactions, in the productive uses (which might be seen as natural, as Italian is also the code these emergent bilingual speakers are more proficient with).

When talking with their parents, which represent the first generation of immigrants, the informants generally seem to get more opportunities to resort to the Heritage Languages (probably also because sometimes fathers, and more often mothers, do not dispose of a sufficient proficiency in Italian, see Fusco 2021a for more details about this aspect). On the other hand, with brothers or sisters, which may be considered as representatives of the new generations, an evident shift appears and the trend in the interactions is to prefer Italian over the Heritage Language. A very similar pattern is registered in the interaction with friends from the same country, where the gap between the use of the Heritage Language and Italian is even broader (from a gap of 19.9 percentage points in receptive uses in the family to a 28.0 one outside the family, and from a 27.1 to a 31.2 one in productive uses in the same domains).

3. Factors which influence the language shift

According to Chini (2018, 154-7) and Chini, Andorno and Sordella (2018, 274-8) there is a number of factors which are acknowledged to have an influence on the maintenance of the Heritage Languages by emergent bilingual speakers with a migration background. In a gender perspective, girls seem to be more likely to achieve higher levels of proficiency in the Heritage Languages than the boys, as it has already been exposed by earlier research (Chini, 2004, 318). The composition of the parental structure seems to have an influence as well, as the parents' ethnicity is related to their level of competence both in Italian and in the language of the country of origins. The generation of arrival, or the birth in Italy, can represent a decisive factor as students who directly experienced migration were exposed for a longer time to the language of origins and can actually consider Italian as an L2, while those who were born in Italy may have known the Heritage Language only through their parents' voices (for a more detailed framework about generation of migration see Rumbaut, 1997 and 2004, as well as Versino, 2018, 64-8). Two other influent factors are the country of origins of the migrant family, as some communities seem to be keener at maintaining alive their languages, cultural traditions and connection with the past, and the place of residence. According to Meluzzi, Chini, and Versino (2018, 227-37) the degree of urbanism of the place of residence showed to influence the data collected in north-western Italy, as living in big and more densely inhabited areas like the cities of Pavia (Lombardy). and Turin (Piedmont) seemed to favour the use and maintenance of the language of origins, while living in less populated centers seemed to promote the shift to Italian.

FIG. 3. *Proficiency in the Heritage Language and in Italian, by subjects' gender*

