# Universidad de Huelva

## Departamento de Filología Inglesa

# Communicative mediation and identity for the development of European democratic values in the EFL classroom

**Memoria para optar al grado de doctora**
**presentada por:**

**Esther Cores Bilbao**

Fecha de lectura: 16 de diciembre de 2020

Bajo la dirección de las doctoras:

María del Carmen Fonseca Mora

María del Carmen Méndez García

**Huelva, 2020**

Programa de doctorado:
Ciencias Sociales y de la Educación

Línea de investigación:
Investigación e Intervención Social y Educativa

COMMUNICATIVE MEDIATION AND IDENTITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN THE EFL CLASSROOM
Tesis doctoral Esther Cores Bilbao
Huelva, 2020


Universidad de Huelva

UNIVERSIDAD DE HUELVA
Facultad de Educación, Psicología y Ciencias del Deporte
Departamento de Pedagogía


# COMMUNICATIVE MEDIATION AND IDENTITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN THE EFL CLASSROOM


Directoras:
Dra. María del Carmen Fonseca Mora
Dra. María del Carmen Méndez García


Tesis doctoral
Esther Cores Bilbao
Huelva, 2020

Ilustración: Romain Maillé
Diseño gráfico: María Fernández Arenas

UNIVERSIDAD DE HUELVA

Facultad de Educación, Psicología y Ciencias del Deporte

Departamento de Pedagogía

# COMMUNICATIVE MEDIATION AND IDENTITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

Tesis doctoral

Esther Cores Bilbao

Huelva, 2020

UNIVERSIDAD DE HUELVA

Facultad de Educación

# COMMUNICATIVE MEDIATION AND IDENTITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

Doctoranda:

Esther Cores Bilbao

Bajo la dirección de:

Dra. María del Carmen Fonseca Mora

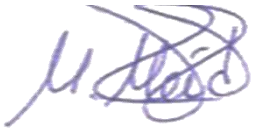
Dra. María del Carmen Méndez García

Programa de doctorado: Ciencias Sociales y de la Educación

Línea de investigación: Investigación e Intervención Social y Educativa

Tesis doctoral presentada por Esther Cores Bilbao bajo la tutela de la Dra. María del Carmen Fonseca Mora y de la Dra. María del Carmen Méndez García, para la obtención del título de Doctorado Europeo en Educación por la Universidad de Huelva.

| VºB | VºB | VºB |
|---|---|---|
| María del Carmen Fonseca Mora | María del Carmen Méndez García | Esther Cores Bilbao |
| La directora de la tesis | La directora de la tesis | La doctoranda |



Huelva, 2020

A mi amama. A mi madre. A mi marido.

Agradecimientos:

Me gustaría expresar el más sincero reconocimiento a la labor de Mª Carmen Fonseca, artífice en gran medida de que este trabajo haya llegado a buen puerto. Gracias por creer en mí, por tus constantes palabras de aliento y por tu enorme generosidad en el terreno académico y en el ámbito personal. Ha sido un auténtico privilegio ser tu pupila, y poder ahora contarme entre tus amigas.

De igual manera, deseo reflejar mi profundo agradecimiento hacia Mª Carmen Méndez. Gracias por tu cercanía, por todo cuanto me has enseñado, por brindarme la posibilidad de trabajar mano a mano contigo, por ser un ejemplo de rigor científico y búsqueda continua de excelencia. Ha sido un honor ser tu coautora en cuatro artículos, dos de los cuales se incluyen en este compendio.

Gracias a Analí Fernández y a Francisco Herrero por todo el tiempo que me habéis dedicado de manera desinteresada y por la increíble calidez con la que habéis contribuido a formarme. También quiero transmitir mi agradecimiento a Laura Moreno, por su encomiable capacidad de trabajo en equipo y por su contribución a la publicación aquí recogida.

Gracias a mi amama y a mi madre, por ser mis referentes y modelo a seguir, por haber escogido ser independientes y fuertes, por haber sido valientes y adelantadas a vuestro tiempo. Sin vosotras y vuestro ejemplo, nada de esto hubiese sido posible.

Y a ti, Ádam, gracias por estar a mi lado, por compartirlo todo conmigo y por aligerarme la carga cuando se me hizo más pesada.

I would like to live in this kind of cosmopolitan Europe, one in which people have roots and wings

Ulrich Beck

Learning is not just acquiring skills and information; it is becoming a certain person—a knower in a context where what it means to know is negotiated with respect to the regime of competence of a community.

Etienne Wenger

Our way of 'telling the time' is not the only way; our way of thinking about 'democracy' has to be compared with the meaning an apparently similar word carries in another country and culture.

Michael Byram

Few societies are good at identifying the things they take for granted. These are the things that structure their vision of the world, providing them with categories which shape their experience of fact and underpin their judgment of what is valuable. The result is that, when trying to understand ourselves, we often miss the obvious.

