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EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE MAINSTREAM: VALUING CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES FOR THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN IN THE UK

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ABSTRACT

This article draws on interviews with members of the educational community and fieldwork conducted in five UK schools to unpack the ways in which communities develop alternative resources to mainstream curriculum to assist the integration of migrant children. They consist of additional or parallel curricula offered by supplementary and faith schools, initiatives bridging inter-cultural gaps through additional or arts, charities rating the inclusiveness of schools, and educational tools challenging the mainstream curriculum. The article concludes by discussing the extent to which such diversity of approaches values the cultural heritage of migrant children and successfully complements the existing curricula.

Keywords: migrant children, social anchoring, migrant integration, UK schools, alternative education

ISTRUZIONE FUORI DAGLI SCHEMI: VALORIZZAZIONE DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE ATTRAVERSO RISORSE ALTERNATIVE PER L'INTEGRAZIONE DEI BAMBINI MIGRANTI NEL REGNO UNITO

SINTESI

In base a interviste con membri della comunità educante e al lavoro sul campo svolti in cinque scuole del Regno Unito, l'articolo cerca di scoprire le modalità con cui le comunità sviluppano risorse alternative al curricolo convenzionale o 'mainstream' per coadiuvare l'integrazione di bambini migranti. Esse consistono in curricoli paralleli offerti da scuole supplementari e religiose, iniziative che si adoperano per colmare i divari interculturali attraverso l'arte, enti di beneficenza che valutano l'inclusività delle scuole e strumenti educativi che sfidano il curricolo convenzionale. In conclusione, l'articolo discute della misura in cui tale diversità di approcci valorizza il patrimonio culturale dei bambini migranti e integra con successo i curricoli in vigore.

Parole chiave: bambini migranti, punti di riferimento sociale, integrazione di migranti, scuole del Regno Unito, istruzione alternativa

INTRODUCTION

The total number of international migrants in the UK is estimated at 8.8 million, representing more than 13% of the total country population. Ten percent of this figure (accounting for around 900,000) is comprised of migrants 19 years and younger (see www.un.org), a figure which represents almost 20% of this age group in the country and one of the highest in Europe (Harte, Herrera & Stepanek, 2016). Beyond these statistical numbers lies a complex reality impacting on how the UK migrant population and, specifically for the scope of this article, the migrant children contingent, are embraced by and adapting to their host nation. In the light of the country's decision to leave the European Union, largely driven by an anti-immigration rhetoric, and an ongoing global pandemic which has highlighted, on the other hand, the essential role of migrants for the local labour market (Barber, 2020), the question of migrant integration in the UK appears more timely than in recent years.

The integration of children with migrant background in the UK schools and society is currently hindered by a mix of reasons. They include a 'hostile environment' and a regression of rights in recent years, a decade of austerity that has severely reduced the support schools and other educational players can offer and the lack of an explicit and overarching integration policy. This article draws on fieldwork undertaken with MiCreate (Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe)[1], a pan-European project which aims to stimulate inclusion of diverse groups of migrant children by adopting child-centered approach to migrant children integration on educational and policy level. It uses interviews with members of the educational community and fieldwork conducted in UK primary and secondary schools to unpack the manifold ways in which different communities develop strategies and tools to mitigate the impact of these limitations.

Theoretically, we advance and expand on the concept of social anchoring developed by Grzymala-Kazlowska (2018) to account for the experiences of migrant children in educational contexts. Social anchoring is used here to include, alongside the structural contexts and factors of the host environment, the cultural characteristics of migrants, which determine in equal measure individual agency and offer psycho-social resources for providing footholds. Specifically, the article considers anchors the specific alternative arrangements to mainstream school settings and curricula existing in the UK context. They are additional or parallel curricula offered by supplementary and faith schools, initiatives bridging inter-cultural gaps through music and poetry, charities producing guides and certifications reflecting the inclusiveness of schools. These are complemented by educational tools within schools in the form of multilingual displays, online platforms for learning English and music, history and religious studies classes which are challenging the mainstream curriculum.

The article is structured as follows. Firstly, it provides a brief overview of the current broader context which negatively impacts the integration of migrant children in the British education and policy. It then introduces the concept of social anchoring (Grzymala-Kazlowska, 2018) as a critique and alternative to more prevalent notions of integration, adaptation and identity, which are deemed insufficient to fully capture the complex issue of establishing relationship with a receiving society while at the same time preserving one's own identity. This is followed by a brief description of the fieldwork, methods and data we gathered. Thirdly, it explores how such anchors are created in two different environments: both outside and inside the formal educational system. Outside the school gates, we propose a national perspective to identify social anchors developed by community-based and faith schools geared towards specific language, cultural and religious teaching, public initiatives promoting arts and performance as means to develop a sense of belonging, charities working with schools to produce guides and certifications reflecting inclusiveness or campaign groups invested in offering legal aid, facilitating access to education, building leadership or assisting with strategic communication on behalf of migrant children and adults. In the primary and secondary schools we worked with in and around Manchester, we further identified anchors in the forms of multilingual displays and teaching materials, digital and online tools assisting teachers and pupils with their educational endeavour, collective or individual efforts from school staff to diversify the standard curricula and address the needs of migrant children, including through speaking other languages than English, or the acknowledgement and celebration of cultural and religious diversity. Finally, the paper concludes by reflecting on the extent to which this diversity of approaches successfully complements the existing curricula and what are their limitations.

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT, AUSTERITY, LACK OF EXPLICIT POLICY

The last five years have brought an overall regression of rights for migrants in the UK (MiCreate, 2019b). This has broadly coincided with the introduction of the Home Office hostile environment policy, a set of administrative and legislative measures announced in 2012 under the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition and designed to make staying in the United Kingdom as difficult as possible for people without leave to remain (Taylor, 2018). The

1 The article is published with a financial support of the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation program under grant agreement No 822664.

aim of the legislation was to deter people without permission from entering the UK and to encourage those already here to leave voluntarily. Amongst the adopted measures are limiting access to work, housing, healthcare, and bank accounts, revoking driving licences and reducing and restricting rights of appeal against Home Office decisions. The policy has directly impacted the livelihoods of migrants living in the UK in a number of ways, as pointed out by the representative of an educational NGO we interviewed, a national independent funding body we have approached. Amongst the negative effects are an increasing costs of application fees for settled status, the lack of legal aid for immigration cases and the increasingly prevalent practice of data sharing on immigrants between governmental departments. Specifically related to migrant children is the recent impact of Brexit, which pushes them to apply for settled status in the country and also the university fees that many migrant young people turning 18 realise they need to pay (as often they have not acquired this settled status) (MiCreate, 2019b, 81).

