

Plurilingual education in Friulian schools

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Abstract. This paper describes the features and evaluates the results of a research project in education and glottodidactics aimed at carrying out pilot experiences in the teaching and learning of the Friulian language from the perspective of plurilingual education. The experimental educational activities, conducted in 3 infant schools (age 3 to 5) and 3 primary schools (age 6 to 10) in the provinces of Udine and Pordenone, integrate language teaching with thematic or workshop activities involving non-linguistic disciplines, developing an integrated, content-based approach to the didactics of languages. The plurilingual projects have seen the participation of children of different age groups and respond to the curricular objectives set out by the schools, incorporating Friulian as an element able to enrich and strengthen the curriculum. The educational strategies adopted are meant to promote inter-linguistic analysis and comparison as an instrument by which to develop positive attitudes towards diversity and alterity.

Key-words. Multilingual education, infant and primary school, Friulian language, plurilingual curricular models.

1. Introduction. The interest in bi- and plurilingual educational research using minority languages and the testing of didactical models and practices in everyday teaching and learning have been a significant feature of Friulian schools ever since the 1980s. In the mid 1980s two important educational experiences were launched

in the province of Udine: a bilingual Slovene and Italian infant school was established at the cultural centre Študijski Center Nedža in San Pietro al Natisone on the initiative of a group of parents (Gruden Crisetig 2001); and a pilot project on bilingual education in Friulian and Italian was introduced at the infant schools of

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Gagliano and Treppo Grande, developed by the University of Udine and financed by the European Commission (Schiavi Fachin 1998). Both initiatives made reference to international scientific research on bilingualism and bilingual education (Siguan & Mackey 1986, Cummins & Swain 1987), on second language acquisition (Dulay, Burt & Krashen 1982), and on language teaching (Wilkins 1976). These studies provided the theoretical foundations for the choice of organizational models, the description and selection of language teaching content, the planning of activities, and the adoption of didactic modalities tailored around the children's communicative competence and cognitive development (Schiavi Fachin 1991; Burelli 1996, 1998a).

Scientific studies in the aforementioned fields guided also the design and implementation, between 1992 and 1997, of plurilingual educational activities using the local languages in three alloglot localities in the province of Udine: Timau and Sauris, where two different varieties of German are spoken, and the Resia Valley, where varieties of Slovene are spoken. A common denominator of these initiatives and of the bilingual education experiences mentioned earlier is the aim to support and value the native plurilingualism of children living in Friuli, encouraging the children and their communities to become aware of the wealth of their linguistic repertoire, to appreciate it, and to use it as the foundation of a wider plurilingual competence and linguistic repertoire.

To this day, the theoretical framework and educational practice of the Friulian-Italian bilingual education project (Burelli 2001) represent an important point of reference for those schools in Friuli Venezia Giulia that make an effort to integrate the teaching and learning of the Friulian language in their curricula. The notions of additive bilingualism, communicative language competence, content-based language teaching, and the educational models one person-one language and one situation-one language are well known by the majority of pre-primary and primary teachers in the Region, even if they are not always translated into coherent educational experiences.

In the last fifteen years, the approval of a State law on the protection of historical linguistic minorities in Italy (Parlamento Italiano 1999), the publication of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe 2001), the publication of *Indicazioni pe programazion didatiche curiculâr daûr de leç 482/99* (Guidelines for curriculum development and programme planning in accordance with law 482/99) (OLF 2004), the approval of a Regional law on the protection of the Friulian language (Consiglio Regionale 2007) have increasingly encouraged infant and primary school teachers and managers to develop projects for the teaching and learning of the Friulian language. At the same time, the University of Udine has launched important and innovative schemes for the training of minority language teachers, lending

support to the proposal that Friulian be included in the curriculum and promoting the realization of activities in the field of plurilingual education, aimed at developing the children's plurilingual competence (plurilingualism as competence) and their awareness and respect of linguistic and cultural diversity (plurilingualism as value) (Beacco 2007).

2. The research programme. The Regional agency for the Friulian language, ARLeF, while it is awaiting the publication of the regulations implementing the Regional law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language, has commissioned two studies that will provide schools with examples and models of a plurilingual curricular programme including the teaching and learning of the Friulian language. One of the two studies, denominated *Progjets pilote di educazion bi-plurilengâl inte scuele de infanzie e primarie* (Pilot projects of bi- and plurilingual education in infant and primary schools)¹, which is the object of this paper, has been carried out between September 2010 and June 2012 at CIRF (Centri Interdipartimentâl di ricercje su la culture e la lenghe dal Friûl), the University of Udine research centre on Friulian language and culture.

