Teachers as transformative agents and professional chameleons

Gli insegnanti quali agenti trasformativi e "camaleonti professionali"

di
Gina Chianese
gchianese@units.it
Caterina Bembich
cbembich@units.it
Università di Trieste

Abstract:

Teachers play a key role in supporting equitable and quality education, as also advocated by the 2030 Agenda, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. To achieve this, they must develop themselves as transformative agents and change-makers, especially in a post-pandemic era. To this end, through a research project with municipal school teachers, activities were proposed to initiate a reflexive re-examination of the basic premises that characterize their professional action based on the ideas of Schön (particularly the concepts of reflection in and on action) and Mezirow (with respect to the concept of the 'disorienting dilemma'). The findings highlight the need to develop a 'transformative resilience' that enables teachers to transform themselves into 'professional

chameleons', i.e. evolving professionals capable of managing multiple levels with a reflective and research-based educational mindset.

Keywords: 2030 Agenda, professional chameleon, disorienting dilemma, changemaker, educational posture.

Abstract:
Gli insegnanti svolgono un ruolo fondamentale nel sostenere un'istruzione equa e di qualità, come auspicato anche dall'Agenda 2030, che porti a risultati di apprendimento pertinenti ed efficaci. Per raggiungere questo obiettivo, devono svilupparsi come agenti trasformativi, artefici del cambiamento, soprattutto in un'epoca post-pandemica. A tal fine, attraverso un progetto di ricerca con insegnanti delle scuole comunali, sono state proposte delle attività per avviare un riesame riflessivo delle premesse di base che caratterizzano la propria azione professionale sulla base delle idee di Schön (in particolare dei concetti di riflessione nell'azione e sull'azione) e di Mezirow (rispetto al concetto di "dilemma disorientante"). I risultati sottolineano come la professione educativa necessiti lo sviluppo di una "resilienza trasformativa" che consenta agli insegnanti di svilupparsi quale "camaleonte professionale", ossia come professionisti in dinamico cambiamento capaci di gestire multi-alfabeti con postura educativa di ricerca e riflessiva.

Parole chiave: Agenda 2030, camaleonte professionale, dilemma disorientante, agente di cambiamento, postura educativa.

1. Being a teacher for the 2030 Agenda scenario

The European Agenda 2030 under Goal No. 4 'Quality Education' sets the ultimate goal of achieving 'quality education [as] the basis for improving people's lives and achieving sustainable development'. In this sense, it sets, among the goals, those of ensuring, by 2030; in particular by guaranteeing "all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (4.7)".

To achieve this goal, as the 2030 Agenda also reminds us, it is necessary to [increase] considerably by 2030 the number of qualified teachers, also through international cooperation, for their training activities […] (4.c)" (ONU, 2015, p. 17).

It is clear from the declaration that teachers play a key role in supporting these quality processes, in standing as guarantors of rights to quality, inclusive and equitable education; in helping to develop lifelong key skills and competences; and in promoting individual and community empowerment processes while also supporting literacy and combating school drop-outs.

The European Union, in 2022, furthermore acknowledged, in the Council document on learning for environmental sustainability, that all teachers, regardless of their discipline or educational sector, are educators for sustainable education (Council of the European Union, 2022, p. 12).

Due to this task, it is necessary to engage teachers on curricula development and support appropriate professional developments about green skills and sustainable education. Certainly, the pandemic situation, which is still to a certain extent ongoing, entailed a number of aftershocks and changes: already existing challenges have undergone profound accelerations becoming increasingly complex and requiring new approaches and a different kind of professionalism. These aspects were also highlighted during the 2020 World Teachers' Day, which focused on 'Teachers: leading in crisis situations, reinventing the future'.

Teachers are therefore recognised as having a political-pedagogical responsibility to acknowledge their actions as influential on the community they belong to (Bertolini, 2003); but to do so requires a critical-reflective ability (Dewey, 1933; Schön, 1983) that allows them to see themselves as transformative professionals, changemakers, that is, agents of change and liberation (Freire, 1973).

Reflection concerns the way in which we make new connections and becomes the main element of learning and personal and professional development understood as an intention to attribute meaning to experience. In Dewey's theory, reflective thinking «transforming a situation whereby an experience is lived in t1he darkness […] in a solved situation, clear and harmonious» (Dewey, 1933, p. 172) and helps people get out of a kind of routine thinking/action to activate the process of change. The Covid pandemic for people, and for teachers in our case, made everyday practices and routines obscure and no longer functional, so they needed to be illuminated through critical thinking.