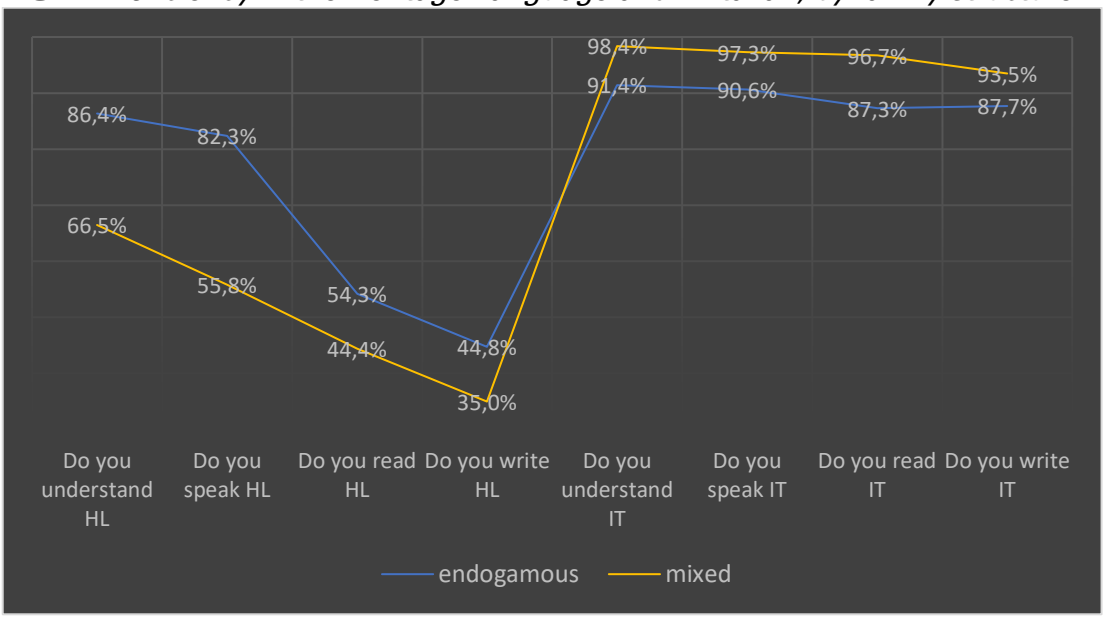


Source: *Impact FVG 2018-20*

The information collected by *Impact FVG 2018-20* in Friuli Venezia Giulia seem to be generically aligned and bring more evidence to support these observations. For what concerns gender, the sample group appears to be well balanced and it is composed by 49.1% of girls and 50.9% of boys. A strong correlation between a specific gender and a corresponding language seems not to be evident, but in practically all the situations and in all the language abilities girls more than boys affirm to dispose of a high level of proficiency (i.e., scoring a self-assigned mark of 8 to 10). This seems to be true both in the code connected with the country of origins, and in Italian.

Between the pupils with a migration background who participated to the Friulian survey, 794 belong to a family where both parents are foreigners and come from the same country of origins (endogamous couples). while 189 live in a family where only one parent is Italian and the second one has a different ethnicity (mixed marriages). This exerts an influence on the linguistic repertoire of the family and, subsequently, on the language uses of the subject. The evidence collected seems to support this perspective, as informants who live in endogamous families are considerably more often proficient in the Heritage Language (with a wider gap in oral abilities), while in Italian an opposite trend prevails (with a small yet stable gap around 7.2 percentage points in mean).

FIG. 4. *Proficiency in the Heritage Language and in Italian, by family structure*



