The Didactics of "Being With"

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ABSTRACT – This paper focuses, on the one hand, on the relationship between schools and students' families and, on the other, on the relationship between schools/teachers and students. However, all these subjects need to be seen as subjects interacting in a *continuum* and not as dichotomies. The aim is to relate the experience and practice of pioneering and innovative approaches to education and learning in Italian high schools. Students become a participative actor of their *curricula* chosen by their teachers. The paper also shows the construction of learning communities and learning networks as spaces where to connect schools, families, and students. Besides offering a different approach to involve the different actors in the learning process, this article also suggests a new figure 'the liquid teacher' and a new space where teachers and students can work and learn together.

1. THE NEW COMMUNICATION

The dimension of communication within schools represents a fundamental resource for building students' educational relationships and for the definition of a learning environment beyond the mere classroom, and that involves teachers, management and families as part of the actual networks of learning.

It is crucial to realise that, with the ever-growing role of technology in everyday life, learning is highly reliant on a process that depends not on an isolated source or environment, but on a plethora of sources, practices, interactions and collaborations, from diverse systems and supported by languages and media.

When talking about communication, knowledge-sharing and collaboration, it is important to face the social and technological shift with determination and realism. The distances when interrelating and sharing have shortened and new cultural and communication methods have emerged,

which is something that schools must understand and take into proper consideration in order to maintain their educational roles.

It is, furthermore, extremely important to understand that all the processes in the learning path make up a *hybrid environment* (between real and immaterial) in which students live: *hybrid* because it originates from the fracture that often appears between knowledge, skills and patterns learned in the classroom, and the real environment where adults operate, communicate and interrelate.

It is necessary to acknowledge this state of hybridisation to be able to manage it, in order to improve, as clearly and openly as possible, the dialogue amongst all the participants in the learning network.

Regarding this, one of the first obstacles to overcome in schools is the misguided idea that communication, sharing and various forms of active collaboration should be oriented towards a rigid definition of what constitutes student-to-teacher and student-to-student dialogue, neglecting all the other relationships that also participate in the definition of the learning path. It is fundamental to take into account the school's *ecological perspective*, meaning both the set of participants, environments and tools, and the role and dimension that such people and structures have to the external world. The networks of learning are built from a number of participants (students, teachers, families and management) who act in and define various learning environments (schools, but also home, leisure places, and so on). Acknowledging this continuity, supporting it and making it effective for learning is one of the main objectives of school communication.

The ever-growing presence at home, in the classroom and increasingly more frequently in students' pockets and backpacks, of 'new technologies' (smartphones, tablets) can be taken as a reference point to reformulate the potentialities of learning. Technological media, in fact, is used today in support of both activities usually performed remotely (i.e. homework, online research, online learning, communication with teachers and other students, document sharing and collaboration, virtual classrooms) and processes of personal physical interaction (i.e. instant messaging, classroom chat, sharing, local interactions in shared environments, such as *padlet* or *blendspace*), highlighting the emergence of the phenomenon of 'short networks' (Ciastellardi 2017) at school, that is, networks that replace the function of presence with technological devices.

The biggest risk we can detect today with the use of new technologies as a learning support is their blind and uncoordinated adoption, that is,

without having given the chance, especially to teachers, to engage in a challenge that could involve training, discussions with colleagues, management and families, and the necessary time needed to rethink and reorganise the current didactic methodologies (Bardi 2014). The likely outcome could be the destabilisation of the learning pace within the school, creating personal and professional demotivation in the process of forcing the adoption of misunderstood tools that would end up being used merely as a substitute for previously used supports, therefore missing out on potential added value.

The same communication and sharing problem apply to parents and students: a conscious choice (that could, for instance, be offered upon enrolment) creates awareness of a new path, making it possible for all stakeholders to be present, engaged and informed.

The use of digital tools could furthermore improve communication with parents, making it timelier and more consistent, helping the latter in monitoring their children's learning paths and also giving them a more active role in the process in order to let them adapt their nurturing model outside of the classroom to their children's school experiences.

Thus, it becomes clear that there is a need to keep in constant contact with families, who must be shown, step by step, what the educational project for their children is and the possibilities it offers, as well as overcoming any generational gap in terms of dialogue.

Communication with families should not be seen as a unidirectional information channel towards passive parents, but must be created and maintained as a means of continuous interchange between teachers and parents. Wherever possible, tools could be used to minimise physical journeys, e.g. Skype, Hangouts, etc.