The study has pursued the following aims: to explore and contextualize notions and theoretical principles developed in glottodidactics research and implemented in European educational policy; to test organizational approaches that, in consideration of the economic and professional re-

sources available, could allow to systematically include Friulian in the school curriculum; to propose didactical models and practical suggestions for shaping the education process with a view to promote plurilingual and intercultural education. The researchers² have concentrated their attention on ways to present the Friulian language as a “language of schooling”, i.e. as an instrument for teaching and learning in addition to Italian, and as a “language of education”, i.e. as an organic element of the curriculum like Italian or a foreign language (Coste, Cavalli, Crişan & van de Ven 2009: 28).

In the framework of European education policy, plurilingual and intercultural education has a two-fold objective. On one hand it favours the learning of linguistic and intercultural skills by enriching individual repertoires with new linguistic and cultural resources. On the other hand it promotes personal development by encouraging to respect and accept linguistic and cultural differences in a multicultural and multilingual society and by fostering a sense of awareness of individual competencies and potential (Beacco *et al.* 2010: 18).

The design of educational models for a plurilingual and intercultural education is guided by the principle, which is shared by the Council of Europe, that all languages have an equal value “regardless of their status and weight in society and the State” (Beacco *et al.* 2010: 96). An educational model based on these principles assigns Friulian schools an all-important role, that of preserving and

developing linguistic and cultural diversity through the teaching *of* the minority language and *in* the minority language. So the systematic inclusion of the Friulian language in the educational activities takes up the double function of promoting and reinforcing the identity of Friulian-speaking children as speakers of a minority language and of making all children reflect on linguistic and cultural diversity. In other words, schools are being given the task to value and develop the Friulian language skills of the children who already have it in their repertoire, but also to introduce it to those children who do not know the language, who can then appreciate it and broaden their skills as a result.

The plurilingual and intercultural education curriculum that the research programme has tried to implement in the participating classes collects and valorises the community's linguistic repertoire both inside and outside the school, making it available to the children; it also favours "a global linguistic education" by fostering an awareness of the value of linguistic and cultural plurality in the class and around it, thus promoting an open and positive attitude to alterity. The minority language becomes an element of enrichment of the education process and its presence in school work enables to focus the attention on the role of languages in cultural development, through the contact with the symbolic, conceptual and social differences which exist between languages.

The research programme did not

propose a single organizational model for all the participating classes. Both CEFR (chapter 8) and the successive documents published by the Council of Europe and specifically devoted to the implementation of plurilingual and intercultural education urge curriculum development agents to adapt the form and degree of language integration to the specific educational and socio-cultural contexts. The CoE indications are in line with studies on the adequacy and efficacy of bi- and plurilingual curricular options adopted in different countries and contexts (Baker 2006, Garcia 2009). So rather than proposing a generic scheme, we worked with each individual school in order to identify the best way to realize a plurilingual and intercultural education in their particular situation. In this way, we estimated that we would be able to operate even in the presence of the continuous changes in Regional and State regulations affecting the everyday working of Friulian schools; regulations which require teachers to take upon themselves the complex institutional task of meeting the educational demands of an ever-larger number of children with diverse and multifaceted cultural and linguistic profiles, a task that is becoming increasingly difficult for the lack of financial, material and human resources.

Assuming that the curriculum is an instrument by which to organize learning (Beacco *et al.* 2010: 12), the programme researchers developed the didactic projects to be implemented by every experimental group

by involving the class teachers as co-authors of the project. The researchers provided the theoretical and practical elements based on scientific research; the teachers provided their didactic competence as well as their knowledge of the class, of the participating children, and of the social and institutional background of the school. Together researchers and teachers decided on the best way to accomplish a high-quality educational experience which would be sustainable in the everyday context of the class. Each one of the six projects was centred on the children's need to grow and learn, as individuals and as members of society, and tailored on the characteristics of the individual class: age, existing linguistic competence, children's learning conditions and potential difficulties. The objectives, the contents and the operative modalities were defined according to the notion of plurilingual and intercultural competence, as defined by CEFR (chapters 6 and 8) and analyzed by contemporary research on plurilingualism and plurilingual and intercultural education (Cook 2002, Abdallah-Pretceille 2003, Zarate, Levy & Kramersch 2008, Auer & Wei 2009, Kramersch 2009).