More than a decade of austerity measures has equally affected the migrant population, the UK government having progressively limited free health services for 'overseas visitors' on the grounds of fairness and frugality (Shahvisi, 2019). Representatives of UK charities working with migrants and interviewed for the MiCreate project describe a 'dehumanizing and disempowering' state of affairs and argue that austerity is contributing to an overall lack of compassion towards migrants. At the school level, this can translate into a lack of understanding and knowledge about migration issues amongst some staff. Some teachers lack confidence when working with migrant children and families and may not ask the right questions for fear of not appearing politically correct. On rare occasions staff have felt that teaching migrant children with little or no English was over and above their role and duties according to one local authority (MiCreate, 2019b).

Finally, at policy level a lack of coherent approach is visible in relation to migrant integration. Despite having been part of the UK political discourse since the 1960s, migration has been done quite stealthily: at top there has been a vision, while at the bottom there is good work. While a National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants and later the Community Relations Commission have been charged from mid-1960s with the 'integration of the immigrant' into the wider community (Cantle, 2008, 39), it was mostly at the local level that most efforts were visible. Thus, schools received funding for English language teaching and local authorities benefitted from further assistance to help alleviate any issues arising from migrant arrivals. This arrangement continued throughout the 1990s, with the multicultural/antiracist education debate prevalent amongst educators and academics, mirrored at the same time by little engagement from central government (Modood & May, 2001).

More recently, in the light of the 2001 riots in the UK and following jihadi terrorist attacks, the central government pushed ideas of cohesion and shared values to the fore, while tasking schools to promote 'fundamental British values'. It can be thus argued that, historically, the legislation aimed at the integration of migrant pupils has been mostly undertaken at the local levels. Similarly, two rather different approaches have become apparent in the last decades. On the one hand the aim was to promote equality through older and newer anti-discrimination and anti-hate legislation, but also a slew of funding, guidance and monitoring for equality purposes. On the other, a more coercive approach aimed at engineering change of migrants' (and others') values through a discourse of counter-extremism, and counter-civil disorder, talk of 'fundamental British values' and preparing pupils for 'life in modern Britain' (MiCreate, 2019c).

One particular recent policy negatively impacting migrant children was the decision of the Department for Education to requested schools to stop collecting pupil nationality data following accusations that this is used for immigration enforcement (Weale, 2019). According to the representative from NALDIC, the national subject association for English as an Additional Language, this has made it both harder to identify and support migrant children and communicate with schools: 'This policy change effectively means that there are increasing gaps for children to fall through without being noticed' (MiCreate, 2019b, 82). A pointedly observation made by one policy expert interviewed for the project was that there is no explicit UK national policy on integration, with no specific focus on migrant integration. Therefore, the focus moves to educational policies at school level, which are regarded by most as welcoming sites for migrant pupils (MiCreate, 2019c).

SOCIAL ANCHORS FOR MIGRANT PUPILS

Most of academic debates in the field of migration studies have been concerned with notions of integration, identity and social networks. Stubbs' conceptualisation of integration is widely used and 'refers to the attempt to facilitate a sharing of resources – economic and social, an equalizing of rights – political and territorial, and the development of cultural exchanges and new cultural forms, between forced migrants and all other members of a society' (1995, 5). It describes a mutual process whereby the old culture is retained while at the same time a new one is gained. At the same time, in public debates and policies, integration has often been confused with assimilation into the dominant society (i.e. losing old culture and gaining new one) rather than

migrants establishing relationships with a receiving society and at the same time maintaining their own ethnic identity (Berry, 1997).

Identity, on the other hand, is an equally problematic concept to operate with in a liquid, networked and globalised world (Bauman, 2000; Castells, 2000; Urry, 2000). In relation to migrant identities, both structures of the state and families are interested in supporting cultural identity for its own sake. Parents may aim to hold on to and preserve the 'old ways' (see Bowie, Wojnar & Isaak, 2017), while, to some extent, states see 'family cultural and language capital' as something to be supported (Sime & Moskal, 2015; see also the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). Conversely, there is active encouragement for migrants to gain new elements of cultural identity, including language acquisition and the assumed 'values' of the new society (see Casey, 2016). Despite its analytical rigour both theoretically and empirically, the term 'identity' has been regarded as both overused and fuzzy (Hall, 1996) due its subjectivity and the nature of self-identification.

We use instead here the concept of social anchoring (Grzymala-Kazlowska, 2018) as a theoretical lens to analyse experiences of migrant children in educational contexts, both formal and extra-curricular (Arun & Bailey, 2019). Such anchors are defined as 'the processes of establishing footholds which allow migrants to acquire a relative socio-psychological stability and function effectively in new life settings' (Grzymala-Kazlowska, 2018, 225). By including the structural contexts/factors of the host environment and/or cultural characteristics of migrants, this social anchoring goes beyond the restrictive concepts of identity and integration to account for the stabilisation of individuals both psychologically and sociologically. This allows for the incorporation of human agency, including emotional aspects of establishing footholds and, on the other hand, acknowledging inequalities and structural constraints that shape their experiences of stability and security.

Innumerable fields are available for 'social anchoring', according to Grzymala-Kazlowska, including education, leisure, food, family, religion, literature etc. As our empirical data show, these anchors exist not only within the school environments, but outside them as well: supplementary schools, charities and various citizenship initiatives provide such social and psychological 'grips' for migrant pupils to rely on. In the process of integration, identity negotiation and community building, new anchors are gained and perhaps others are lost. Looking at migrant adults from Poland building their new lives in the UK, Grzymala-Kazlowska observes that her subjects tend to protect their anchors rather than establishing new ones. On the contrary, our data suggests that pupils are more predisposed than adults to build new such connections.

For the purpose of this article, the concept of social anchoring is useful to highlight not so much the proactive nature of anchoring. Instead, we chart the anchors set up in place at institutional and non-institutional levels to address their needs, both at social and psychological levels. Before going to effectively explore these anchors, the next section will proceed to describe the fieldwork and interviews undertaken for the MiCreate project and briefly present the child-centred approach we developed.

FIELDWORK AND METHODS

This article draws on research undertaken under the MiCreate project (2019–2022), a pan-European initiative involving 15 partners in 12 countries. Its overall objective is to stimulate the inclusion of diverse groups of migrant children by adopting a child-centred approach to their integration at the educational and policy levels. The dataset we present focuses on the UK educational and policy landscape and is divided in two categories.