The learning networks that connect schools to families must take into account the often crucial financial and time factors. Parents must be made aware and confident that the investment in their children, from books to technological equipment, is an investment in their future. Management and teachers must also be flexible and understanding in order to be able to find solutions involving tools that families could already have, without restrictions of platform or brand that are not strictly functional to the educational goal.

2. NETWORKS OF LEARNING

The networks of learning discussed here often lead to a reconstruction of communication with and participation in the world of education, pointing to a preferential path to a model of knowledge that is open, hybrid and interconnected, supported by new technologies and able to sustain continual movements from school to informal learning environments (home, play, new media etc.) and vice versa.

This new model is intended not as a static hierarchical model but as a shared and spontaneous one that can find in schools, with the help of teachers, the same rules of application and support that the students develop in other informal education environments.

The core of an educational model based on these foundations is participation and collaboration between teachers and students, as it is the point from which all relationships with the other environments and participants in the network start. That is because one of the most important aspects of communication in schools is the creation of dynamic social contexts of learning in which to "transform disciplined knowledge into a process of construction and interaction between firm knowledge and liquid skills. […] At the same time, sharing learning processes with others in a collective path of construction of knowledge encourages multiple perspectives of reality and therefore a propensity to pluralism as a foundation for integration and inclusion". (Spinelli 2009, 32)

This pluralism and confluence of knowledges requires collaboration and participation amongst the various school participants who could sustain, mainly within the classroom and possibly more widely between classes of different schools (through the use of appropriate technologies), a shared planning strategy; that is, the ability, mediated and guided by teachers, to enable students to use their formal and informal knowledge to achieve well-defined shared goals.

This was trialed in the school year 2014/15 by the regional school office of Lombardy, (Progetto Scuola Lombardia Digitale, whose science coordination was headed by Prof. Dianora Bardi and by the tutors of ImparaDigitale) that facilitated the interaction of 54 *consigli di classe* (a committee of teachers, and often student and parent representatives formed to support one class of students) of 54 schools around the region. The teachers gathered spontaneously, creating nine transversal paths and fourteen virtual *consigli di classe*, which interacted, planned and shared in the cloud.

3. Structures in the Networks of Learning: The Students

In any Italian school, didactic programming/planning and the subsequent review process are defined and performed by the *consiglio di classe* that gathers periodically. The students' representatives receive the planning information, then have to wait with their parents, as mere spectators to a process in which they should be the protagonists, while, in another room, judgements and decisions are made. The teachers explain how, what, in what timescale, what knowledge, what learning, what learning processes, which methodologies. The students listen; the parents try to understand.

In many Italian schools, such as the Liceo Scientifico F. Lussana in Bergamo, the Gonzaga in Palermo, the ITIS Marconi in Jesi, the IC Bruno da Osimo, the IC Gervasoni in Valnegra, it has been considered how this modality of planning disallows students from being 'protagonists of their learning path', making them passive by simply passing them modalities of learning decided by others. New strategies have been developed, involving students in the planning process, testing out the Bardi-ImparaDigitale method . The presupposition is that systemic change in teaching can only happen if it involves the whole educational process and not just a single aspect, because putting the student at the centre of the process starts from a wholesale renovation of roles, based on listening and reciprocal understanding. The student must understand the process that led his/her teachers to develop projects and evaluation grids, what the teacher expects and what is required from him/her and, above all, understand the reasons for such a structural change in teaching.

4. From Schools to Learning Communities

This very mechanism, well-known from the dynamics of communication and social gathering, especially in the Internet era, is one that allows the construction of learning communities, more or less scattered, able to interact in the immaterial and to grow from experiences that are plural and heterogeneous in the context of full cooperation. Beyond competencies, an ability to build a shared knowledge, to learn and cooperate with others, students or teachers, develops an important sense of solidarity, of *problem solving*, of plurality and autonomy, that facilitates the definition of a tailored learning path for every student, mediated and sustained by the commu-

nity, but closer to personal attitudes, abilities and interests.