Structuring the curriculum around the concept of plurilingual and intercultural education means to adopt organizational principles and methodologies which promote forms of integration, highlighting cross-curricular elements and privileging a more global approach to the development of linguistic and cultural abilities (Coste, Cavalli, Crişan & van de

Ven 2009). It means to break the barriers between the languages of education and to overcome the separation between the teaching of languages and the teaching of other disciplines, viewing languages as the plural realization of the faculty of speech and as a fundamental tool in the processing of knowledge, in personal development, and in social relations. To this end, the research programme has paid particular attention to designing and implementing forms of coordination and cooperation among the teachers of the three languages involved in the projects, providing moments of negotiation among them and managing forms of complementarity among the activities.

3. Subjects. The experimental programme was carried out in 6 state schools (3 infant schools and 3 primary schools) and involved 7 classes with a total of 128 children (Table 1).

The schools taking part in the programme are situated in different parts of Friuli and are characterized by diverse economic, social and linguistic situations. The infant school "Marin" in Casiacco and the primary school "D. Cernazai" in Travesio are located in the province of Pordenone, the western-most province of the Region, lying on the border with Veneto. Casiacco, a village included in the municipality of Vito d'Asio (843 inhabitants), is situated at the mouth of the secluded Arzino Valley and includes numerous industries and businesses which have attracted a number of foreign workers, Romania and Burkina Faso being the largest

Table 1. Groups involved in the programme.

<i>School level</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Class/group</i>	<i>No. of children</i>
Infant school (age 3-5)	<i>Marin</i> , Casiacco	Mixed-age class (Years 1-2-3)	19
	<i>C. Collodi</i> , Madrisio di Fagagna	Years 2-3	32
	<i>Amicizia Mantovana</i> , Treppo Grande	Year 3	15
Primary school (age 6-10)	<i>D. Alighieri</i> , Faedis	Year 5	19
	<i>D. Cernazai</i> , Travesio	Year 3	26
	<i>G. Carducci</i> , Udine	Year 1	16

groups. The local infant school is attended by the majority of the children of Vito d'Asio and has a single class. Travesio (1,814 inhabitants) is a municipality situated to the west of Casiacco; its economic situation is also characterized by the presence of businesses and industries. Travesio primary school is a "tempo pieno" school offering extended hours and is attended by all the municipality children. Like in Casiacco, classes include several immigrant children; those attending the experimental class taking part in the project were from Burkina Faso and Albania. In Casiacco and Travesio a western variety of Friulian is spoken (Francescato 1970).

The four remaining schools are in the Province of Udine and include two primary schools and two infant schools. The primary school "Giosuè Carducci" includes 9 classes and is situated in north Udine, next to one of the largest business and shopping areas in the Region. Udine (99,627 inhabitants, 13,488 foreign; data 2010), at the centre of a lively economic area, is the main cultural centre of Friuli. With regard to its socio-linguistic situation, the traditional three-

lingual repertoire of the city, including Italian, a local Venetian dialect and Friulian (Francescato 1982), shows today, in all social situations, a strong expansion of the Italian language which has generally become the only language spoken by the younger generations. In addition, Udine is characterized by the presence of many foreign languages spoken by its large immigrant community.

The primary school "D. Alighieri" in Faedis, a Friulian-speaking municipality with around 3,000 inhabitants, located to the east of Udine not far from the border with Slovenia, is attended by the children of the village and of nearby localities. The economic structure of Faedis, lying at the foot of the Julian Alps, is mostly agricultural and characterized by the production of high-quality wines. In the village the use of Friulian is widespread, both at home and outside.