Larry Siedentop

# Table of contents

List of tables ..... 1
List of figures ..... 1
Summary ..... 2
Resumen ..... 4
Introduction ..... 6
Part 1: Theoretical framework ..... 14
Chapter 1: Mediation ..... 17
1.1. Mediation as a communicative language activity ..... 17
1.2. Mediation scales in the CEFR Companion Volume ..... 21
1.3. Cognitive and Relational Mediation ..... 24
1.4. Mediation and collaborative learning ..... 26
1.5. Mediated Language Learning Experiences ..... 28
1.6. Mediation for the inclusion of linguistic and cultural minorities ..... 31
1.7. Conclusions ..... 34
Chapter 2: Identity ..... 37
2.1. Collective identity formation ..... 38
2.2. Territorial identities and loci of sentiment ..... 42
2.3. European identity ..... 44
2.4. Nested identities: from local to European self-identification ..... 46
2.5. Language learning and identity ..... 48
2.5.1. Distinctions between ESL and EFL identity building opportunities ..... 51
2.5.2. Plurilingualism and European identity building ..... 53
2.5.3. International academic sojourns and incidental acquisition of supranational identities ..... 56
2.5.4. Identity-themed, domestic transnational experiences in the EFL classroom ..... 60
2.6. Conclusions ..... 61
Chapter 3: European democratic values in plurilingual and multicultural societies ..... 65
3.1. European Democratic Culture and Euroscepticism ..... 69
3.2. European ethos: original construct, advances and paedagogical implications ..... 75
3.3. Social Capital, Democratic Values and Language Learning ..... 78
3.4. Civic education for multicultural communities ..... 82
3.5. Democratic Culture and Intercultural Dialogue ..... 84
3.6. Intercultural literacies and European ethos ..... 89
3.7. Conclusions ..... 91

Part 2: Empirical studies ..... 93
Chapter 4: Methodology ..... 97
4.1. General objective and research questions ..... 97
4.2. Study 1: University students' representations of Europe and self-identification as Europeans: a synthesis of qualitative evidence for future policy formulation ..... 99
4.2.1. Aim ..... 99
4.2.2. Design and corpus selection ..... 99
4.2.3. Instruments and research protocol ..... 100
4.2.4. Results ..... 100
4.2.5. Preliminary conclusions ..... 102
4.3. Study 2: Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity: international orientation and experiences ..... 104
4.3.1. Aim ..... 104
4.3.2. Design and participants ..... 104
4.3.3. Instruments and data collection ..... 105
4.3.4. Results ..... 105
4.3.5. Preliminary conclusions ..... 113
4.4. Study 3: A mediated language learning experience ..... 115
4.4.1. Aim ..... 115
4.4.2. Design and participants ..... 115
4.4.3. Instruments and data collection ..... 116
4.4.4. Results ..... 117
4.4.5. Preliminary conclusions ..... 119
Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusions ..... 123
5.1. Limitations ..... 126
5.2. Future research directions ..... 127
5.3. Concluding remarks ..... 127
References ..... 129
Annex 1: Original paper: University Students' Representations of Europe and Self-Identification as Europeans: A Synthesis of Qualitative Evidence for Future Policy Formulation ..... 156
Annex 2: Original paper: Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity: international orientation and experiences ..... 174
Annex 3: Original paper: A music-mediated language learning experience: Student's Awareness of their Socio-Emotional Skills ..... 194

## List of tables

TABLE 1: MACRO-FUNCTIONAL BASIS OF CEFR/CV MEDIATION CATEGORIES AND ACTIVITIES ..... 22
TABLE 2: COGNITIVE AND RELATIONAL MEDIATION ACTIVITIES PERFORMED WHEN MEDIATING CONCEPTS AND COMMUNICATION ..... 26
TABLE 3: PARADIGMS EXPLAINING COLLECTIVE IDENTITY FORMATION ..... 40
TABLE 4: IDENTITY IN SLA AND FLL ..... 52
TABLE 5: LANGUAGE EDUCATION, SOCIALISATION AND EUROPEANNESS ..... 64
TABLE 6: COMMONALITIES BETWEEN SOCIAL CAPITAL AND THE CEFR/CV MEDIATION SCHEMATA ..... 81
TABLE 7: OVERVIEW OF RFCDC COMPETENCE SCHEME ..... 84

## List of figures

FIGURE 1: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES ..... 18
FIGURE 2: MLE COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT SCHEME ..... 29
FIGURE 3: CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIATION, THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND INTER-GROUP RELATIONSHIP PROCESSES ..... 35
FIGURE 4: 'GIVING PEOPLE MORE SAY IN IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT DECISIONS IS AN IMPORTANT GOAL TO ACHIEVE DURING THE NEXT TEN YEARS' ..... 72
FIGURE 5: MY VOICE COUNTS IN THE EU: TREND AND NATIONAL RESULTS ..... 73
FIGURE 6:CITIZENSHIP AND COMMON VALUES EDUCATION IN THE EU ..... 78
FIGURE 7: INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE CONTRIBUTING COMPETENCES ..... 87
FIGURE 8: BROAD THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH FIELD: COMMUNICATIVE MEDIATION OF EUROPEAN VALUES AND INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS ..... 96

## Summary

Against the backdrop of rapidly evolving globalised societies in which public attitudes are polarised, and where phenomena such as the revival of nationalism intersect with movements that seek to achieve further internationalisation, the aim of this thesis is to put forward scientifically grounded teaching methodologies that can extend the strictly linguistic nature of adult English as a Foreign Language (EFL) by positively impacting on students' receptivity to the adoption of European democratic values, as well as on the functioning of the overall social dynamics of the classroom.