This prospect of sharing leads towards a factor in learning that overtakes the environment and pace of schools. With the support of the Web, for instance, through smartphones, tablets or computers, students lose the concept of 'class-space' and 'school hours': learning gains continuity, reality expands, libraries become virtual, children discover a spontaneous didactic in which all that counts is what they want to modify, through new sources of information (search engines are gradually refining the methods of filtering appropriate content; however, the role of guidance about what is scientifically sound on the net is still the teacher's duty.) and new ways to construct one's own knowledge. (Arina 2011)

5. Liberating Environments in the School-Home

It is testable that, with a solid structure for interchange and dialogue amongst teachers, students and families, the modalities of literacy, both individual and group, leading to collective/connective learning, can give momentum to determining effective, critical and creative learning. Social models and the modality of participation and exchange allow students and teachers to create groups that are not structured upfront but founded on the modularisation of the participants, according to individual needs, able to compose and decompose, facilitating a spontaneous aggregation and respecting at the same time the need to let each individual stand out, to develop that protagonist and the personalisation of the learning process that is indispensable in the didactics of competence.

No more traditional classrooms but *school/home classrooms*, proposed by Centro Studi ImparaDigitale (implemented at Liceo Scientifico F. Lussana in Bergamo, at Istituto Gonava in Palermo and in many other Italian schools) who decided to create spaces focused on the wellbeing of their inhabitants, which break the discontinuity with the places where the students spend most of their day. When Daniele Lago, the designer who planned the school spaces project with ImparaDigitale, surveyed the students to understand their needs, what emerged was the need for an environment that is dynamic, modular and modifiable according to diverse didactic needs and methodologies, inspired by warmth, the idea of wellbeing, of being comfortable, relaxed and at ease.

A place where emotions, attachments and relationships change along

with the learning and interaction modalities; a place where one wants to be and to live, in an atmosphere that reflects our traditions, the aesthetic sense of our culture and our taste; a place to relive once out of school, after a few hours, in one's own bedroom or living room.

In this case too, the idea of imposing strict models is giving way to a flexible model inspired by a general principle - warmth, informality and comfort - that can be reinterpreted by teachers and students according to their needs.

On the other hand, it is necessary to leave behind rigid models that have already demonstrated their failure in sustaining change. The traditional formula of the class oriented towards the teacher's desk communicates immediately the idea of absolute dependence on the teacher, the impossibility of communication, if not prompted, immovability, isolation and rigidity. The teacher, enclosed by his/her desk space, sits or at most stands in front of the whiteboard, explains or dictates notes, the only resource aside from the textbooks, passing knowledge without worrying about interacting, relating, communicating.

Even the 'classroom 3.0', built to innovate that traditional scheme by means of a massive influx of technology, has substantially failed (Bardi 2014). These were environments that potentially offered dynamism, flexibility, adaptability of the available spaces to offer new contexts for learning. However, they were classrooms considered as high-tech laboratories where the students went only occasionally, while spending most of the time in regular and often small classrooms. They stood out as *the other classroom* as opposed to the everyday one.

Marc Augé enphasised that what sets apart a place from a *non-place* are three characteristics: being identitarian, being relational and being historical. The passage between a *non-place* space (the traditional classroom) to a *place* is marked by the meaning that it makes for the person who lives in it, by the intertwining of the relationships and emotions that fill it. The furnishing contributes to the shaping and meaning of the space.

It is hard to imagine Italian schools, often old and falling apart, suddenly transformed into modern ones, colourful with diversified and open spaces. It is possible though to reconfigure environments, revamping traditional classrooms so as to transform them into places with meaning for their inhabitants. It becomes much easier to adapt spaces with warm and relaxing colours, colourful and stackable desks, wooden floors and curtains, familiar places where the teacher can facilitate the students' paths, respect-

ing the various modalities of work and study, helping them to build relationships, use multiple resources and make them aware of the project they are working on.

The new school should not replicate today's society: *liquid* (Bauman 1999), technological, fast. If technologies forcefully entered our daily lives and influenced our modalities of thought and learning, it does not follow that it is enough to fill a classroom with technology to be up-to-date and in the lead. The mere introduction of technological tools leads to impoverishment.

The pervasiveness of the digital and the creation of virtual environments where we often *isolate* ourselves perhaps require a greater effort in the material realm to develop environments that are colourful, playful, dynamic, comfortable and connected, but where technology is *transparent*, not invasive.

School can answer to the risk of alienation from reality by reconfiguring learning spaces to leverage affective, emotional and social dimensions, aiming above all at the students' wellbeing, at them *inhabiting* the place classroom (psycho-pedagogic reflection started in collaboration with Prof. Giuseppe Mannino, expert in scholastic psychology and teacher at Università Lumsa in Palermo).