The infant school "Amicizia Mantovana" in Treppo Grande, which had taken part in the pilot project on bilingual education in Friulian and Italian mentioned in the Introduction, has two classes for each one of its three grades, which during school

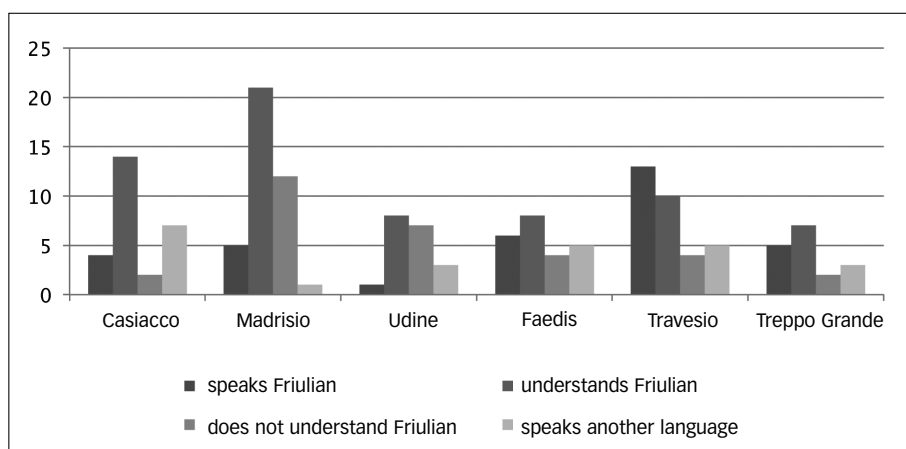


Figure 1. Competence in Friulian and the other home languages among the children of the participating classes.

work come together in homogeneous age groups. The school is attended by children living in Treppo Grande and in other five nearby villages which make up the municipality (1,765 inhabitants). Standing at the foot of the mountains a few kilometres to the north of Udine, near the main communication routes to Austria, Treppo Grande has a lively Friulian-speaking tradition; both at home and in the interactions among villagers communication is mainly in Friulian.

The infant school “C. Collodi” in Madrisio is one of two state-run infant schools in the municipality of Fagagna (just above 6,600 inhabitants), which is built in a hilly area just to the west of Udine. The village enjoys a vivacious economic structure based on farming, commerce and services. One of the most important ethnographic museums of the Region, “Cjase Co-cel”, devoted to a reconstruction of

traditional peasant life, is situated in Fagagna. Locally, Friulian is spoken also in public situations and contexts.

According to the data provided by the children’s parents, of the three languages used at school by the children (all of whom were involved in experimental plurilingual projects), Italian was the only language of communication spoken to (and by) the majority of children both at school and at home. Friulian was spoken by a small minority of the children, in certain occasions and/or with relatives. English was only spoken at school in English-language activities. With regard to Friulian, most children (84%) had at least a passive knowledge of the language. 24 children (19%) spoke “languages of migration” (Beacco *et al.* 2010) at home in addition or in place of Italian. The distribution of these children in the experimental classes was not homo-

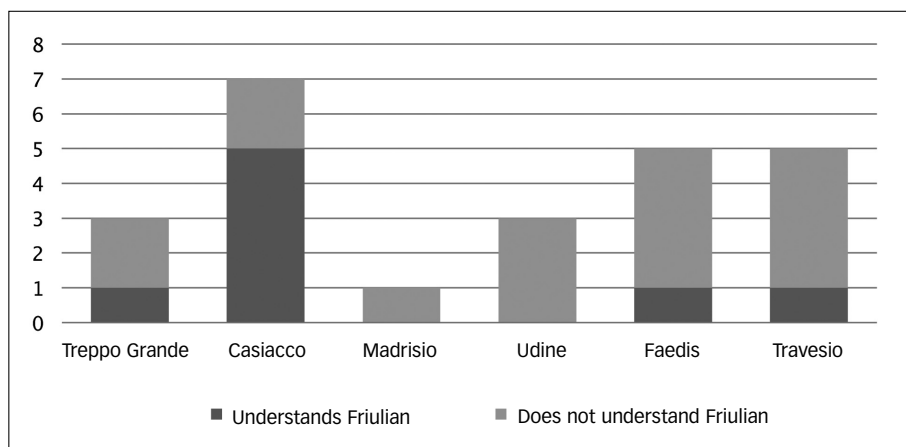


Figure 2. Friulian language competence among children who speak other languages at home.

geneous, varying from 1 child in the entire Madrisio school to 7 children in the mixed-age class in Casiacco. Of these 24 children, 8 had some receptive competence in Friulian (Figure 2).

