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Enlarged contexts of learning in pre-primary education for professional teacher's development

Learning in enlarged contexts to promove learnfare

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Abstract:

Today professional development in pre-primary education can be supported by integrated relationships emerging from enlarged contexts of learning. It allows to generate new teachers' competences and support new pedagogical and educational strategy of learnfare. The teacher's reflexive and transformative competence, emerging by social (parental and intergenerational) interacting and professional (community of practice) context, supports capabilities development and qualifies a new participatory idea of pre-primary education.

Key words:

Professional development, pre-primary education, enlarged contexts of learning.

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Pre-primary education and enlarged contexts of learning

Today pre-primary education represents a strategic field to employ a new citizenship right based on learning (learnfare)[1] and well-defined on the agency of subjects in the definition of social good (active welfare)[2].

The educational boundaries of pre-primary school enlarged to include and integrate multiple education agencies, social institutions and local stakeholders (corporations, associations and groups involved) to take advantage from communities and parental or intergenerational network.

Promoting this new vision requires a capacity of educational governance applied on the entirety of educational experiences[3] to which the teaching function is called to give answers.

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[1] Margiotta U. (2012) explains how development of individual empowerment allows the subject to partecipate actively to the economic, social and political life of his country.

[2] Costa M. (2012b) says that welfare represents a strategic framework to think about the concept of development within which to coniugate both freedom and human responsability through the primacy of the subject and his fulfillment project.

[3] Orsi M., in *A scuola senza zaino. Il metodo del curricolo globale per una scuola comunità*, p.19, describes the Global Curriculum method (Curricolo Globale), applied in the many "Senza Zaino" projects in experimentation all around Italy: this represents an innovation in planning and organization approach

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Therefore, teachers find themself to govern and value these new enlarged contexts of learning according to a greater flexibilization and personalization of educational paths (COM 2020), with an enhancement of parenting (OCSE-Euridyce 2009) and a new sociality called to contribute to the definition of educational services (IRER, 2004).

The enlarged system of education: consequences on teacher's professionality

Teachers, whose training in entry lacks a unique European perspective, can now give shape to their professional action valueing the transformation and interaction processes, in the sphere of interdipendence between the boundaries of the school and the informal network of education (especially parental and intergenerational).

The enlarged contexts of learning become the space in which the teacher can and must give shape and quality to professional development, as required by the European Community (COM 2007) and underlined by european and international research (eTwinning 2011, starting from OECD-TALIS). The teacher is called to provide stability and awareness to the actions that arise from social and personal experiences of the new enlarged contexts, highlighting the need for development policies of the teaching profession able to leverage the capabilities[4].

The impact on professional development: the dimensions

The challenge to educational research concerns the regard of all those contextual and relational implicit elements emerging from the processes of social interaction. This challenge also applies to the vocational education curriculum: the capacity to operate in the integrated system of education is developed through a qualified support, capable of systematically linking practices, reflexivity and motivational inducement, expecting functional devices of multidimensional regarding to the social, professional and personal sphere (Eisenschmidt 2006).

Empowerment of professional development needs a definition of policies centred on the centrality of capabilities that are able, for example, to: encourage the creation of communities of practice (Wenger 2009, L. Cuddapah, D. Clayton 2011) in a dialogue of intra-extra-curricular partners, which is based on interactive multi-identity; strenghten the reflectivity (Striano 2001, Fabbri 2008) as a function of transformational learning (Mezirow 2000, Kitchenham 2008), even throught the assistance of figures like counselors; recognize and value the new competences acquired in the enlarged interaction between educational settings, learning environments and extra-school network.

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of the school environment like we can desume from these words:"the planning is planning of the educational environment".

([4]) Costa M. (2012b) refers to "learnfare of capabilities" as right to lifelong learning in function of the capabilities' development for the functionings' realization . Capabilities, such as by theoretical paradigm of A. Sen, are the set of relational resources available to a person, combined with its ability to benefit from it and then use it operationally. In this perspective, the teacher's competence loses the value of performance and becomes "competence to act" (agency).

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Conclusions

Developing new capabilities qualificates the reflexivity of professional acting as a choice of realization and discovery, starting from the new methods and forms of interaction/interpretation/processing that are the basis of enlarged contexts of education. The development of teacher professionality becomes the guarantee of construction of new "bridges" of meaning and educational action between living environments, from which to gain those implicit elements of individual agency beyond the multi-identity. A bridge that becomes generative (Costa, 2004), able to improve a learnfare of capabilities within which reconstructs professional identities and new paths in pre-primary education.

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