6. The Liquid Teacher

The innovative school proposed by Centro Studi ImparaDigitale requires a different relationship between student and teacher, where the objective is not disciplinary learning, but a real didactics by competences, customised and shared. It is clear that in this process the key role is the teacher's, who feels, today more than ever, disoriented and incapable of facing such a radical change to students' learning modalities.

Every student has different cognitive styles, learns in different ways, is unique and subjective: the learning process must therefore be strongly oriented towards customised action through which everyone can freely express themselves.

When the educational perspective is paired with suitable tools, used properly, a shift from transmission-consumption to collaboration and co-creation happens; not just transmission of knowledge but collaboration in renewed environments. This can take the form of planning the resolution to a problem, to action (teachers and students together), through a dynamism

of roles made possible through wide participation and shared leadership. This implies, for students, an autonomy in the management of their work and study (acting in an autonomous and responsible way) and a collective construction of knowledge made possible by *learning activities*, that is "Activities aimed at concrete learning in action, in physical space, authentic, and based on collaborative processes" (Vettraino et al. 2017).

It becomes connective learning, facilitated by a transmedial educational perspective that can offer the sharing of memory, imagination, experience: a synergy that students, along with teachers, put into play to develop new codes and new expressive modality. Such an attitude, aimed at overcoming the thresholds of notions verification, triggers a process in the student who, confronted with a problem to solve, will not have to rely on cognitive resources alone (knowledge and procedures), but will have to, through self-reflection and self-evaluation (possible in a continuous dialogue and interchange of experiences in an open group) make knowledge and procedures interact, and apply rules to proceed in difficult situations, developing the ability to manage them in a strategic way.

For this change to happen, though, the teacher must change his/her role once again: no more knowledge transmitter, mentor or researcher, nor 'hub' that collects, redistributes and connects all the students in formation in and out of the classroom.

The teacher is no more just a mono-dimensional figure who dispenses content, but must turn into a 'liquid teacher' in a 'liquid society', made out of mutable and fragile bonds (Bauman 1999) that contain the effects of globalisation, of nomadism, of the virtual network: a world and a subjectivity constantly redefined.

A modernity characterised by complexity; a complexity in which operate disorder, the non-determinate, the arbitrary, the absence of points of reference, something that we teachers must transform not into limiting factors, but into elements that aspire to a rationality that is diverse but perhaps superior because it negates organised rationality and monoculturalism. The teacher must observe, listen, lead students in their learning paths, facilitating meta-reflection on engagement in relationships, pushing towards objectives of competence, encouraging confrontation and collaboration, respecting individual styles and characteristics, leaving space for autonomy and protagonism, letting students discover facilitating tools for learning, listening to propositions for the creation of individual and collective products to be shared and presented to other 'externals', imbibing the

students with the teacher's knowledge without proposing pre-constituted cognitive structures, imparting knowledge without overruling, with the awareness that learning is an individual fact but derives from collective actions, with a connective intelligence that produces the construction of meanings born from continuous exchange.

7. The Destructured School

The school of the future must take into account the technologies used by students, not only to communicate but as a virtual place they inhabit, using them as enabling tools for a transformation of learning, as bridges for the dialogue not only in the classroom, but also as places where not only violence and discrimination exist, but where even students with disabilities can break physical barriers, and where there is a chance to talk and get to know different societies, cultures and religions. The schools of dialogue, a school-world in which walls are taken down and the doors are open, in which one learns to cohabit in an ever growing network, where not only students learn to know each other, but where teachers succeed in entering a community in which to pose their problems, voice their criticalities, ask for help with a change that is under their eyes but that they do not know how to deal with.

An inclusive school that allows the students to decide how to study, that gives them a guide that is not a constrained road to follow passively, relying on but not trusting the cultural propositions of the teacher, on the quest, above all, of finding their wellbeing at school in which spaces, where they spend many hours of the day, make them feel at ease, avoid stress and help them find themselves in familiar environments in which to acquire knowledge but also competences. In which gathering to collaborate, co-create and share is not a choice pushed from above but one that sprouts from the student, from his/her desire to relate to another person, not just 'an other' but a peer.

It is necessary to generate in the students the feeling of belonging even only in the class group and to allow critical sense, reflection, listening, and acceptance of a different point of view to develop, to make our children responsible digital citizens, more autonomous, more able to work in teams, more flexible, more responsible and creative, capable of resolving problems, of debating, of facing more adequately the digital society they are immersed in and the new working world.

It is very important that they learn to listen, not to judge upfront, not to be self-referential, to evaluate and self-evaluate, not to close themselves in a world made out of avatars where 'the other' is just a name, too often unknown, that conditions the mind and often leads them into a fake and imaginary reality, brainwashed, sometimes, with messages that are negative and unethical.