The first is comprised of semi-structured interviews with 11 experts on the topic of migrant children integration. The organisations we approached range from central institutions operating across the country to smaller scale local entities. The first category includes national charities dedicated to funding work influencing migration policy, associations overseeing the teaching of English as an Additional Language (EAL) or an independent policy think tank focusing on migration and integration. The second category, on the other hand, is comprised of regional bodies such as local authorities dedicated to supporting schools across Greater Manchester in their work with migrant children, supplementary schools or grassroots charities working directly with refugees and asylum seekers. On a reflective note, we must also mention the difficulties and challenges in contacting various stakeholders for an open and honest discussion on this contested topic, with many (particularly small NGOs supporting migrant families and communities) faced with pressures of time, resources and priorities.

For the second dataset we worked with 12 schools in the United Kingdom. The sample included 12 schools of diverse characteristics in terms of location, affluent/deprived areas, school performance, percent of migrant pupils and public/private/faith school status. Thus, out of the 12 schools 10 were located in the North West of England (where the research team is based), one in Northern Ireland and one in Scotland. Half of the schools we investigated are located in areas of high deprivation, while in most of these institutions English is not the first language that pupils speak. Seven of the schools were primary schools and five were secondary schools. Majority

(ten) of the schools were public (state) schools, two were private schools and two were also classified as faith schools.

The overall methodological approach was a combination of qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups and observation of the school environment. Informal conversations with staff while observing their classes and participating in class activities were the strategies used to gather information about the school. There was difficulty gaining access and data in schools as some of them were in the middle of exams and Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) inspections, later compounded by the coronavirus crisis which led to the effective closing of their premises and ensuing discontinuation of our fieldwork. In total, 34 interviews with school representatives were conducted, one focus group with 3 members of school community (parents), as well as analyses of existing visual displays, curriculum and teaching materials in four of the schools. The interview notes and school materials were analysed in order to examine how schools approach integration, how diversity in a migratory context affects schools, what resources and mediators for integration exist, obstacles to integration and possibilities for doing it better.

SOCIAL ANCHORING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL GATES

Outside the school environment, the UK has a broad range of alternative arrangements contributing to the support of migrant children. Such anchors are represented by parallel curricula designed by supplementary and faith schools, initiatives intended to bridge inter-cultural gaps through artistic means such as music and poetry and charities working with schools to produce guides and certifications reflecting their inclusiveness. The need to consider non-school initiatives as equally important for the successful integration of migrant pupils is acknowledged in the literature (Medarić & Žakelj, 2014; Ahad & Benton, 2018; Dovigo, 2018; Miller, Ziaian & Esterman, 2018). Dovigo, for example, talks about 'a shift from a school-centered view to a network-based perspective focused on active cooperation between services and communities' (2018, 48). In this section, we will present some initiatives in more detail.

Supplementary schools

Outside the formal education, the role of supplementary schools is considered essential for improving the overall achievements of migrant children. Despite the diverse nature of supplementary schools provision, the significance of supplementary school education on overall pupil school achievement has been brought out in a research study by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, which showed that, on average, the supplementary school pupils do better than their peers (Evans & Gillan-Thomas, 2015). Such provision is important in areas with high migrant community concentration, thus an important need for migrant communities. It is important that migrant children are able to speak safely about their migrant experience in a normalised educational context, rather than in compartmentalised debates on migration.

Supplementary schools commonly offer mother-tongue language classes, faith and cultural studies, but also activities such as sport, music, dance and drama, while supporting National Curriculum subjects. They are established and managed by communities, run on a voluntary basis. Some are small local groups run by parents, others are part of larger organisations. An estimated 3,000–5,000 such schools exist across England. We interviewed the Co-ordinator Provider of a Supplementary School for Indian Arts and Culture based in Central Manchester. This is located in a local school and delivers education through arts and culture. Classes are provided during Saturdays, are open to all backgrounds in relation to diversity, special needs and abilities and range from music to dance, yoga, languages etc.

Faith schools

While strictly not outside the school gates, some state schools in the UK have some form of faith affiliation, and not necessarily to the Church of England. They play an important, if not contested, role in reception communities across the country. One third of state schools in England are faith schools (Harrison, 2011). In Scotland most schools are non-denominational, with the faith schools largely being Catholic. In Wales, the small faith school sector includes Catholic and Church in Wales, and in Northern Ireland 45% of schools have a Catholic character. They are funded mainly or entirely by local authorities, but are linked to a charitable body, usually religious. Some of these schools can discriminate in admissions, but not all, and parents may also choose to self-discriminate. The role of faith schools is thus debatable in relation to migrant children integration and our respondents have called for efforts to tackle fragmented or insular identities by encouraging wider debates on identity formation, not based purely on religion or cultural beliefs.

Music and poetry

Arts have proved to have a positive impact on the integration of migrant children. Recent research has demonstrated that music education programs have encouraged them to foster 'a sense of well-being, social inclusion (a sense of belonging), and an enhanced engagement with learning' (Crawford, 2017, 353). Similarly, a study on applied theatre projects

with young refugee arrivals in Australia (Balfour et al., 2015) has shown that theatre can be used for increasing migrant inclusion and resilience in manifold ways. We have identified two similar initiatives where music and poetry serve as both social and emotional anchors for migrant children.

A creative approach to language learning is delivered by the Mother Tongue Other Tongue Project (MTOT). MTOT is a multi-lingual poetry competition that celebrates cultural diversity and the many languages spoken in the UK schools. Nationally, the Routes into Languages programme (the co-ordinator of the MTOT project) encourages young people in schools to study languages, which have been identified as a Strategic and Vulnerable subjects by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. One of the major aims of Routes into Languages project based in the North West is to boost recruitment to language degrees in higher education. This has led to supporting children who are bilingual in background, primarily due to migrant backgrounds.

Although funding has reduced for these programmes, such projects have made a great impact into promoting foreign languages. While migration is not the focus on the project, it is found that promotion of home languages is popular particularly among second and third generation migrant background children. The project started as a pilot in 2012 with 500 children participating, which increased to 6,000 in 2016. The programme is endorsed and supported by the Poet Laureate Dame Carol Duffy (based in the English Department at Manchester Metropolitan University) and by a number of celebrities from fields such as education, sports, literature and who were themselves second generation immigrant children. The success of the MTOT project has been further endorsed with the Royal College of Music developing a musical programme on Migrant roots based on selected works from the Poetry competition as part of the MIRO initiative (Manchester International Roots Orchestra).

Another inspiring example in Manchester is Stone Flowers, a project that supports traumatised refugee and asylum seeker torture survivors living in the UK through regular therapeutic music sessions. Its aim is to bring together people who are often without family and hope. As sessions develop, survivors have begun to write original songs with messages of hope, peace and resilience. According to the initiators of the project, music helps survivors to 'move beyond trauma to rediscover feelings of motivation and self-esteem, becoming the architects of their own recovery, using music as a strategy for coping with stress and anxiety' (see www.musicaction.org). Stone Flowers members have fled war, conflict and violence from places such as Iran, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Syria, Afghanistan, Cameroon and the DRC. Since 2011, the project has worked with over 200 torture survivors and recorded two studio albums.