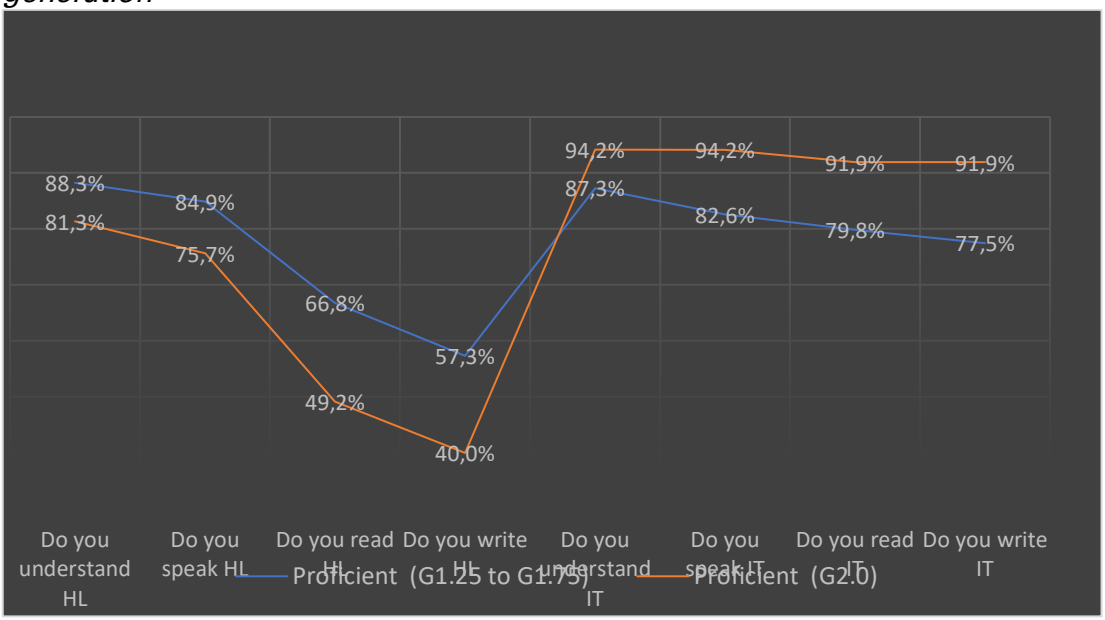
Source: *Impact FVG 2018-20*

As most of the subjects who participated to the survey in Friuli Venezia Giulia were born in Italy, it was neither possible nor representative comparing them with the other three generation groups described by Rumbaut (1997, 2004). The 851 second generation students with migration background (G2.0) were therefore generically considered side to side with those not born in Italy. In these latter mixed group, 82

subjects migrated to Italy before they were 6 (or generation G1.75). 116 arrived between 6 and 12 years of age (G1.50). and only 17 reached Italy when they were 13 or older, as a consequence sharing a considerably higher experience of life in the country of origins (G1.25). Evidence shows that the first group, as it is natural to expect, includes a significantly higher percentage of proficient Heritage Language users (again, especially in the oral abilities). while between the second generation subjects more informants feel to be better in Italian.

The 794 endogamous families count up to 83 different country of origins, where the most represented group is the Albanian, with 146 families, but many ethnicities which are referred by no more than one or two subjects are present too (Kazakhstan, Burkina Faso, Sudan, and Hungary to name some). Consequently, when searching for possible correlations between the parents' country of origins and the proficiency level achieved in the Heritage Languages or in Italian, it was decided to consider only the groups composed by at least 50 units. Data shows a high degree of variability and different patterns, but it is hard to say which correlations are really significant. The members of some communities (namely the Serbian, followed by the Chinese, and by the Romanian) seem to express a higher degree of proficiency in the Heritage Language, and they declare a lower gap between oral and written skills.

FIG. 5. *Proficiency in the Heritage Language and in Italian, by subjects' generation*