This requires reflection in action (thinking while doing) and reflection on action (after the event/activity) (Schön, 1983). Reflection in action enables practitioners to reshape the situation or activity they are working on while it is taking place. It generates a new understanding of the experience and a change in the situation.

Reflection on action involves reflecting on an experience or situation after it has occurred. It helps to explore what happened and why, whether one could have acted differently generating processes to improve practice.

To do this, it is necessary to invest in initial and continuous teacher training capable of promoting and exercising reflective thinking in context. In details, as Nuccio Ordine recalled during the National Congress of the UIL Scuola Rua Federation - "schools, universities, must recover the mission enshrined in their etymologies and be workshops of free, critical, open, responsible, dialoguing spirits, and to do this there is no time for speed [...] slow learning should be cultivated"[1].

Taking time to counter routine or hectic schedules by promoting slow learning is the first step in developing reflective thinking. This is important in daily and professional practice after disorienting events such as the Covid pandemic, which required all professionals, and especially teachers, to become changemakers.

Becoming a changemaker means pedagogically embracing the theorisations of Paulo Freire, who in his book-manifesto 'Pedagogy of Autonomy. Necessary knowledge for educational practice' (2004) reminds us that teaching requires epistemological curiosity, methodical rigour and correct thinking, as well as respect for students' knowledge; the concretisation of their teaching and their

---

[1] 2ND National Congress of the UIL Scuola Rua Federation. Nuccio Ordine, Lectio Magistralis, ""Le scuole non sono imprese" in https://www.facebook.com/UILScuolaSegreteriaGenerale/videos/-congresso-2022-la-lectio-magistralis-del-professor-nuccio-ordine/789864208803179/.

words through example, critical reflection on practice and ethics. These concepts are based on respect and solidarity, which appear fundamental in the new scenario of sustainable development.

The pandemic condition has certainly reminded us that continuous training cannot disregard the use of new resources and teaching strategies as well as soft skills, i.e. emotional, social and communication skills that enable movement in complexity, opposing a 'paradigm of simplification' (Morin, 2001, 1990). Indeed, Morin writes that "it is necessary to promote a knowledge capable of grasping global and fundamental problems in order to inscribe partial and local knowledge within them" (Morin, 2001, p.12).

Here, then, emerges the importance of the "transformative resilience" (Giovannini et al., 2020) to act in the context that allows us, on the one hand, to cope with 'disorienting dilemmas' (Mezirow, 2009) and, on the other hand, to act as agents capable of sustaining the development of the highest level of well-being for the individual and the community.

"Transformative resilience 'comes with metamorphosis', that is, a transfiguration of culture that is triggered by the shocks and disturbances that come with radical newness and reinventions, reassessments and rediscoveries" (Ossewaarde et al., 2020, p. 13).

Thus, transformative resilience is the response triggered by disruptions, disorienting dilemmas and discoveries that render us unable to respond according to established practices. Such a situation resiliently requires us to change conventional developmental trajectories and paths to sustain a systemic transformation rather than return to a previous state.

In this scenario, teachers are called upon to act as "professional chameleons" (Tardif, Borgès 2009; Tardif, Lessard, 1999) through dynamism in the use of multiple alphabets, aware of their action and of the epistemological premises that characterise the researcher's approach (Perrenoud, 2002).

The idea of the chameleon should not be misleading as it refers to the idea of personal mastery, flexibility and adaptation to the complexity of the world we live in and the demands we have to respond to. It is about being aware of one's personal development and directing it without, however, compromising one's authenticity.

2. Rebuilding professionalism in the post-pandemic era

The research "The Fatigue of Educational Work", based on a memorandum of understanding between the Municipality of Trieste (Department of School, Education, Tourism Promotion, Culture and Sport) and the University of Trieste (Department of Humanistic Studies), focused on the theme of change - and the difficulty in implementing it - within the coherence of the professional profile.

The research project lasted two years and was structured in different phases and actions, specifically:

Phase 1: Definition of the state of the art (bibliography analysis, national and international researches and good practices).

Phase 2: Training aimed at developing the competence to learn to learn and a reflective professionalism, capable of critically examining practices, theories and assumptions of educational action. Through a wide range of activities proposed (self-training, small group activities and large group online activities), four fundamental focuses were proposed and subsequently analysed:

-   education in the new contemporaneity with respect to the ever new and sometimes unforeseen challenges;
-   the dimension of the group and ties (peers, children/young people, families, operators, management) considered as a source of both well-being and malaise;
-   the authenticity of educating that promotes deep reflection on one's own professional development;
-   the concept of care referring both to that directed towards users and to that necessary towards oneself.