Guides and certifications for inclusiveness

A series of charities and organisations both national and international are collaborating with schools across the UK to promote anchors such as citizenship training and education or simply to ensure a welcoming environment for migrant pupils. Their work can be described as building a resilience curriculum that equips migrant children with the skills needed to overcome challenges, focusing on their strengths rather than disadvantages (Quezada, Rodriguez-Valls & Randall, 2016).

One such national organisation is City of Sanctuary, a grassroots movement aiming to provide a welcome to people seeking sanctuary. City of Sanctuary is involved on a daily basis with migrants of all ages through offering basic services such as signposting them to English or arts classes and engaging them in volunteering activities. Its principle is to find a common ground with such people and learn together, through building bridges, recognising similarities and challenging stereotypes. The integration efforts done by some schools across Manchester and Salford is being recognised by the charity, whose program, Schools of Sanctuary, helps their students, staff and wider community understand what it means to be seeking sanctuary and to extend a welcome to everyone as equal, valued members of the school community. There are more than 200 schools across the UK which are recognised as Schools of Sanctuary.

In parallel to the official school curriculum, there is also the work done by the charity Oxfam through the project 'Education for global citizenship' which has received praise from our stakeholders. Conceived not as an additional school subject, but as a framework for learning, reaching beyond school to the wider community, the programme is promoted in class through the existing curriculum or through new initiatives and activities. The project is laid out from primary school to secondary school, every year group having links to every school topic and aims to encourage young people to develop the knowledge, skills and values they need to engage with the world. The programme supports young people to explore and question the world around them. It promotes critical thinking, advocates social justice and encourages learners to apply their learning to real--world issues.

Finally, one of the Manchester schools we have worked with has been certified by UNICEF as a Rights Respecting School. The international organisation works with schools in the UK to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured, and they are able to thrive. UNICEF awards the title to schools which embed these values in their daily activities, giving children 'the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens' (see www.unicef.org). The organisation uses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as guide and

enables 1.6 million children in the UK go to a Rights Respecting School. Nearly 5,000 schools in the country are working through the Award. The head teacher of the Manchester school recognised as a Rights Respecting School argues that the award provides a lot of support for the integration of migrant pupils:

> *There's this idea that the rights of the child are universal. We have five key rights that are selected by our children: the right to be safe; all children have rights; the right to healthcare, healthy food and water; the right to an education; and the right to an opinion. That opens up conversations about integration* (interview, 8 November 2019).

Initiatives offering help with legal aid and media training

We have so far focused on initiatives that provide social anchors for migrant pupils by mainly focusing on the educational aspects of their integration. There are nevertheless enterprises covering domains which are not directly linked to improving their education, but instead address adjacent issues such as legal aid or media representation.

With the significant reduction of legal aid afforded to migrant pupils starting with 2013, there are at least 6,000 children each year who have been left without access to free legal advice and representation in many areas of civil law, including employment, education, non-asylum immigration, private family law, many debt and housing cases, and most welfare benefits cases (Lagrue & Dorling, 2018). Two initiatives are working with migrant children and offering them support with accessing legal aid: the organisation Let Us Learn and the Strategic Legal Fund. The former is an inspiring initiative promoting young people with lived experience of migration and enabling them to lead change. The initiative started from a focusing on the question of education, then broadened out to wider issues around fees and around legal aid. Let Us Learn is led by young people who have migrated to the UK: 'Most of them turned 18 without realising that they didn't have immigration status and were barred from going to university. So, they set up a campaign to allow them to get access to student loans, rather than being considered as foreign nationals' (interview, 9 August 2019).

Another project is the Strategic Legal Fund, funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, an organisation we have also included in our research. The Strategic Legal Fund is a source of grants for legal work that can make a significant difference to vulnerable young migrants in UK. The foundation has a pooled fund, with four other foundations, and together they fund pre-litigation research and third-party interventions, around strategic legal cases relating to migrant children and young people.

The British media is regarded to be one of the most intolerant across Europe in their representation of migrants (Vicol & Allen, 2014; Berry, Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2015; Musolff, 2015; Pierigh, 2017). The manner in which most media outlets describe migration is not only biased and distorted, but, most importantly, it arguably has a strong impact on public perception (MiCreate, 2019a). Within such a challenging environment, it has been demonstrated that media literacy education contributes to strengthening the participation and resilience of migrant children (Leurs et al., 2018).

The work of On Road Media, a charity that tackles social problems by improving media coverage of misrepresented groups and issues, is thus essential to both change the public narrative on migration and contribute to this resilience. One of the charity's projects, The Media Movers is concerned with strategic communication work with young migrants to change the media debate on migration through strategic and 'deep communication' approach. The project focuses specifically on the wellbeing and safeguarding of young people, while at the same time developing personal relationships with strategic figures in the media to try to influence the narrative on migration. Pupils receive media training, mentoring and peer support in order to be able to share with media representatives experience of the issues that may come with having a migrant background.

SOCIAL ANCHORING IN SCHOOLS

Across Europe, the educational system represents one of the greatest weaknesses in migrant integration and it is acknowledged that significant reforms are needed to deliver equal opportunities for migrant children (Huddleston, 2016). Calling for Europe 'to get migrant integration right', the Huddleston report notes that '[t]oo many school systems leave behind pupils from poorly educated families, especially from minority communities, who are more likely to be concentrated in poorly performing schools' (2016, 27). In a context where, as we have indicated, there is no explicit and overarching policy strategy addressing the integration of migrant children in the UK schools, it largely falls, nevertheless, on the latter's responsibility to cater for to the needs of these pupils. The interviews and fieldwork we have conducted with 12 primary and secondary schools in the United Kingdom have suggested that these institutions have a paramount role in the integration of migrant pupils, being regarded as welcoming sites for both children and the wider community to which they belong.