The experimental activities were conducted by 10 teachers³ who had offered to take part in the research programme and to include the plurilingual project in their everyday school activities. 4 teachers had already worked with the researchers, having taken part in teacher-training programmes at the University of Udine. All of them had carried out or helped to design original Friulian-language projects at their schools. All teachers were competent Friulian speakers and used Italian as the language of instruction in class. 5 teachers also used English in class activities or taught it as a subject.

4. Methodology. The research programme was divided in two stages.

Between September and December 2010, researchers and teachers drafted the general outline of the projects and presented them to the parents, discussing the projects' educational aims and content as well as the educational models which characterized them. In a series of separate meetings at school, researchers and teachers analyzed the Friulian-language activities presently carried out by the teachers, highlighting the elements in their content and practice that could be relevant to the theme of plurilingual education. In addition, they discussed the potential problems of working with children with different levels of competence in Friulian and Italian. In addition to these moments aimed at highlighting and reinforcing their professional abilities, teachers took part in a study seminar, conducted by the project's scientific referent at the University of Udine, where they were helped to expand

and organize their knowledge of the theory of plurilingual education. The themes considered included making an in-depth analysis of possible cross-disciplinary elements in Italian-, Friulian- and English-language teaching; working out ways of creating coherent links between the three subjects; examining the disciplinary ambits that could be taken into account by the three linguistic subjects; establishing forms of cooperation among the teachers of different languages and subjects; identifying possible organizational models, starting from those defined in the *Indicazioni...* (OLF 2004) and adapting them to the projects and activities already present in the schools. The ideas which had emerged from the seminar, together with the data which had not been available at the beginning of the school year, helped to adjust and finalize the project outlines. Each project was then presented to the school authorities who formally approved it and included it in the school's yearly "formative offer plan" (*Piano dell'Offerta Formativa* - POF).

The educational activities began in mid January 2011 and continued until the end of May. In June the documentation of the educational activities carried out by the groups/classes was collected and assembled. Teachers were assisted in their work by a tutor⁴ who organized regular meetings at the schools. Besides monitoring the implementation of the project, the tutor dealt with and helped to solve whichever didactical problem emerged, providing theoretical guidelines and offering practical sug-

gestions. In addition, the tutor discussed the most problematic issues with the project's scientific referent, and then referred back to the teachers.

The teachers drew up their work plan using a general scheme, which had been designed by the researchers as a tool helping to describe the features and context of the educational project in terms of:

- teachers and subjects involved;
- organizational model adopted;
- didactical model of the Friulian-language activities;
- objectives and linguistic content of the language activities for each of the two/three languages;
- objectives and content of the non-linguistic elements of the educational activities;
- ways of integrating the linguistic subjects;
- didactical methodologies used;
- time devoted to the teaching/use of the Friulian language.

Moreover, researchers designed a questionnaire which was employed by the teachers to verify which languages were present in the children's family and circle of friends, which languages were used by the children and with whom they used them.

5. Results and discussion. The observational data collected by the researcher during her periodical visits to the schools and the analysis of the project documentation (Cantarutti 2011) show that all six projects were successful in implementing the principles and objectives of plurilingual and intercultural education, which provided the main theoretical frame-

work for the inclusion of Friulian in the curriculum. By comparing the individual projects, common traits as well as elements of differentiation and originality can be observed. The main elements of differentiation can be found in the age, linguistic repertoire and degree of Italian and Friulian competence of the children, in the number of teachers and disciplines involved, and in the organizational choices.

The common traits are:

- the coordination between the linguistic subjects;
- the integration of linguistic and non-linguistic subjects;
- the use of Friulian as the language of instruction, combined with an effort to develop the children's linguistic competence in the language;
- the use of content-based teaching (CLIL) for the teaching and learning of Friulian;
- the valorization of the aspect of mutual reinforcement between languages;
- the attention to the formal features of the different languages;
- the attention to the themes of inclusion and interculturality;
- the adoption of didactical methodologies which give value to cooperation and negotiation and activate cognitive strategies and creativity.