Phase 3: Questionnaire, interviews and Focus Group in order to analyse in depth the need and necessity for professional transformation with respect to the following dimensions:

- self and one's professionalism;

- organisational-managerial structure;

- working group;

- relationship with families;

- relationship with children/pupils/teens.

Phase 4: Data analysis and dissemination.

To support teachers in developing a new vision of their own professional profile and seeing themselves as "professional chameleons" the application and development of reflective thinking was proposed through the "What? So what, Now what?" model (Driscroll, 1994). It is a cyclic process between action and reflection, in detail:

- Action. Learning experience (self-training, small or large group) on which one is asked to reflect.

- Reflection: what? Describe the learning experience.

- Action. Reflect specifically on certain aspects of the experience.

- Reflection: So what? Analysing the experience.

- Action. Be aware of the learning that emerges from reflection.

- Reflection: what now? After the description and analysis of the experience, propose actions for improvement in one's practices resulting from learning and reflection.

- Action. Put the new learning into practice in the next learning experience

In a pandemic era, such as the one in which the project took place, and faced with the need to rethink practices and attitudes that had become dysfunctional, teachers sometimes showed resistance to change and the need to step out of their comfort zone.

This resistance was sometimes expressed through a criticism of the proposed reflexive approach, insofar as the 'immediate' remedy, the already thought-out and ready-made solution to a difficult situation to manage was considered the only one possible, or at any rate the only one that did not require personal commitment and questioning. This made evident the worrying propensity, even in the field of education and training, to understand own professionalism as immutable in time and not instead open to continuous and constant rethinking starting from a reflexive habitus that requires one to constantly reflect on action and for action (Schön, 1983) in order to generate quality educational processes.

©Anicia Editore
QTimes – webmagazine
Anno XVI - n. 1, 2024
www.qtimes.it
Doi: 10.14668/QTimes_16139

505

This is because every transformation often leads to a crisis, which, read from an etymological point of view, refers to a turning point and the need to choose in order to achieve change. For teachers, crisis and change entail the questioning of established educational practices and the search for a new formative, reflective and regenerative pedagogical posture.

It is about conceiving a new organisational and professional ergonomics made of innovative educational practices based on permanent transformation and reflexivity understood as deeply intrinsic to educational action.

In the specific case of this research, it was a matter of devising a renewed pedagogical vocabulary, based on words that are authentically educational and thus capable of promoting quality educational processes, as opposed to a vocabulary made up of harmful words that should instead be eliminated from the professional practices.

3. Building new educational vocabulary

For the purposes of this work, the agreed analysis concerned the construction of a new teaching vocabulary. The data analysis focused on the result of the work produced by the teachers during a small-group training activity. Teachers were called to reflect on some stimulus questions with the aim of identifying the essential 'educational words' on which to base and rethink their professional actions. The teachers worked on the "toxic words" to eliminate, the words to share with colleagues and families, the "educational words" essential to their profession. At the end of the group work, they produced a written document with the reflections that emerged. One of the challenges has certainly been to contextualise these words and operationalise them into consequential actions within daily practices and routines. This required a substantial change of perspective with respect to usual educational practices and personal professionalism, outlining constant guidance, accompaniment and support in a highly disorienting context for both children and adults. From the texts produced during the research, the following emerged as key words to be taken and put back into context: trust, listening, empathy, respect, relationship, discussion - educational words, capable of re-establishing professionalism and opposing the 'toxic' words that emerged during the pandemic.

Starting from the analysis of the texts produced by teachers, the in-depth questionnaire was subsequently constructed. The identified dimensions aimed to analyze the need and necessity for professional transformation, considering the emerging elements and critical issues that arose in group work. Furthermore, the construction of indicators involved a phase of analyzing the reference literature related to the theme of professional well-being, which was compared with the collected data to identify the most significant analysis dimensions. In detail 288 teachers from preschools in the Municipality of Trieste took part in the training project. Table 1 shows the descriptive data of the sample of participants: the majority of teachers are female; their age range is mainly between 41-50 and over 50; most of them have experience in the institution, or in general in the educational sector, of more than 10 years (table 1).

