



Diversities in today's Classrooms

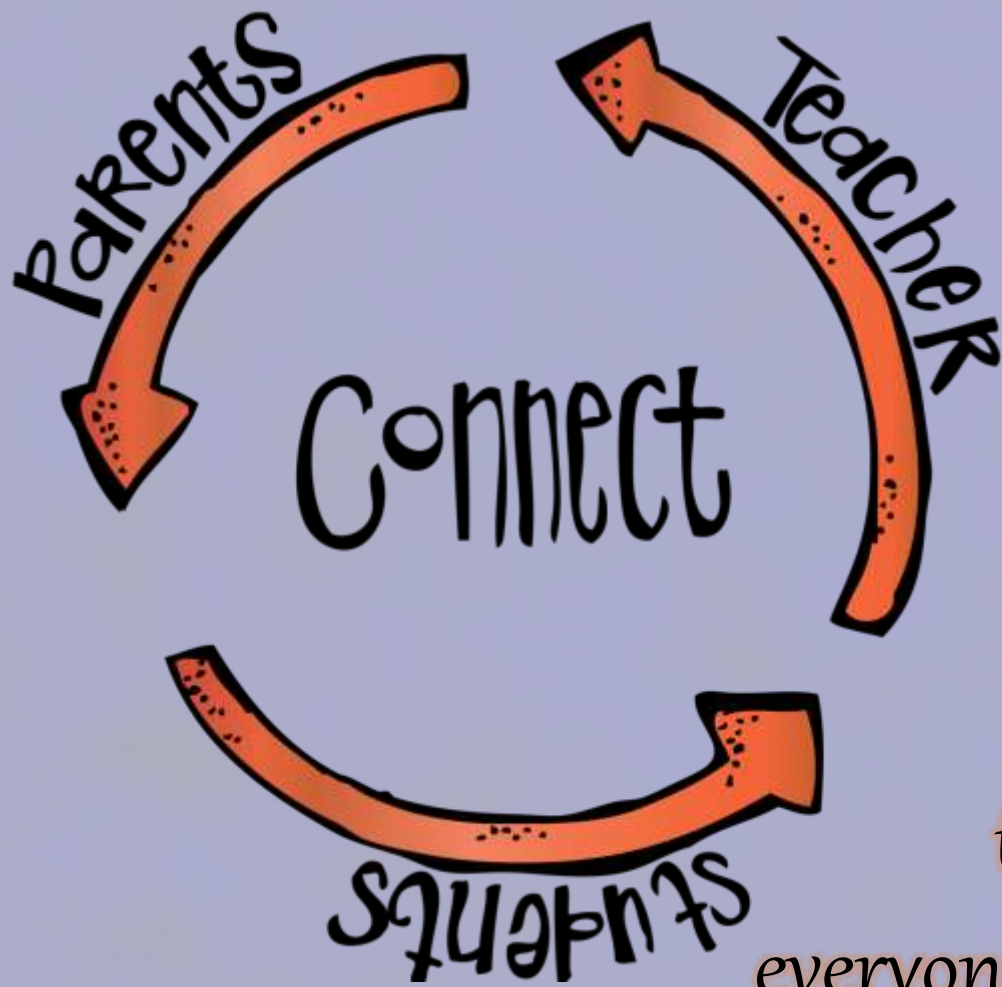
Giulia zambon – IFOM trainer

Teachertrainings.eu
Training courses for education staff



Culture and Education

What does it mean for you
“welcoming all diversities”? What
challenges does it implies?



“No teacher is asked to be a diversity expert; everyone is asked to be experts in people, families and concrete lives.”

Exploring identity

The development of identity can take two roads:

- On one side we look at ourselves in contrast to others and define what makes us unique, where we differ from other individuals, where we are special.

This is the **personal meaning of identity**.

- On the other side we are 'social animals' and need to relate ourselves to others and identify with groups, opinions and things we have in common with them.

This is the **social meaning of identity**.

EXPLICIT MANIFESTATIONS OF CULTURE

FOOD

GREETINGS

MUSIC

LANGUAGE

DRESS

RITUALS



IMPLICIT MANIFESTATIONS OF CULTURE

An iceberg floating in a teal sea. The tip of the iceberg is above the water line, and the much larger base is submerged below. The iceberg is composed of several blue and white geometric shapes. The background is a gradient of teal and blue.

WORLD VIEW

**RESPECT FOR
AUTHORITY**

RELIGION

**CONCEPTS
OF TIME**

**CONCEPTS
OF JUSTICE**

**SPIRITUAL
BELIEFS**

**DECISION
MAKING
MODELS**

The onion metaphore



The onion metaphore

- Geert Hofstede used the metaphor of an 'onion' to describe cultural phenomenon.
- Cultural identity is similar.
- first we form impressions of people at a public level (the visible or early surface questions), then move to private (relationship building, self-disclosure interaction) and eventually to deeper psychological areas in exploring their personhood

The onion metaphor

- Each person's identity is made of multiple elements and is unique.
- Sometimes people focus on one element of identity (often a different one) and attribute all this behaviour to this one element of identity, whereas a person is a lot more.
- It is unfair and uncomfortable to be 'locked up' in one part of their identity.

Where do we come from?



Activity - Where are you a Local?

- **Rituals** - think of your daily rituals: making your coffee, driving to work, harvesting your crops, saying your prayers. What kind of rituals are these? Where do they occur?
- **Relationships** – think of your relationships, the people who shape your days. To whom do you speak at least once a week? Be reasonable in your assessment: think about the people who shape your weekly emotional experience.
- **Restrictions** - where are you able to live? What passport do you hold? Are you restricted from feeling fully at home where you live? If yes, by what? By civil war, dysfunctional governance, economic inflation, ...

ACTIVITY

Create a collage that is representative of the person that you are and the values that you have. Think about the many layers that makes you the person that you are today.

What do your language, values, literature, worldview, food, religion, clothing, holidays, beliefs... look like?



Activity

- Personal Collage



Perceptions and misconceptions

- The world is infinite stimuli and we have limited tools to capture and retain them
- The vision of the world that we have is not at 360°
- Perception is a selective process – we speculate about what the world can be
- The map is not the territory

Perceptions and misconceptions

Raising awareness about limited perception make more conscious that what they see is not 100% reality.

Therefore the question is:

Did we see/ hear/ taste/ feel/ smell it right?

Perceptions and IDENTITY

- The glasses through which we perceive the world are a product of our identity, that is determined by 2 factors:
 1. Who we are (personal identity)
 2. Where we come from (social identity)
- Misinterpretations and Misconceptions are caused by physical+mental differences and cultural differences.

Socialisation...

- Perceptions depend on what we've seen and learned before
- Tool to help young people realise that not everybody is the same and not everybody reacts in the same way
- Beware of relativism! Basic human values are common to all people
- Perception is a process – it changes over time

... AND YOUNG people



- Importance of awareness of different glasses help us to accept diversity

Perception is a process – it changes over time.

If change is possible...

- ...it is wrong to pin people down for what they did in the past
- ...openness and comfortabilty in presence of difference can be learned

... AND YOUNG people



- No glasses are better or worse than others
- Different glasses = different solutions to the same problems
- Borrowing glasses helps you see things under a different light

The key to an inclusive society is to teach to young people *not to tolerate* the presence of people with different glasses, but to ask them to try those glasses!

Activity

- What are the main issues in your countries?



School case study

- What are your students profiles? (age, social background, special needs, disabilities...)
- What are the main issues in your school?
- What are the stakeholders involved (municipality, social services, psychologists, social service, cultural mediators..) What do they do?
- What special policies your school has to welcome all diversities?