

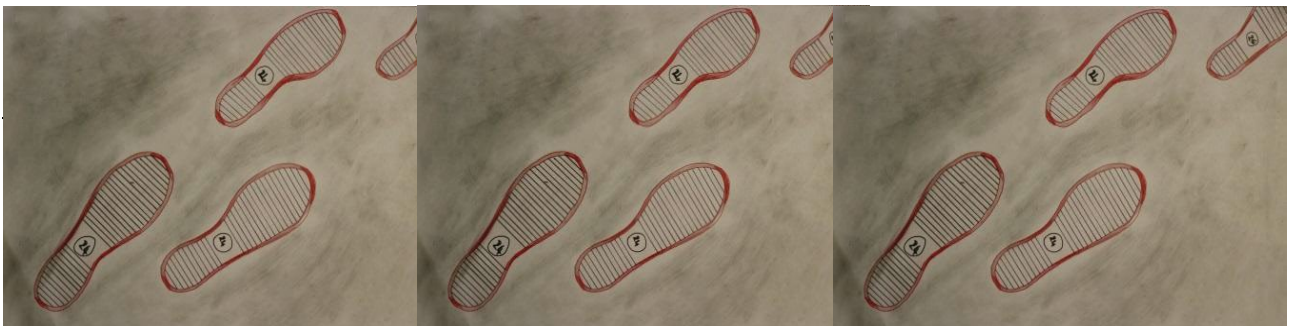
Theme 4

Middle school experience

This is the report of the experience of a middle school class in the Aosta Valley, gathering children about 13-14 years old. The **“There is a pair of scarpette rosse”** project was carried out from October 2018 to February 2019.

This document relates the journey and the reflection of the teachers who undertook the project, on the basis of their log book.

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| Pedagogical Stakes | <p>The “There is a pair of scarpette rosse” project, winner of the Plurilingual Kamishibai Contest in the Aosta Valley, 5th edition (2019-2020), gathered French, English and Italian teachers. This production took shape during the hours dedicated to ELI (integrated language education), in anticipation of their cooperation in realizing a plurilingual project, in the framework of the end-of-cycle review.</p> <p>The goal was to treat an important historical topic in an original way. The topic of the Shoah, that is part of the eighth-grade program (equivalent of the last year in middle school in Italy), happened to be perfectly in line with the general theme of the contest - “I remember”. The starting point was an everyday object - a children’s shoe. It is starting from this item that Joyce Lussu’s poem <i>C’è un paio di scarpette rosse</i> (<i>There is a pair of red shoes</i>) and the staging technique of the movie “<i>Schindler’s list</i>” respectively became the stand of the narrative story and the basis of the kamishibai’s images.</p> |
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Once the first drafts of the written and graphic parts were set, the project was ready to be concretely carried out with a strong **involvement** and **collaboration** from the students regarding the crafting of the cards. The **languages the students chose** were linked to the story and one language that wasn't taught in the school - German - was naturally incorporated in the unfolding of the poetic narrative, among other languages, like Franco-Provençal, that were spoken in the family.



Strong Points

Parallely to multilingualism, which the project naturally tended to develop, the opportunity to **work on poetry and poetic structures** has been an important asset. Students analyzed Lussu's poem and divided it in various sequences composing the text on the cards. Each part of the text precisely reflects the image on the other side of the card, which adds a lot of emotion to the reading of this kamishibai. From an artistic point of view, the **reflection on the visual and emotive impact of colors** determined the group's final choice. The capacity to use graphics and writing in a creative, interdependent way was an important advantage.

In order to make the choices and decisions taken at every step of the project **uniform**, it has been necessary to work in tune with various terms and conditions while alternating class group activity and individual or subgroup activity. In a more general way, cooperative learning has been efficient since the project enabled a collective effort that resulted in one final outcome, with a view to interdisciplinarity.

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| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Consequences</p> | <p>Through a dramatized reading, the students were able to present their kamishibai to other groups of children and to their parents during a final performance. This show enabled them to spread awareness among other classes of this dramatic topic, through an innovative approach.</p> <p>After their participation in the contest and the performance in front of the school, teachers continued offering various pedagogical activities that were based on this project. Students were made aware of different languages and took an interest in some that weren't taught in their school program - German, for instance. Moreover, students who spoke the Valdôtain patois (Franco-Provençal) with their family made the effort of using it not only as a spoken language but also as a written language.</p>  |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Difficulties encountered</p> | <p>The difficulties reported were mainly related to organization and the relationship between teachers, rather than the unfolding of the project with the students. The major pitfall was the transmission of information and instruction, which highlighted the necessity of collaborating and solving incomprehension that had appeared during the project. Hence, the situation has also been positive since it enabled teachers to reach an agreement regarding a common goal and it underscored their will to carry on and overcome organizational issues.</p>  |