Going a bit more in depth, it can be noted that in all activities teachers included elements of language awareness, encouraging children to become conscious of the similarities and differences between Friulian, Italian and

English on one side and the other languages present in class on the other; they tried to activate the children's transversal linguistic abilities by drawing attention to their learning strategies; they adopted common methodologies for the three languages, which they defined in relation to the children's transversal communicative competence. Working with the younger age groups, teachers emphasized the spontaneous discovery of lexical equivalents and phonetic elements, inviting the children to locate these elements in the linguistic varieties they were familiar with, be they foreign languages, regional minority languages, dialects, or languages of migration. The inter-linguistic considerations made by the older age groups included syntactical forms and modalities of discourse, as well as the written language. In every project an "integrated language didactics" (Coste, Cavalli, Crişan & van de Ven 2009: 118-124) was adopted, sometimes resorting to an alternate use of the two/three languages for expressing concepts and communicating knowledge, or encouraging activities of mediation between languages by re-telling experiences and reformulating concepts.

The educational activities showed a good degree of coherence and coordination in the didactical models, linguistic forms and content. Since every teacher used two or three languages to conduct her project-related work in class, these traits are common, but they are particularly evident in the activities carried out at infant school level. The fact that, in the curricular

framework set out by the schools, every teacher had responsibility over the teaching of Italian and/or English represents the variable which has allowed, in all classes, to integrate Friulian in the class curriculum according to the modality “one situation-one language” (Tables 2 and 3).

In 2 primary-school classes and 2 infant-school groups, the organization of the educational activities made reference to the model of “plurilingual work unit” (Burelli 1998b, OLF 2004), linking language learning to an interdisciplinary theme which was relevant to the children’s

Table 2. Curricular organization of projects in infant schools.

<i>Infant school</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Disciplines</i>	<i>Project title</i>	<i>Organizational model</i>	<i>Friulian language integration</i>	
						<i>Modality</i>	<i>Time</i>
Casiacco	Mixed age class (Yr 1-2-3)	2	Italian English Science	Il bosc (The forest)	Plurilingual unit	One situation - one language	120'
Madrisio	Years 2-3	1	Italian Science	Une storie pal ambient (A story for the environment)	Plurilingual unit	One situation - one language	60'
Treppo Grande	Year 3	1	Italian Art	Dal trat al ritrat (From trait to portrait)	Workshop	One situation - one language	75'

Table 3. Curricular organization of projects in primary schools.

<i>Infant school</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Disciplines</i>	<i>Project title</i>	<i>Organizational model</i>	<i>Friulian language integration</i>	
						<i>Modality</i>	<i>Time</i>
Faedis	Year 5	3	Italian English Science	Luce - Lûs - Light	Plurilingual unit	One situation - one language	70'
Travesio	Year 3	3	Italian English Science	Il pane - Il pan - Bread	Plurilingual unit	One situation - one language	60'
Udine	Year 1	1	Italian History Geography	Ator dal Orsut (Little Bear Toby)	Workshop	One situation - one language	60'

everyday experience and which highlighted social behaviour and the relation with the natural environment. Conversely, in the 2 remaining classes, one at infant-school level and the other at primary-school level, the Friulian-language activities were conducted as workshops. Specifically, the little children at Treppo Grande infant school learned Friulian as they used it, drawing and colouring-in. In the Year-1 class at “G. Carducci” primary school in Udine, children used and learned Friulian as they discovered natural spots and wild animals in the company of Orsut Tobie (Little Bear Toby).

Orsut Tobie and the teacher’s red scarf in the case of the Udine children, a rug and some golden dust with the Madrisio children, bracelets with the Casiacco children, a trolley laden with paints and brushes with the Treppo Grande children were the mediators introducing the use of Friulian in class, sometimes accompanied by the recital of a magic formula or the practice of sitting down in a circle. These strategies, which interpret and adapt elements of foreign language teaching (Taeschner 2003, Artigal 2005) and which were also used in the English-language activities at Treppo Grande and Madrisio, were not employed with the older children (aged 8-11): for them the choice of language of study and communication was decided by subject matter and timetable.

In all situations, particularly when Friulian was used, teachers were careful not to discourage children as they attempted to talk and communicate

personal information or elements of knowledge even if their language ability was scarce. They allowed code switching when the child had difficulty to continue and did not sanction code mixing. In brief, they recognized these linguistic manifestations as the natural way to communicate for someone who has some knowledge of more than one language (Cook 2002, Grosjean 2010); they were interpreted as normal and characteristic phenomena of the process of learning a second language (L2) (Doughty & Long 2003, Auer & Wei 2009). In these situations, the child’s effort and good intentions were praised and the message was reformulated in Friulian. Class work involving the use of Friulian often made use of plurilingual material prepared for the occasion by the teachers; inter-linguistic word games were employed; a “language-sensitive” approach was adopted which paid attention to the linguistic elements while processing and learning some specific content.