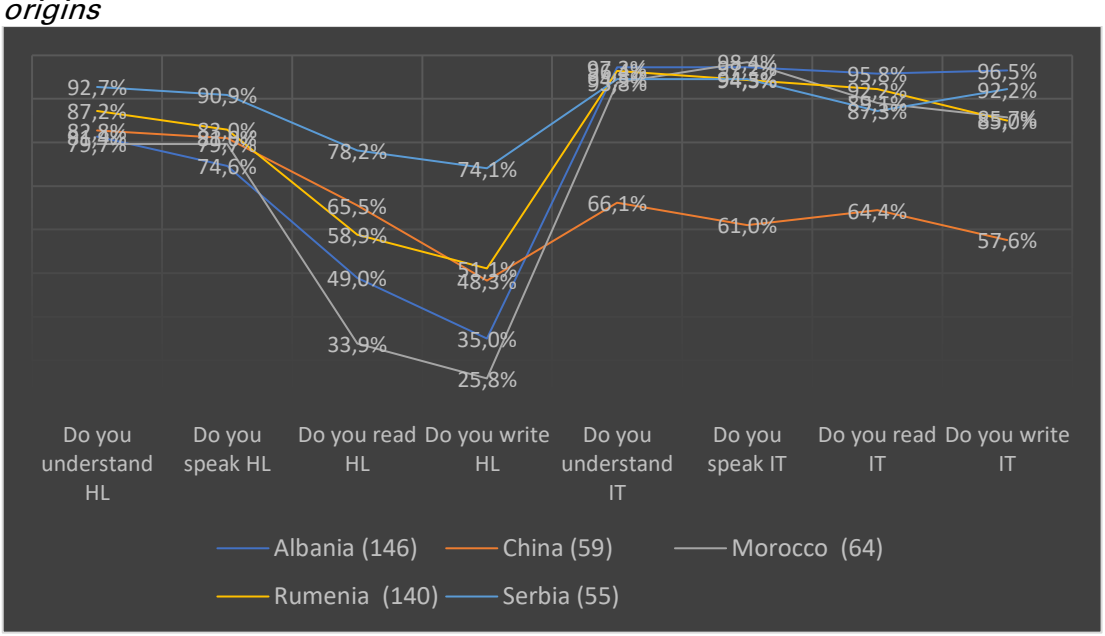
Source: *Impact FVG 2018-20*

The subjects representative of one nationality in all, the Chinese, seem to meet higher obstacles both in the code connected with their origins and with Italian. As a matter of facts, the 59 Chinese students with a migration background are also the only ones who more rarely affirm to dispose of a high proficiency in Italian, with an evident gap with the

other nationalities. In conclusion, significant differences seem to correlate the country of origins of subjects' families to the levels of proficiency achieved in the Heritage Language and in Italian, but more specific studies and with broader samples for each nationality might be needed in order to determine actual trends and peculiarities.

Roughly half of the sociolinguistic questionnaires collected by the researchers of *Impact FVG 2018-20* were distributed to pupils living in the main and more densely populated urban areas of the Region, like Udine, Pordenone, or the capital city of Trieste (502 subjects in all). while the other half came from smaller towns or even villages with less than 10,000 inhabitants in the mountains or in the countryside (467). The sample shows therefore to be well balanced and data analyses here seems to confirm the observations about language shift and degree of urbanism already presented in Meluzzi and colleagues (2018). Students living in smaller towns of Friuli Venezia Giulia declare considerably less often a high degree of proficiency in the language connected to the migratory past, while the situation about Italian appears to be almost unmodified by the place of residence. It is therefore possible to make the hypothesis that in bigger cities more opportunities to meet other members of one's own community arise, this way offering more chances to practice the Heritage Language than it happens in smaller towns.

FIG. 6. *Proficiency in the Heritage Language and in Italian, by country of origins*

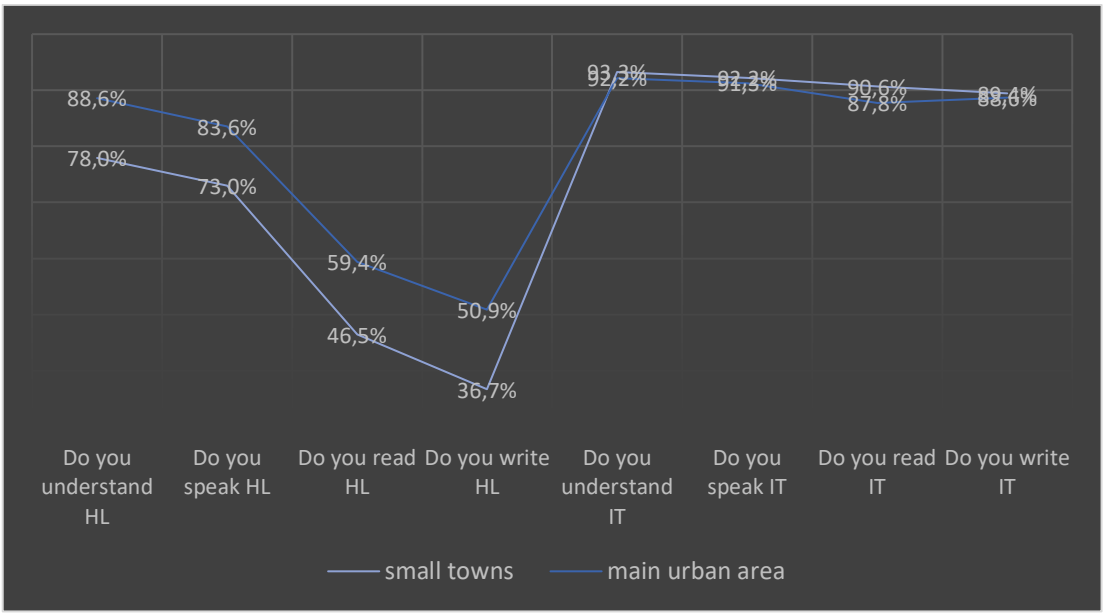


Source: *Impact FVG 2018-20*

In addition, in the cities it is easier to count on the support of the whole ethnic community, which might offer teachers or courses to those who want to study and improve their linguistic skills. Some of the questions of the research tool deal with this perspective as they ask to the informant whether or not they are studying the Heritage Language at

the moment, and if they would be willing to do it if given the opportunity.