Teachers n. 288							
Sex (%)		Age (%)		Years worked in the institution		Years worked in the educational field	
Female	97.90%	20-30	1.40%	Less than 1 year	19.10%	Less than 1 year	10.10%
Male	2.10%	31-40	13.50%	1-5 years	14.20%	1-5 years	16.30%
		41-50	42.40%	5-10 years	6.60%	5-10 years	2.80%
		Over 50th	42.70%	Over 10 years	60.10%	Over 10 years	70.80%

Table 1 - Descriptive data of the participants.

The research team collected 42 texts prepared by the teachers during the group work; the analysis of the texts followed a thematic approach through which recurring meanings were identified. The results also include some significant phrases in the teachers' texts, which describe recurring core concepts. The analysis of the answers given in the questionnaire reproduced the frequencies; the correlation between the answers given and the years of service provided was also calculated (only significant correlations are reported in the results).

The addition of information from the administration of a questionnaire consisting of 36 closed-ended questions to be assessed on a Likert scale from 0 to 10, made it possible to assess the above-mentioned topics in detail across five categories

- Self-management and personal professionalism
- Organisational-managerial structure
- Working group;
- Relationship with families;
- Relationship with children/pupils/adolescents.

4. Results

a. What are the essential 'educational words' on which to rebuilt professional action?

The texts produced by the teachers highlight some key words that recur frequently and emphasise the importance of the relational and collaborative aspect as a founding factor of professional action. Teachers emphasise how the relational attitude is fundamental to building a welcoming and stable context for children, especially at a time of criticality and instability.

Trust, listening, empathy, respect, relationship, confrontation are the central concepts identified by the teachers:

- "Listening, listening attentively. Paying attention to words, thoughts, sentimental tones, personal meanings".
- "Our professional action is conceived as an educational work aimed at listening, availability, observation and collaboration. Fundamental elements for a new awareness of our professionalism".

- "Welcoming as an inclusive proposal in which we offer relational serenity and lightness (always linked to simplicity and marked by trust) in the affective relationship. We are all called upon to propose environments and activities such as to make each day experienced at school stable and continuous precisely to make up for the instability of the moment".

Listening therefore means entering into a relationship with others, understanding their point of view, through an empathetic and welcoming approach; empathy that means being able to grasp not only the needs of children, but also those of their families and supporting them in a period of disorientation:

- "Words can be a source of misunderstandings; they are a tool for explaining and explaining ourselves, for building understanding, but they can sometimes generate misunderstandings and distances. Words like serenity, in such an uncertain moment, peacefulness, 'I'm listening to you', 'I take care of you', I encourage you, patience, friendship, words of courtesy, welcome, waiting, dialogue, normality, understanding, supporting, 'Can you help me?', Being able to think, community, building relationships, "What do you think?", "Tell me about it", waiting, doing together, saying yes [...] they can be a great "weapon" for instilling confidence, increasing self-esteem, and showing love and respect".
- "Tuning/empathy understood as the ability to read and tune into the needs of the family, in order to respond to their doubts, perplexities, providing useful guidelines in this period of disorientation".

The teachers underline how these aspects can only be built through moments of training, which allow for discussion and sharing and which stimulate reflection. Professional training is considered a tool to broaden one's skills, to better understand the context and identify new strategies:

- "We should precede our educational act by a careful examination, by a conscientious reflection and comparison which could lead to a disorienting dilemma from which we could then achieve transformation and change".
- "Professional updating - in part it is accompanied by curiosity, but updating broadens the possibility of reading the context, also through technology and the use of a context-specific language".

The pandemic experience has therefore made it clear for educators that training is significant if it is capable of activating reflective processes, which are strictly connected to the improvement of soft skills, such as communication and collaboration abilities.

a.1 Self and professionalism
The importance given to training and professional growth are aspects that also emerge in the answers given by the teachers to the questionnaire. For example, it emerges that the desire for professional growth is generally high (mean=8.1; SD=1.46) (Graph 1). 94,4% of the teachers declare a high desire for professional growth (range of answers from 10 to 7 on the Likert scale); 4,5% declare an average desire (range of answers from 6 to 4 on the Likert scale); only 0,9% declare a low desire (range of answers from 2 to 0 on the Likert scale). Data analysis shows a negative correlation between years of teaching in the Municipal service and desire for professional growth: in fact, as years of service increase, the desire for professional growth decreases (Spearman's Rho=-,148)
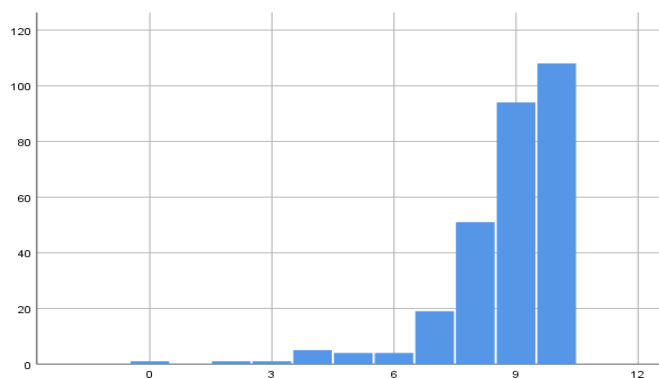
Graph 1: Frequency of the question: "My desire for professional growth is high"