From these considerations come the destructured class and school, the classroom and the school-home where special attention is paid to emotional intelligence, which can interfere with the processes of teaching/learning, blocking or facilitating the construction of competences and the idea of community.

A 'liquid' teacher for a school that cannot follow rigid normatives anymore, in the narrow spaces of the classroom, in time-frames that do not allow co-presences or that do not let students of different classes interact: a school destructured but organised, ordered and regulated in the light of new didactic methodologies and new shared designs.

Knowledge is always in 'becoming': the students must be enabled to communicate with their peers and also with those outside of the classroom who can give them information to build their knowledge. That is why not only the class is internally restructured with a shape that is flexible and adaptable, but the work opens outwards, starting with the school. The organisation of teaching by units of multi/interdisciplinary learning destructures the organisation by classes and pre-constituted organisations, in favour of groups that gather by interests and competences and that work openly in a collaborative relationship between teachers and students.

The objective is not anymore only the disciplinary learning in itself, but its pursuit within a more complex process that entails identifying and resolving problems, researching and selecting information, learning to work as a group, knowing how to communicate, express oneself and listen, channel creativity and emotions, make it operational.

The road to conquering competences, both disciplinary and transversal, involves a process which each student follows in order to:

– observe oneself along the didactic path, learning to spot the efficacy of one's process, recognising obstacles, difficulties and errors and spotting the modalities to fill the gaps: a metacognitive type of process
– identify, with the teachers, the tools that are best suited for one's way of learning to boost skills and fill gaps, in the spirit of autonomy and responsibility

– mobilise knowledge and skill resources and know how to find new resources, in the logic of self-efficacy: stimulating self-efficacy is a fundamental duty of teachers.

8. Enabling Technology

Moreover, the importance of developing a critical and reflective capacity is urgent today, to face the negative trend of a society of information that offers ever-increasingly persuasive and fast tools, but at the same time delivers into the hands of the same users a culture of 'everything now' (McKevitt 2012), pushing more and more towards the lack of 'patience for culture', therefore of the capacity to go deeper. The speed of communication, excellent for accelerating cognitive process and facilitating 'connective' interchanges, correlating, that is, more people and intelligences in an exchange of ideas, becomes the ultimate educational risk when it translates into the acritical dimension of mono-lemmatic research that stops at the first Google page, or into encyclopaedic knowledge to be consumed through a click on the screen.

The key points that can avert the risk of superficial absorption and of the banalisation of educational action supported by the new knowledge media, go, above all, through a constructivist vision that help reaching a critical maturity of the students.

A first point can surely be identified in the necessity of offering an ever wider openness towards transmedial literacy; that is, the possibility of facilitating the acquisition of competences and the production of content by means of diverse communication media (tablet, Internet, but also books, group leisure activities and work time). The natural threshold of communication and cooperation in daily activities goes through devices that put students into contact with their peers and the socio-cultural environment they are in: allowing the exploitation of the same transmedial sharing and consumption channels to better the educational assets that were confined to the classroom is an important step for contemporary education. As anticipated, this doesn't mean banalising the medium to insist on the content (it is pointless to try and understand whether a tablet or a book is the most effective medium to read and understand a text), but rather exploiting the natural knowledgeability footprint that students today already have, thanks to new technologies, to make their learning (which finds its foundation in

ongoing contextualisation, in debate, in collective and individual reflection in a free organisation of students, but strategically structured by the teacher), more active, constructive and collaborative.

9. Being with the Other Teachers

In this momentous shift for school and didactics, teachers today feel utterly at a loss, without points of reference, confronted with a reality in which the whole process of learning is being revolutionised.

The changes to be faced are many: the relationship and the context of involving students, knowing how to exploit the opportunity brought by technology to make them 'enabling' in students' learning processes, modifying one's own role, giving up the safety of traditional teaching. It is an intriguing challenge, but also extremely hard because it is made from new paths to be invented.

This challenge also involves managing to design, collaborate, share, and co-create projects transversally with colleagues. Significant effort is therefore required to completely modify the didactic perspective.

Sharing planning means learning to dialogue with colleagues of the same or other classes, not being self-referential and locked in one's own discipline, developing a true planning by competences, thinking not in terms of 'subjects' but of 'cultural axes' on the basis of which to measure knowledge, competence and attitudes, but above all defining and implementing active and shared didactic methodologies so that planning does not remain only theoretical but becomes a serious transformation of didactics.