If we accept that the links between linguistic subjects are the central element in plurilingual and intercultural education (Beacco *et al.* 2010: 11), then the six projects can be viewed as examples, even if context specific, of plurilingual and intercultural education, of which Friulian is an integral and fundamental part. In these projects Friulian takes up the double role of “subject of learning” and “language of instruction” which Italian (the main language of schooling) normally possesses; so it acquires the visibility that Friulian-speaking

children need in order to reinforce their self-esteem and self-image as speakers. The didactics of the Friulian language, measured on the competence and knowledge of the children, mixes monolingual and bi- and plurilingual moments: so the children who have some knowledge of the language can consolidate and develop their communicative competence by reinforcing their oral comprehension and production skills, and in the case of older children also their written comprehension and production abilities; while children who do not know the language have the opportunity to widen their linguistic repertoire. At the same time, it contributes to the development of the children's transversal linguistic abilities; helps to acquire strategies enabling to switch between languages in communication; helps to develop positive attitudes towards the Friulian language; gives value to language diversity in class; reinforces the perception that languages convey cultural values; contributes to expand cultural knowledge.

Among the conditions and resources which were instrumental to the success of the project, a fundamental part was played by the teachers' professional skills and in particular by their sound training in linguistics and glottodidactics. Ten months is a very short time to plan and implement an experimental project. As demonstrated by international research (Kelly & Grenfell 2004) and by the practical experiences mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the cooperation of competent teachers was a necessary condition if the

project was to be completed successfully and in time.

In a project involving the rearrangement of school curricula around the concept of plurilingual and intercultural education, variables are numerous and most of them involve the teachers, their educational culture, knowledge of the subject matter, linguistic abilities, and teaching skills; but most of all their willingness to overcome the traditional barriers between disciplines. The research programme presented in this paper has taken steps in this direction; these steps, unfortunately, stop at the door of the experimental classes. If a school is to embrace plurilingual and intercultural education, if infant and primary schools across Friuli are to adopt this educational perspective, curricula need to take as their fundamental principle and objective that of strengthening the children's plurilingual and intercultural competence, fostering a sense of awareness, respect and curiosity with regards to all languages; they need to possess horizontal coherence – in order to integrate all linguistic teaching – and vertical coherence – so as to ensure continuity and development in the educational path. The teaching and learning of the Friulian language, as a language belonging to all the children of this Region, must be included in this design and become a structural element of the educational process. It is not a small curricular adjustment. Its successful implementation depends on the willingness of teachers to change their traditional way of working, overcoming the division be-

tween disciplines and cooperating fully with their colleagues from other subject areas; it also depends on their readiness to adopt didactical models which pay attention to the linguistic elements in the learning process. These are not small changes: they require commitment and a didactical

culture able to deal with the educational needs of contemporary European society, a society characterized by plurality, cultural and linguistic diversity, mobility, change. Without adequate teacher training, plurilingual and intercultural education is not so easy to achieve.

¹ The other study, which will not be considered by this paper, is titled *Insegnament des lenghis: furlan, talian, lenghe foreste te scuele medie cun modalitâts CLIL* (Content and Language Integrated Learning in Friulian, Italian and foreign language teaching at middle school level).

² The Author of this paper, Alessandra Burelli, researcher in Didactics of the Modern Languages, has been the scientific referent and coordinator of the project. The project has been implemented with the help of Dr Sara Cantarutti, recipient of a research grant by ARLeF and teacher at Travesio primary school.

³ The teachers involved were Marisa Comelli, Emanuela Vidic and Loredana Basso at the Primary School "D. Alighieri" in Faedis; Sara Cantarutti, Daniela Florit and Lorena Zancan at the Primary School "D. Cernazai" in Travesio; Angela Tuniz at the Primary School "G. Carducci" in Udine; Patrizia Liva and Daniela Valvasori at the Infant School "Marin" in Casiacco; Ornella Piccoli at the Infant School of Madrisio, near Fagagna; Marisa Scuntaro at the Infant School "Amicizia Mantovana" in Treppo Grande.

⁴ The project researcher Dr Sara Cantarutti.

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