The interviews with school representatives and the analysis of teaching materials revealed that a range of anchors are in place to address the integration needs of migrant children. They come in the forms of displays and teaching materials, digital tools, collective or individual efforts to diversify the curricula or the acknowledgement and celebration of diversity. The In-

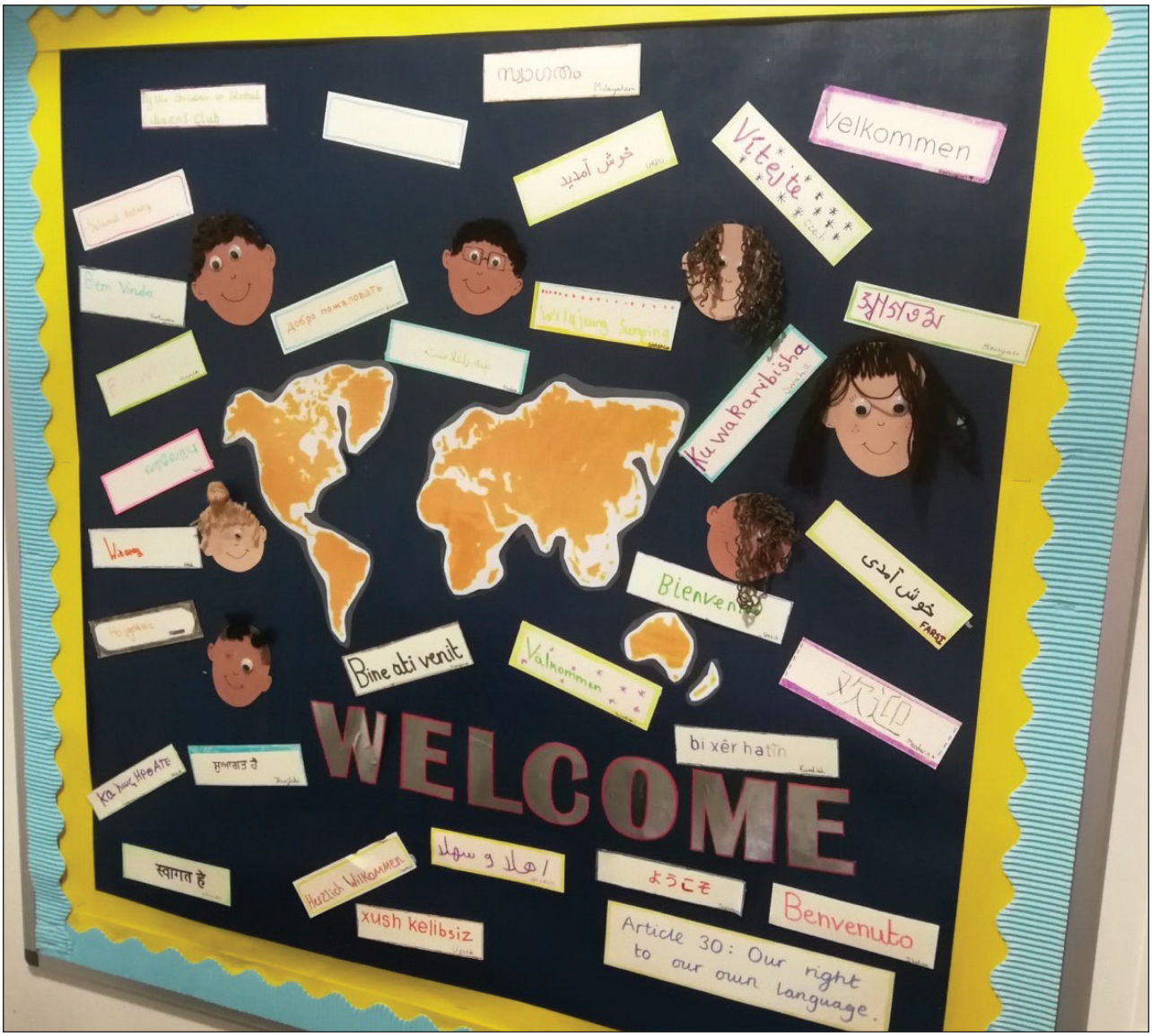

Figure 1: 'Welcome' message in different languages (Photo: Cosmin Popan).

tercultural Development Research Association (IDRA, 2000) notes that children embracing and maintaining the values, language and heritage of their native country contribute to a 'positive self-concept'. This is why it is integral that the student body see themselves represented and reflected in different ways within the teaching material, staff representation and school environment. In this section we propose an inventory of such social anchors.

Multilingual displays and materials

Introducing migrant children symbolic cultural artefacts in school has already been highlighted as essential for their integration (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014; Thomas, 2016; Amthor, 2017). Most of the schools we have visited share this vision and have multilingual displays featured on entrance halls, hallways and classrooms.

Two of the schools in particular are greeting both pupils and parents with welcoming posters in the school lobby. They feature a map of the world and the message 'Welcome' written, often by pupils themselves, in a dozen of different languages (see Figure 1).

Such posters also provide information about the time the classes start and finish, telephone number, the school's website, the Headteacher's name and picture, photos of uniforms, and information about lunch.

Other generic posters reflecting diversity can be observed in classes and hallways. Amongst the

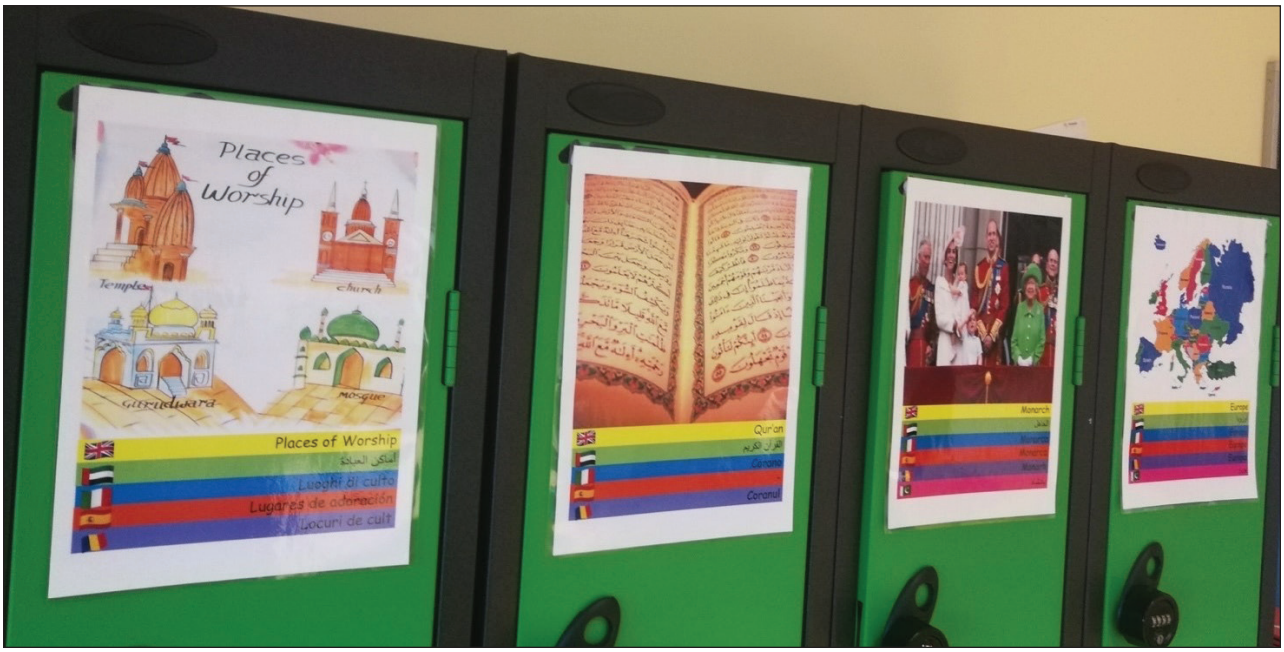

Figure 2: Classroom posters in different languages (Photo: Cosmin Popan).