Moreover, the satisfaction regarding professional expectations is high among teachers (mean= 7.82; SD= 1.89) (Graph 2). 84,1% of the teachers declare a high satisfaction (range of answers from 10 to 7 on the Likert scale); 11,4% declare an average satisfaction (range of answers from 6 to 4 on the Likert scale); only 4,5% declare a low satisfaction (range of answers from 2 to 0 on the Likert scale).
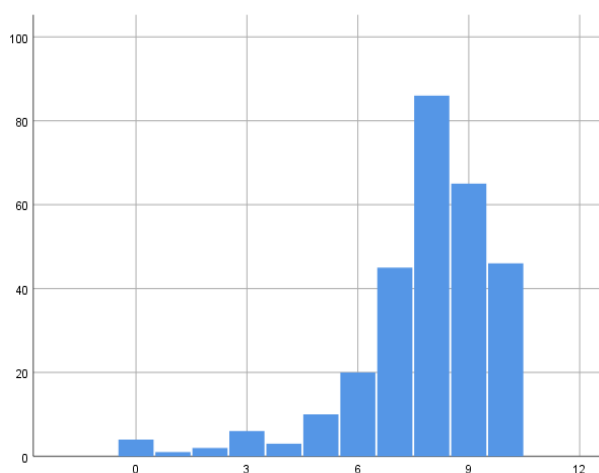
Graph 2: Frequency of the question: In reference to the school where I work, I consider myself satisfied in my professional expectation

b. *What are the "toxic words" to eliminate?*

Compared to the words considered "toxic" and therefore harmful to professional behaviour, the teachers in their texts focus on some issues that highlight the emotional aspect above all. For example, words such as: fear, anxiety, judgement, anger, distrust, label, frustration, sadness are used. The teachers associate some words with the pandemic situation, and highlight the difficulty in coping with the situation, especially from an emotional point of view:
- "The term FEAR is a "toxic word" that emerged with the resumption of face-to-face activities, both among colleagues and families: fear of facing an absolutely new and unknown situation for everyone. As a result, states of anxiety and uncertainty about the future have arisen".
- "Feelings like "fear", "panic", "it won't go well", social distancing, and isolation lead us to live in a fearful way. Only with everyone's collaboration, following the health indications,

will we return to establishing that normal everyday life that belongs to us and feel protected again, without fearing uncertainty".

Furthermore, the teachers underline how individualism and judgement are also critical words that impede comparison, true knowledge and therefore do not allow true growth:

- "The opposite word to the educational word community is individualism, which leads to 'looking at one's own backyard' without considering the context, the community, the people who live and work in and for the same context."
- "Another word to be eliminated is judgement, which unfortunately enters the school. If on the one hand the comparison is an opportunity for growth, the judgement is not constructive, it often arrives a priori without careful analysis of the situation."

Educators' reflections highlight how, especially in times of uncertainty, it is crucial to develop transformative resilience (Giovannini et al, 2020) that is generative, to prevent difficult situations from activating dysfunctional relational dynamics.

b.1 Organisational-managerial structure

The need to work on the emotional aspects as a central aspect of educational action does not seem to find a full response in the training activities usually offered to the teachers. In fact, from the analysis of the questionnaire data it emerges that training activities aimed at recognising, communicating and managing emotions are not very common in kindergartens (mean=5.81; SD=2.68) (Graph 3). 45,2% of the teachers declare a high percentage of emotional training activities (range of answers from 10 to 7 on the Likert scale); 35,8% declare an average percentage of emotional training activities (range of answers from 6 to 4 on the Likert scale); 19% declare a low percentage of emotional training activities (range of answers from 2 to 0 on the Likert scale).
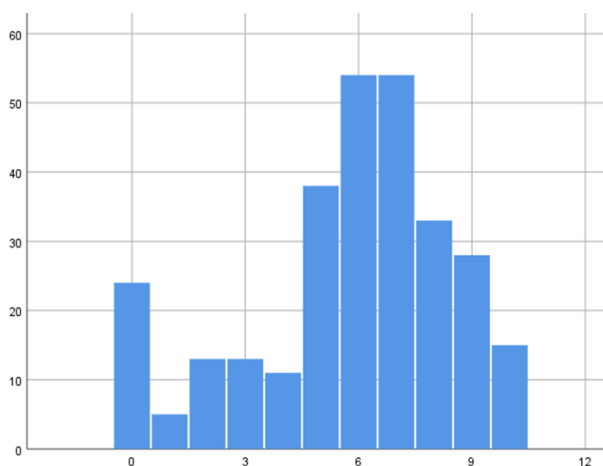
Graph 3: Frequency of the question: Training activities that lead to recognising, communicating and managing emotions are promoted in the school