FIG. 7. *Proficiency in the Heritage Language and in Italian, by place of residence*



Source: *Impact FVG 2018-20*

A relative high percentage of 38.0% of the emergent bilinguals affirmed they were studying their parents' language at the moment they were reached by the researchers. However, only 28.8% of them stated they were attending a school, while others more often declared to rely on the support from the community: a church or the mosque (18.6%). specialized teachers (9.0% for Arabic, 5.1% for Chinese). relatives (3.4%). or other and different sources. Nevertheless, most of the pupils expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity of keeping alive and strengthening this bond with their often-distant origins, as 57.7% of them declared to be willing to study the languages inherited by their parents and only 14.0% affirmed not to be interested in this possibility at all.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, the evidence collected in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region during the second semester of s.y. 2018-19 by *Impact FVG 2018-20* aligns to the premises found in literature (Chini, 2018, 154-7; Chini *et al.*, 2018, 274-8). Data shows a process of language erosion which in time might lead to the loss of the Heritage Languages by second and subsequent generations of students with a migration background, and a shift to Italian in domains like the family, which in the past were mainly characterized by the use of the code connected to the country of origins. The process, already observed and studied in depth in other

environments (Cummins, 2001; Montrul, 2008). shows to be influenced by a number of significant factors. In a gender perspective, girls seem to share a higher perception of their own language skills, both in the Heritage Language and in Italian. As it is natural to expect, the composition of the parental couple can also offer significantly more opportunities to practice and use one or the other code, depending on the ethnicity of the parents and on their country of origins. Under this point of view, however, nationalities seem to show different patterns both in the motivation to maintaining the language connected to the home country, and in the acquisition of Italian, but more specifically aimed studies are needed in this direction, and with a broader sample. Generation of birth or arrival to Italy is another relevant factor, which seems to favor the use of Italian between pupils born in Italy from foreign parents, which at the moment are the vast majority of the sample met in the Friulian schools. Lastly, urbanism and the place of residence also confirmed their relevance in offering better opportunities of maintaining the Heritage Language to subjects living in more densely populated cities or, on the opposite, of practicing Italian to pupils resident of smaller towns and villages in the countryside and mountains.

In this environment, the perceptions and attitudes of these potentially emergent bilingual students towards plurilingualism are usually still positive. When directly asked in the questionnaire to associate a number of adjectives expressing feelings and attributes to the idea of speaking and being able to resort to different languages, most of the subjects defined it as useful (77.6%) and funny (55.0%). while only a minority considered it a possible source of problems (8.2%). Meanwhile, the Italian educational system seems to be struggling to keep the pace with the quick emergence of this new plurilingualism, with the risk of missing the opportunity offered by these emergent bilingual students, whose competences in languages might prove to be useful both to them and to their Italian classmates.

There are, however, both recent recommendations by the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR, 2014). and a number of successful experiences which proved to be useful in similar contexts (Cummins, Early, 2011; Favaro, 2013; Prasad, 2014; Sordella, Andorno, 2017; and Cognigni, 2020 for a synthesis). If on the one hand Italian teachers seem to lack the resources and sometimes the theoretical formation to implement these strategies, yet on the other one elsewhere a number of highly motivated, skilled and self-trained teachers are already introducing these measures, in order both to support the maintenance of the Heritage Languages, and to protect the linguistic rights of their pupils with a migration background.

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ISBN 978-88-944888-6-

Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference of the Journal Scuola Democratica

REINVENTING EDUCATION

VOLUME I

Citizenship, Work and The Global Age