topics they cover are literature, languages, cultural artefacts, personalities or poetry. One such display, titled 'Authors Around the World', features a world map in the centre alongside the books' cover pages and biographies of different non-British authors (Subhadra Sen Gupta, Marjane Satrapi, Cao Wenxuan). In one specific class from the same school six posters are dedicated to the Punjabi culture, offering a small description of the language, the Punjab cuisine, as well as a list of important words and how to count to 20 in Punjabi. Similar posters in another secondary school translate into Arabic, Romanian, Spanish and Italian various religious and citizenship concepts and characters such as 'prayer', 'Bible', 'Heaven and Hell', 'Buddha', 'Prophet Muhammad', 'Europe' or 'monarch' (Figure 2).

The EAL department in this school is particularly well equipped with posters which list keywords translated in different languages: 'listen', 'read', 'look at', 'speak', 'discuss', 'draw' etc.

Other visual displays function as culturally targeted motivational poster or quotes. For example, one poster pictures Nelson Mandela with the quote 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world', while another one presents a generic image of a black woman with the message 'We will not apologize for embracing our culture and acknowledging our history'. In another school, a poster created by pupils is dedicated to the Black History Month and covers topics and personalities such as Black Lives Matter, a poem titled 'Woman. African Woman', Oprah Winfrey, Madam C. J. Walker, Mae Jemison (Figure 3).

Similarly, a visual display in the same school celebrates racial diversity amongst women in science and introduces students to personalities such as Matia da Penha, Gladys West, Hayat Sindi, Juliana Rotich and others.

Aside from these display materials, many schools have dictionaries and multilingual books for the use of migrant pupils. At one of the primary schools we visited, an entire section in the library is dedicated to Languages and is comprised of dictionaries, grammar and spelling books and dual language books. Similarly, another secondary school has an impressive range of dictionaries in several languages, which are stocked in the EAL department, but often used during mainstream classes as well.

Digital and online tools for learning English

A great variety of digital and online tools are used in classes to assist migrant pupils with language acquisition. Below we present an inexhaustive list with short description of each of these programmes.

- *Mantra Lingua Talking Pen* – Device that 'reads' printed text and 'speaks' the translation in the child's home language. It is useful for children who have no previous experience with English. The pen is used in combination with dual language books, in which the whole content is written in two languages throughout, in as close a translation as possible.

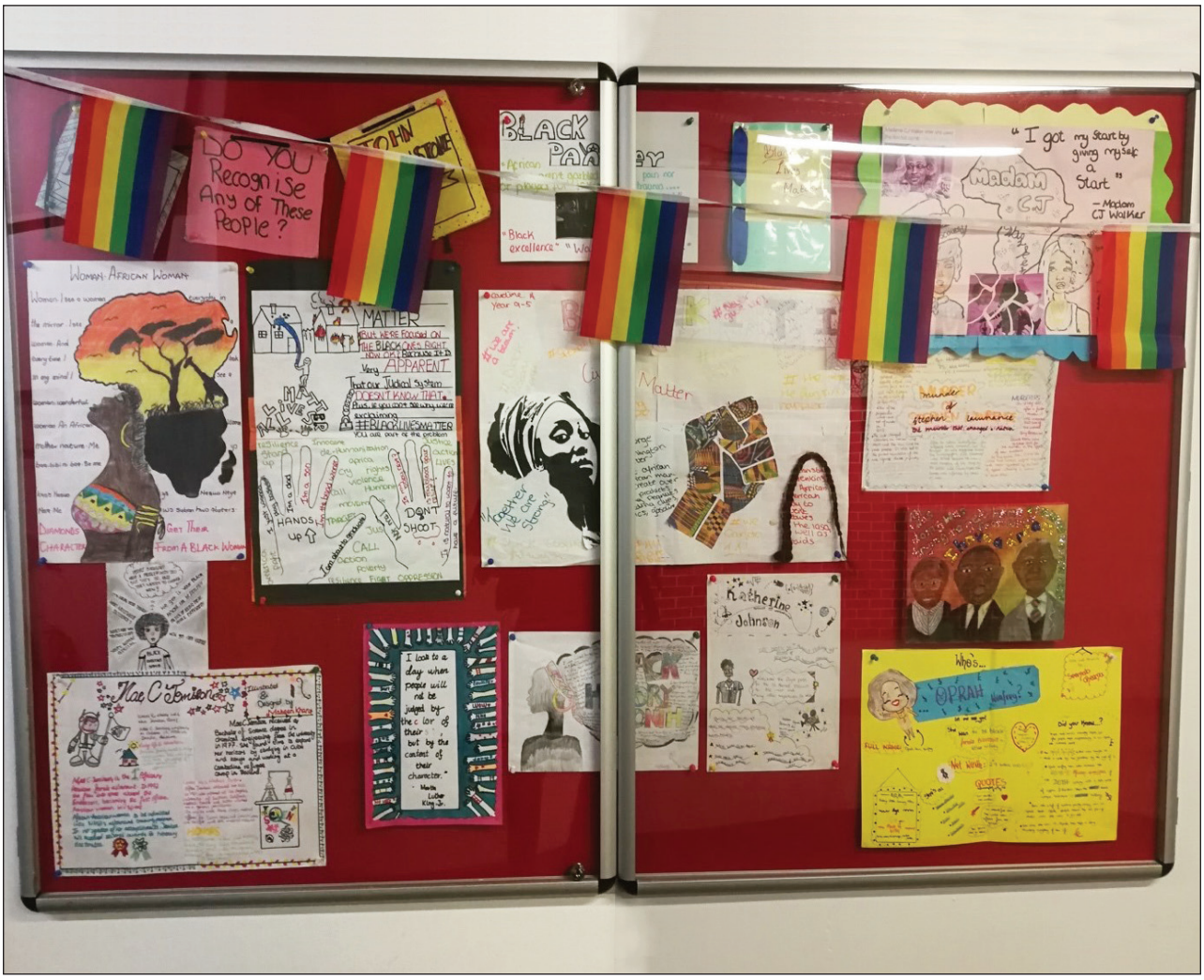

Figure 3: Poster celebrating the Black History Month (Photo: Cosmin Popan).

