Re-thinking Adult Education Research

Beyond the Pandemic
Towards the INTALL Project Results
International Online Conference

Research-training paths during and beyond the pandemic.
From meta-reflection towards innovative practices

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Under the patronage

Introduction and theoretical framework

The phenomena of **Early School Leavers** (ESL) and school drop-out are dramatically widespread in Italy, **also in compulsory education** (thus up to the age of 16; MIUR, 2019).

school year 2016/2017 and transition to 2017/2018		
Lower Secondary School (1st cycle)	Dropping out during the year	0,37%
	Dropping out at the end of the 1st or 2nd year	0,32%
Transition from 1st to 2nd cycle		1,45%
High Secondary School (2nd cycle)	Dropping out during the year	1,36%
	Dropping out at the end of the 1st or 2nd year	2,45%

My research starts from the internal and external causes of these phenomena to **explore how to efficiently intervene on context conditions or endogenous variables to the school systems** in order to prevent (or contrast) **educational risk** with regard to adolescent **minors aged 14-16**.

The theoretical framework is the **Social Justice in Teacher Education** (Cochran-Smith, 2020), which aims at carrying out teacher professional development from **social justice and equity**.

My research considers also teachers and school educators still in training, enrolled at University. For this reason, a **Student Voice approach** has also been taken (Grion & Cook-Sather, 2013), as a guarantee of the right of expression.

Research question and methodology

What endogenous factors, interventions, and/or structural changes could prevent or contrast educational risk in minors?

1. During the pandemic (April-July 2020)

Constructivist Grounded Theory for critical inquiry (Charmaz, 2017):

- **method and participants**: semi-structured interviews to 13 university students working as support teachers and school educators in the territory of Milano and Monza;
- **aim**: collecting representations on distance education and several aspects and deeping reflection, making practitioners experience a Service Research (Asquini, 2018);
- **analysis tool**: software ATLAS.ti.

2. Beyond the pandemic (from January 2021)

Research-training at "Antonia Vita" Popular School in Monza:

- **method and participants**: co-design and analysis of critical cases together with the school équipe (3 educators + 1 interns);
- **aim**: developing innovative processes and competences in practitioners and new tools for constructing knowledge and assessing teaching and learning practices.

Conclusions and future perspectives

The first phase of the research has revealed an innovative **ecological theory of educational fragility**, paving the way for reflection on a new post-pandemic sustainability.

The categories of this theory are informing the research-training, that is enabling practitioners to intervene at a more structural level.

Asquini, A. (Ed.) (2018). *La ricerca-formazione. Temi, esperienze e prospettive*. Milano: Franco Angeli.

Charmaz, K. (2017). The power of constructivist grounded theory for critical inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry, 23(1)*, pp. 34-45.

Cochran-Smith, M. (2020). Teacher education for justice and equity: 40 years of advocacy, *Action in Teacher Education, 42(1)*, pp. 49-59.

Grion, V. & Cook-Sather, A. (Eds.) (2013). *Student Voice: prospettive internazionali e pratiche emergenti in Italia*. Milano: Guerini.

MIUR (2019, July). *La dispersione scolastica nell'anno scolastico 2016/2017 e nel passaggio all'anno scolastico 2017/2018*.