10. Curriculum Mapping

An enabling tool developed by ImparaDigitale is available: *Curriculum Mapping*. It is, in fact, an environment in which students' *curricula* are made available and where it is possible to cross-reference them with programming by competence, greatly facilitating teachers' jobs. The platform enables integration of the process of creation of the learning units coordinating the various activities, making the result comparable and helping reviews and sharing.

The process unfolds in three phases:

1. Document: learning unit; competence goals; abilities and connected knowledge; expected performance; modality of evaluation of the activity
2. Evaluate: the results obtained from each student will allow computation of the competences achieved in individual learning units which can be cross-referenced with other units, allowing for corrections in due course
3. Review: the saved data will allow review of the individual learning units and the student's overall *curriculum*, allowing fixes and adjustments.

The collected figures show that the tool meets a common need that is felt by teachers in charge of planning and coordination with other teachers: the platform was made freely available to the public in May 2016; at the moment it is used by nearly 10.000 teachers in 5.500 classes in over 2.100 schools around Italy, with Lombardy in the lead, followed quite closely by Sicily, Campania and Puglia. It is used 35% by primary school, 31% by lower secondary and 28% by upper secondary.

At the same time the platform has become the repository of over 4.000 learning units, already organised and used, with around 1.000 resources available for consultation or as a source of ideas for teachers using the platform.

11. Real Benefits

On the basis of the experience accumulated so far, this innovative approach leads to tangible results that confirm the validity of an integrated approach aimed at innovative didactics through the transformation of spaces, relationships and approach, using a wise mix of traditional and technological tools.

First of all, the better involvement of students is indisputable. It is hard to quantify, but surely the presence of a teacher in a different role, less antagonistic, within an environment where the student feels at ease, cannot but lead to broader involvement: the real world gets closer to the virtual one, to that 'elsewhere' to escape to from boredom during school hours. Therefore, it is on a level that is more resonant with a student's daily experience, and on a contextual level, a continuity with the external world can be found.

As previously seen, the digital approach must overcome the passivity

with which students absorb the digital, educating them to enquire in a tenor of methodological rigour and critical sense in approaching the digital universe.

On the path towards the achievement of transversal citizenship competences, there is no doubt that destructured work, in which each student sees his/her competences valued, leads to the conquest of a higher level of autonomy in the activity. Primary teachers have noticed it too when evaluating individual students' behaviours, so far as to induce the possibility of managing the students' self-evaluation of their activity in respect to the objectives.

All of this, in the context of a multi-disciplinary logic, tends to reproduce the real world's complexity through a destructured approach, but one that is organised and regulated, that knows how to analyse the problem from the point of view of the various disciplines, bringing it back to unity in an approach that can make the students' learning process appear organic.

What is still the starting point is the teacher's renewed approach, with the knowledge of not being the point of reference by job or nature, but becoming so because it is recognised by the students, who in turn are accepted as protagonists of learning in a flexible and creative process. This is a double acknowledgement of identity from which a new educational relationship can be born and projected into the future.

From an auditing performed by Professor Ferdinando Pennarola from the Department of Management and Knowledge of Università Bocconi in Milan on the schools that adopted the Bardi-ImparaDigitale method, we can finally conclude:

– "it appears that the difference, we may say, once more, is made by the teachers" (Pennarola 2015, online). The study, in fact, showed that excellent students (with grades higher than 8) do brilliantly with or without digital innovations. No surprise here. The real difference is understanding if the students who do not reach such levels of excellence benefit from the adoption of a learning method mediated by technology. The advantage is there but must be part of an ecosystem in which the teacher is a competent, active problem-solver, a source of information for the whole class, not only in his/her area of professional/educational expertise – something we take for granted – but also on the digital resources (contents) that are available on the Internet.
– The success achieved by the adoption of a tablet to teach Italian, History or Science must not mislead. The auditing project of ImparaDigitale con-

firms that bringing these technologies into the classroom immediately catches the students' attention and transforms, in their perception, the teacher into a 'modern' adult, capable of interacting with the new generation. This is positive but it is not enough to make a difference. This 'modern' adult must be up-to-date as well and must orchestrate continuous support to the class: to do so he/she will have to revolutionise his/her own didactics.

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Are we ready to form a new class of future teachers? This is the real challenge that must be in the headlines when we talk about schools in our country (Pennarola 2015).

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