- *Racing to English programme* – a programme for children that come to the UK with no English. The Racing to English CD-ROM contains 300 language activities to print out and use with pupils.
- *À Tantôt* – Online interactive programme used in class to learn languages, mainly Spanish and French. The interactivity of the games encourages inclusivity as pupils are required to work in teams and help each other with games.
- *Linguascope* – Interactive language learning platform which includes interactive language games on an interactive touch-screen whiteboard.
- *ClassTools.net* – Free online gaming and quizzing class tool. The teacher designs the material which is used to boost interactivity within the classroom.
- *Class Dojo* – Application that provides and promotes the communication between parents and teachers. Through the app children can receive points and parents can monitor that, but it works as a messaging app as well. Integration is promoted through the translate function.
- *WellComm* – toolkit designed to help early years settings identify children from six months to six years old who might be experiencing delays with speech and language.

Classes challenging mainstream curriculum

In most mainstream classes we observed, engagement with cultural diversity appears both in the topics included in the curriculum and the individual efforts made by staff members. Often though, the curriculum only partly reflects the ethnic diversity of pupils. Amongst the disciplines which best deal with this issue are Religious Studies (where pupils learn about the celebrations of different faiths such

as Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus), Social Issues (where racist and religious bullying are addressed) and Citizenship (which tackles concepts such as emigration, immigration, ethnicity, racism, discrimination or integration). In this context, the effort of individual teachers to provide additional anchors appears extremely important.

In one of the History classes we attended at a secondary school, which focused on the Medieval Times, the teacher, an Iraqi immigrant himself, drew an interesting and engaging comparison between the Christian England and the Muslim Baghdad. As it became apparent, a few of the students were familiar with Baghdad, one of them having even visited recently the city. Another particular instance where the teacher managed to highlight the ethnic diversity in the class was when discussing the meaning of the word 'cosmopolitan', found in the textbook. The teacher took the opportunity to ask pupils where they are coming from, drawing a variety of responses: Romania, Ireland, Iraq.

For pupils with low levels of spoken and written of English there are several ways in which teachers address their cultural diversity outside the mainstream curricula. Art teaching-training programs in particular are shown to enhance sensitivities, and foster community navigating through difference (Wellman & Bey, 2015). During the singing sessions in one of the primary schools, hand gestures and the interpretation of songs in African languages are promoted as ways to engage pupils whose English is not good enough. Similarly, during a literacy lesson in the same school, the teacher is using a system called 'tall, small and fall letters', which is especially useful for pupils without prior school experience. In mainstream classes these reflections of cultural diversity can be observed during reading sessions, when pupils are engaging with a book about a girl from Botswana.

Teachers speaking or learning pupils' language

Jensen et al. (2012) highlight the importance of not treating bilingual (or multilingual, for the matter) students differently from their peers so that being different does not automatically become a problem. Evans and Liu (2018) propose, on the other hand, that the education system as a whole should include all languages, as they play a key role in children's development. Additionally, the Commission of the European Communities (2008), considers that as far as possible teachers should speak the immigrants' mother tongue. While this is aspiration is indeed respectable, it must be said that, in practical terms, this is difficult to achieve and can potentially lead to discrimination towards teachers who are not themselves migrants.

Having said that, the use of home languages both with parents and pupils is valued and used as an effective tool for inclusion in most of the schools we visited. A variety of languages other than English are spoken by staff members, particularly by those who are part of the EAL departments: Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Spanish, Italian, Romanian, Arabic, French, Hungarian. These languages are requested as well for communicating with parents or the families of EAL or International New Arrival pupils.

Some members of staff go the extra mile and learn words in the language of their students even if they are not fluent speakers themselves. For example, a Math teacher in one secondary school, who is an Italian migrant herself, was keen to better know her Romanian students: specifically she has learned to count to ten in Romanian, is often using the Romanian equivalent for words such as 'bigger' and 'smaller' and has even picked up some swear words from her students, that she now makes sure are not used again in her classroom. She confesses that this strategy 'does make students see you in a different way rather than just saying it in English all the time. You're making an effort for them and they need to make an effort for you'.

Cultural and religious celebrations

Regarding teacher's multicultural skills, Vižintin (2016) and Suárez-Orozco (2017) propose to implement intercultural competencies to teach social diversity, although Vižintin (2016) considers this is difficult because students need time to adapt themselves and teachers need continuous training on the field of intercultural education.

Many of the staff members of the school we visited undertook training in these areas, through Continuing Professional Development programmes, which further enabled them to be more aware of EAL and international new arrivals strategies. As a result, pupils are given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with different religions and cultures by attending a diversity of events that are organised at their premises: Eid, the Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas, Easter. The Black History Month is also celebrated in many of the schools, while in some schools all the food served is halal.

These activities often open the doors of schools to the different local community who feel welcomed and appreciated, as observes one of the head teachers:

> *The school has organised an Eid party for a certain Muslim community that felt excluded by the larger Muslim community in the neighbourhood. Similarly, we have helped a refugee and asylum charity who needed a space to meet, thus contributing to their sense of community. The school also links families with community projects* (Interview, 8 November 2019).

CONCLUSIONS

While the UK has no overarching policy strategy that specifically addresses the integration of migrant children in the UK schools, its migration history has generated a number of policy frameworks, each impacting on some if not all migrant children. The development of such policies has been in response to waves of migration that differed in composition, periods of racialized urban unrest, and difference in school policy more widely, notably policies on 'choice' and 'attainment' (see Jensen & Gidley, 2014). The resulting policies have included multicultural education in the 1980s, extra funding for schools via various mechanisms that target ethnic minority children, those with English as an additional language, or deprivation more generally, and a later focus on the twin goals of community cohesion and parental choice, including the encouragement of religiously-affiliated schools. Further, such policy responses have been geographically varied, with the context of super-diverse major cities being very different to that of smaller towns with migrant populations with largely similar backgrounds.

This 'bundle' of policy measures include 'the expansion of human rights and equalities legislation; a formal refugee integration strategy; community cohesion strategy (2001–2010); elements of counter terrorism strategy post-2005; citizenship policy and legislation; and additional funding programmed for minorities' (Saggar et al., 2012, 17). Most broadly, the 2018 Integrated Communities Strategy green paper stated a government aim 'to make sure all children and young people are prepared for life in modern Britain and have the opportunity for meaningful social mixing with those from different backgrounds' (HM Government 2019, 5). However, much of this is taken to be contradictory, or at least in tension, with the celebration of other ways of life found in multiculturalism seen as sitting badly with a focus on Britishness and British Values, and inter-faith contact being undermined by faith schools. Further, parental choice and school autonomy makes the translation of policy to practice variable: where schools have a duty to promote community cohesion, and funding that takes into account the needs of their students, the way that this is done is a local decision.