The data also highlight the importance of the role of the coordinators in promoting participation in training. In fact, the teachers believe that it is the coordinator who stimulates the teachers to attend

©Anicia Editore
QTimes – webmagazine
Anno XVI - n. 1, 2024
www.qtimes.it
Doi: 10.14668/QTimes_16139

510

the training and therefore has a central role in the training proposals (mean=7.82; SD=2.05) (Graph 4). 82,6% of the teachers declare a high importance of the role of the coordinators in promoting participation in training (range of answers from 10 to 7 on the Likert scale); 10,7% declare an average importance (range of answers from 6 to 4 on the Likert scale); 6,5% declare a low importance (range of answers from 2 to 0 on the Likert scale). Data analysis highlights a negative correlation between years of teaching and the role of coordination figures in promoting training: in fact, with the increase in years of service, the perception of positive role of coordinators as figures who can stimulate participation in training decreases among teachers (Spearman's Rho=-,120).
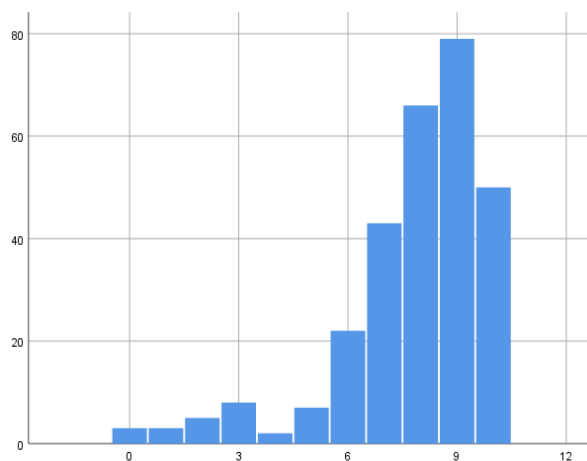
Graph. 4: Frequency of the question: The coordination and management figures of the school in which I work encourage teachers to participate in training courses

c. What are the educational words you would like to share with your colleagues? And with families?

The words highlighted by the teachers as words to be shared with colleagues and families once again highlight a strong relational component. These are words that underline the importance of the quality of the relationship as a founding element of educational action, such as: trust, discussion, collaboration, respect, support, communication.

- "Relationship, meet up. The educational relationship requires the search for words that enhance possibilities and abilities, self-recognition and the desire to meet others".
- "Collaboration is understood as support. To do this it is necessary to encourage communication (even if it is more difficult now) and to discuss both within the work team and with families for the purpose of overall well-being. This can only be implemented thanks to our professionalism by sharing everyone's skills, knowledge, talents, information and resources".
- "Each individual brings their own knowledge and a wealth of experience to share with others. With this spirit we try to involve all our families. The educational words that are recurrent in this context, both with colleagues, auxiliary staff and families, are highlighted as follows: first communication, then inclusion, interaction, availability, cooperation, sharing, comparison, expectations, planning and union of resources".

- "On the same line as the word trust is the word collaboration, which can be spent both within school staff and in relation to families, with the focus of collaboration on the child".