Thus, it is the schools' responsibility to cater for to the needs of these pupils. Our research so far finds that approaches to integration in educational settings work well when taking on a holistic approach that builds on the diversity of student backgrounds, particularly migrant children of different generations. Such strategies engage a wide range of stakeholders such as parents, communities and teachers allowing for consistent approach to student engagement and attainment. This includes use of home languages in schools that is valued and deployed as an effective tool for inclusion. This is all the more so where teaching staff have similar migrant backgrounds and are fluent in the language. So is introducing symbolic cultural artefacts – welcome signs in multiple languages, books, and images – all of which increased confidence in valuing diverse cultural heritage of pupils. In addition, intercultural education approaches, such as cultural adaptation and targeted training through a diversity of events organised at educational premises, provide opportunities for shift in cultural thinking about diversity. The mainstreaming of class engagement with cultural diversity, which is embedded through curriculum and teaching practices, is key for widening understanding about histories of migration. Currently, the issues of diversity, integration and cohesion are only explicitly addressed in the school curriculum through subjects such as Religious Studies and Citizenship studies and foreign languages. However, a history teacher drawing comparisons between medieval England and Baghdad, with the appropriate knowledge and experience, generates another opportunity for intercultural dialogue: this can happen across the curriculum, where the right skills and dispositions are present. In all cases, the role of teachers, and their competency to provide additional anchoring appears extremely important. While some, especially language teachers, may have been given formal instruction for intercultural competences, others gain them through their own life stories or experiences, especially where – like the history teacher – they can make unexpected connections between what are sometimes assumed to be separate worlds. The use of digital and online tools adapted specifically to assist migrant pupils with language acquisition is also critical, particularly with recent evidence on how online learning during lockdown continues to increase the digital divide. Further, the use of art as a subject and learning tool can enhance sensitivities and foster community navigating through difference and is supported by evidence that arts, music and drama impact positively on migrant inclusion and resilience in manifold ways.

In the UK, schools are seen as welcoming sites vital to the achievement of intercultural societies, to the strengthening of communities and to the success of new forms of social learning (Wilson, 2014). Yet, the total school spending per pupil in England has fallen by 8% between 2009–10 and 2019–20 (Britton, Farquharson and Sibieta, 2019), meaning that the effort done by these schools to anchor their migrant pupils in the British society has to be matched sometimes by other non-school initiatives such as

supplementary schools to supplement and diversify their integration anchors. Such 'out of school' social anchors developed by community-based and faith schools help value cultural heritage through community building and by promoting arts as means to develop a sense of belonging. In all, such effective social and emotional anchors for migrant children are promising evidence for structured, and targeted interventions to improve children's social, emotional, and behavioural well-being and are key for academic attainment and success.

IZOBRAŽEVANJE ZUNAJ SISTEMA: PREPOZNAVANJE VREDNOSTI KULTURNEGA IZROČILA Z ALTERNATIVNIMI OBLIKAMI INTEGRACIJE OTROK PRISELJENCEV V ZDRUŽENEM KRALJESTVU

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POVZETEK

Integracijo otrok iz priseljenskih okolij v britanske šole in družbo ovirajo različni dejavniki. Med temi so »sovražno okolje« in nazadovanje glede pravic v preteklih letih, desetletje varčevalnih ukrepov, s čimer se je občutno zmanjšala podpora, ki jo lahko zagotovijo šole in druge izobraževalne ustanove, ter pomanjkanje jasne krovne integracijske politike. Članek smo pripravili na podlagi intervjujev s posamezniki s področja izobraževanja ter terenskega dela, opravljenega v petih britanskih osnovnih in srednjih šolah, pri čemer z uporabo teorije družbenega sidra podrobneje pojasnimo, kako se v skupnostih razvijajo taka sidra za omilitev posledic omenjenih omejitev. V članku uporabljamo podatke, zbrane v evropskem projektu MiCreate (2019–2022), v katerem sodeluje 15 partnerjev iz 12 držav. Njegov skupni cilj je spodbuditi vključevanje različnih skupin otrok priseljencev z uveljavitvijo otrokosrediščnega pristopa k njihovi integraciji na ravni izobraževanja in politike. Nabor podatkov, ki jih predstavljamo, se nanaša na britanski izobraževalni sistem in politiko ter obsega dve kategoriji. V prvi so polstrukturirani intervjuji z 11 strokovnjaki na temo integracije otrok priseljencev. Organizacije, s katerimi smo stopili v stik, segajo od osrednjih ustanov, ki delujejo po vsej državi, do manjših lokalnih akterjev. Za drugo kategorijo podatkov smo se povezali z 12 šolami v Združenem kraljestvu. Vzorec je bil raznolik glede na lokacijo, gmotni položaj območja, uspešnost šol, delež učencev ali dijakov priseljencev ter status šol (javne, zasebne, verske). Združeno kraljestvo sicer nima krovne politične strategije, ki bi posebej naslavljala integracijo otrok priseljencev v britanske šole, vendar so se v njegovi zgodovini priseljevanja razvili številni okviri politike, ki vsak zase vplivajo na vsaj del otrok priseljencev. V tem pogledu so šole pogosto same odgovorne za to, da poskrbijo za potrebe takih učencev ali dijakov. Naša raziskava je pokazala, da pristopi k integraciji v izobraževalnih okoljih dobro delujejo, kadar so celoviti in upoštevajo raznolikost okolij, iz katerih izvirajo učenci ali dijaki, predvsem otroci priseljencev različnih generacij. Take strategije predvidevajo sodelovanje najrazličnejših deležnikov, kot so starši, lokalne skupnosti in učitelji, kar omogoča usklajen pristop k zagotavljanju aktivne vključenosti učencev ali dijakov ter doseganju učnih ciljev. Kljub vsemu morajo prizadevanja teh šol pri vključevanju učencev ali dijakov priseljencev v britansko družbo dopolnjevati druge zunajšolske pobude, kot so dopolnilne šole, ki tako za otroke pomenijo dodatna, drugačna integracijska sidra. Taka zunajšolska družbena sidra, ki jih razvijajo skupnostne in verske šole, pomagajo prepoznavati vrednost kulturnega izročila s krepitvijo skupnosti in spodbujanjem umetnosti kot oblike razvoja občutka pripadnosti.

Ključne besede: otroci priseljenci, družbeno sidro, integracija priseljencev, britanske šole, alternativno izobraževanje

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