The role of educators therefore takes on ever greater complexity and requires the acquisition of multiple skills, pedagogical but also relational and communicative. The teacher thus becomes a sort of "professional chameleon" (see par. 1), who finds himself facing complex educational contexts, with the need to thus broaden his professional competence.

c.1 Working group

The themes emerged from the analysis of the texts, highlighting that professional development has to be built through a training process that allows discussion and sharing between colleagues. However, this aspect does not seem to be so widespread within schools. In fact, the answers given by the teachers in the questionnaire highlight how training among colleagues is not so widespread and available in a homogeneous way among the different schools (mean=6.36; SD=2.48) (Graph 5). 57% of the teachers declare a high presence of training among colleagues (range of answers from 10 to 7 on the Likert scale); 29,1% declare an average presence (range of answers from 6 to 4 on the Likert scale); 14% declare a low presence (range of answers from 2 to 0 on the Likert scale).
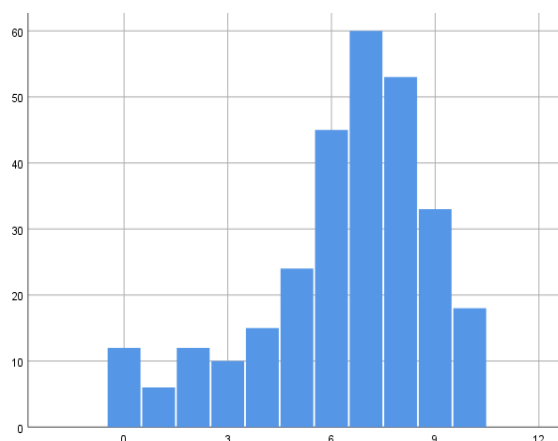
Graph 5: Frequency of the question: Peer/colleague training activities are encouraged and organized in the school

However, it seems that for most of the teachers, the group really represents an opportunity for professional growth (mean=7.57; SD=2.03) (Graph 6). 77,7% of the teachers considered the group a high opportunity for professional growth (range of answers from 10 to 7 on the Likert scale); 16,7% considered an average opportunity (range of answers from 6 to 4 on the Likert scale); 5,8% considered a low opportunity (range of answers from 2 to 0 on the Likert scale).
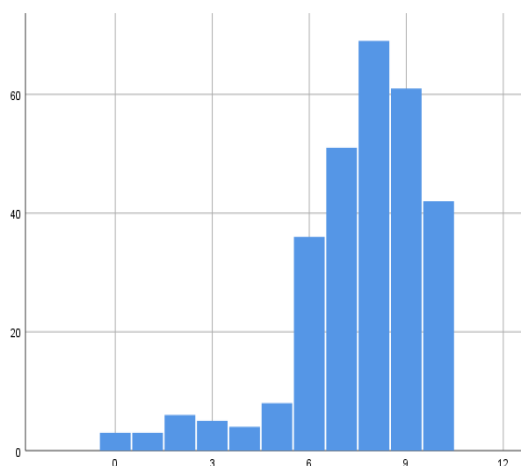
Graph 6: Frequency of the question: The group of teachers is an opportunity for professional growth

5. Discussion and conclusion

The reflections highlighted in the teachers' work and the data collected through the questionnaire, underline how the educational profession should be based on the development of a reflective ability that allows teachers to think about educational practices in a flexible and careful way. One of the challenges has certainly been to put these words into context and operationalise them in consequent actions within daily practices and routines. This required a substantial change of perspective with respect to usual educational practices and personal professionalism, outlining a constant action of guidance, accompaniment and support in a highly disorienting context for both children and adults (Mezirow, 2003). From the texts produced during the research, the following emerged as key words to be taken and put back into context: trust, listening, empathy, respect, relationship, discussion - educational words, capable of re-establishing professionalism and opposing the 'toxic' words that came to the forefront during the pandemic.

In this process, relational and emotional aspects are key: it is in fact through sharing and discussion in the work group and with families that it is possible to build an educational design that can effectively support the growth and learning of children, especially in critical moments (Pianta, 1999; Zinsser, 2016).

The growing complexity of educational contexts and the different needs of children and their families undoubtedly requires an expansion of the educator's skills, who should be able to manage complex processes of change and acquire multiple educational postures.

Therefore, knowing how to develop a reflective approach to daily practices means critically reviewing one's work, identifying the positive aspects and at the same time the critical ones that can hinder the achievement of positive educational objectives (Larrivee, 2000; Fuertes-Camacho et al, 2021). In this process it is necessary to develop a capacity for listening, empathy, and understanding others, which allows us to comprehend the plurality of points of view and avoid prejudice and misunderstandings. The teachers underline how these skills can be acquired through moments of training where space is set aside for sharing and discussion, where reflection within the group is encouraged and attention is also given to the emotional aspects (Karnieli-Miller, 2020). Emotional factors seem to be the most critical factors to address, especially when distrust, fear, frustration and anger come into play. These

513

aspects can negatively affect the educational work and preclude collaboration within the working group. Training that also includes work on emotional aspects seems to be extremely significant for teachers, even if it is not always one of the objectives pursued in training courses. A training course that should support exchange between colleagues, also favours moments of training among peers, where the skills possessed by each teacher are shared and disseminated. In this process, the role of the coordinator, according to the teachers, is key in the educational choices and in supporting the practitioners in a process of continuous professional growth. It also appears essential to support training courses in a life learning perspective: the results show that along the working path one may encounter moments of fatigue and stress which reduce interest in training and trust in coordination figures. Training must therefore consider how fundamental the motivational aspects are in educational work and that they must be sustained over time, to prevent demotivation and discouragement from occurring (Kamstra, 2021).

References

Bertolini, P. (2003). *Educazione e politica*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina.

Council of the European Union (2022). *Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on learning for a green transition and sustainable development*. (2022/C 243/01).

Dewey, J. (1933). How we think. A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process. New York: D.C. Heath & Company.

Freire, P. (2004). *Pedagogia dell'autonomia. Saperi necessari per la pratica educativa*. Torino: Gruppo Abele.

Freire, P. (1973). *L'educazione come pratica della libertà*. Milano: Mondadori.

Fuertes-Camacho M. T., Dulsat-Ortiz C., & Álvarez-Cánovas I. (2021). Reflective practice in times of COVID-19: a tool to improve education for sustainable development in pre-service teacher training. *Sustainability*, 13(11), 6261.

Giovannini, E., Benczur, P., Campolongo F., Cariboni J. & Manca A., (2020). *Time for transformative resilience: the COVID-19 emergency*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Karnieli-Miller, O. (2020). Reflective practice in the teaching of communication skills. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 103(10), 2166-2172.

Kamstra, L.S.G. (2021). *Enriching teacher motivation by improving teacher education: Inclusive and reflective training*. In C.N., Giannikas (Eds.). *Teaching Practices and Equitable Learning in Children's Language Education* (pp. 130-150). Pennsylvania, Stati Uniti: IGI Global.

Larrivee, B. (2000). Transforming teaching practice: Becoming the critically reflective teacher. *Reflective Practice*, 1(3), 293-307.

Mezirow, J. (2009). *Transformative learning theory*. In J. Mezirow, E. Taylor (Eds.). *Transformative Learning in Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Mezirow, J. (2003). *Apprendimento e trasformazione*. Milano: Cortina.

Morin, E. (2001). *I sette saperi necessari all'educazione del futuro*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore.

Morin E. (1990). *Introduction à la pensée complexe*. Paris: Seuil.

©Anicia Editore
QTimes – webmagazine
Anno XVI - n. 1, 2024
www.qtimes.it
Doi: 10.14668/QTimes_16139

514

Ordine, N., Lectio Magistralis *Le scuole non sono imprese* in https://www.facebook.com/UILScuolaSegreteriaGenerale/videos/-congresso-2022-la-lectio-magistralis-del-professor-nuccio-ordine/789864208803179/.

ONU (2015). *Risoluzione adottata dall'Assemblea Generale il 25 settembre 2015. Trasformare il nostro mondo: l'Agenda 2030 per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile*. In: https://unric.org/it/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2019/11/Agenda-2030-Onu-italia.pdf

Ossewaarde, R., Filatova, T., Georgiadou, Y., Hartmann, A., Özerol, G., Pfeffer, K., Stegmaier, P.,Torenvlied, R., van der Voort, M., Warmink, J., & Borsje, B. (2020). Review article: Towards a context-driven research: a state-of-the-art review of resilience research on climate change, *Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences*, 21, 1119–1133.

Perrenoud, P. (2002). *Dieci Nuove Competenze per Insegnare. Invito al viaggio*. Roma: Anicia.

Pianta, R.C., Bunosky, L., Fitz, M., Hamre, B., Kraft-Sayre, M., & Steimberg, D. (1999). *Teacher Relationship Interview Coding Manual*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia.

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner. How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books.

Tardif, M., Borgès, C. (2009). Transformations de l'enseignement et travail partagé. *Les Sciences de l'éducation - Pour l'Ère nouvelle*, 42, 83-100.,

Tardif, M., Lessard, C. (1999). *Le travail enseignant au quotidien. Contribution à ètude du travai dans mètiers et les professions d'interaction humaines*. Bruxelles: Presses de l'Universitè de Laval.

Zinsser K. M., Christensen C.G. & Torres L. (2016). She's supporting them; who's supporting her? Preschool center-level social-emotional supports and teacher well-being. *Journal of school Psychology*, 59, 55-66.