From a conceptual perspective, this work endeavours to present the interrelationship between the socio-cultural perspective of the language teaching-learning process, the development of relational forms of social capital and the self-identification of students with European democratic principles and values. To this effect, and focusing on possible strategies for promoting active European citizenship through higher education, foreign language learning is explored as a means of developing cognitive, relational and communicative competence for individual empowerment.

Building on the contributions of disciplines such as sociology and psychology, as well as the latest frameworks adopted at Community level for language and civic education, the importance of enabling learners to become participatory members of a democratic learning community, in which collaborative interaction, intersubjectivity and mutually assisted performance occur through the implementation of Mediated Language Learning Experiences (MeLLE) is equally upheld. The empirical application of mediation as a language activity (CEFR/CV, Council of Europe, 2018a) thus becomes the centrepiece of this contribution, as it underscores the collaborative nature of communication, explicitly asserting the role of the language learner as a social agent. The fundamental focus followed hence lies in the importance of establishing dialogical and reflective communities of practice in the language learning classroom setting which encompass the integration of relevant thematic content and a mediated approach as a critical variable in the development of collaborative activities.

On the other hand, despite the considerable interest that European identity building has aroused and the quest undertaken by scholars to specify the predictors of its support, few studies have addressed, from a unitary theoretical framework, the joint analysis of positive identification attitudes among young people in Europe and the values they perceive as typically European. Among the shared community values considered here, the appreciation for linguistic diversity and

multilingualism, the respect for otherness and the development of an intercultural mindset are fundamental premises for people to coexist in a world of increasing heterogeneity. Within this landscape, there is space for language identities and foreign language teaching to play an exciting part in education for democracy.

Consequently, the other fundamental focus of this work is the process of Europeanisation, understood as the compounding effect of European integration on the of rules, values and identities on the lives of European nationals, which from the sociological angle here adopted inevitably demands attention to issues such as cross-border encounters in a European Union (EU) context, as well as inquiring how EU citizens are perceiving the politically promoted values and EU policies. To this end, we empirically address the plausability of attachment to Europe being derived from or intensified by transnational learning experiences.

Finally, after examining the main interlinkages between the pedagogical paradigms of Intercultural Communicative Competence and Intercultural Mediation, their impact on the reconceptualisation of the role of educators is traced, substantiating the necessary conversion of teachers from target language and culture knowledge providers to facilitators of intercultural awareness. In a similar token, the management of pedagogical processes associated with the development of learning strategies as a by-product of a democratic classroom culture is analysed.

## Resumen

Dentro del contexto de las sociedades globalizadas en rápida evolución, en las que las actitudes públicas están polarizadas y donde fenómenos como el resurgimiento del nacionalismo se solapan con movimientos que buscan una mayor internacionalización, el objetivo de esta tesis es proponer metodologías didacticas sustentadas científicamente que puedan ampliar la naturaleza estrictamente lingüística del aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE) para adultos, repercutiendo positivamente en la receptividad de los estudiantes a la adopción de los valores democráticos europeos, así como en el funcionamiento de la dinámica social general del aula.

Desde una perspectiva conceptual, este trabajo se esmera en presentar la interrelación entre la perspectiva sociocultural del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de idiomas, el desarrollo de formas relacionales de capital social y la autoidentificación de los estudiantes con los principios y valores democráticos europeos. A tal efecto, y partiendo de posibles estrategias para promover la ciudadanía europea activa a través de la Educación Superior, se explora el aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros como un medio para desarrollar la competencia cognitiva, relacional y comunicativa para el empoderamiento individual.

Sobre la base de las contribuciones de disciplinas como la sociología y la psicología, así como de los últimos marcos de referencia adoptados a nivel comunitario para la formación lingüística y cívica, se propugna igualmente la importancia de permitir que los estudiantes se conviertan en miembros participativos de una comunidad democrática de aprendizaje, en la que la interacción colaborativa, la intersubjetividad y el apoyo mutuo al desempeño se produzcan mediante la aplicación de las Experiencias Mediadas de Aprendizaje de Idiomas (EMAI). La aplicación empírica de la mediación como actividad de lengua (CEFR/CV, Consejo de Europa, 2018a) constituye la piedra angular de esta contribución, ya que subraya el carácter colaborativo de la comunicación, afirmando explícitamente el papel del estudiante de idiomas como agente social. El enfoque fundamental seguido, por lo tanto, radica en la importancia de establecer comunidades de práctica dialógicas y reflexivas en el entorno de las aulas de aprendizaje de idiomas, que abarquen la integración de contenidos temáticos relevantes y un enfoque mediado como variable crítica en el desarrollo de actividades de colaboración.

Por otra parte, a pesar del considerable interés que ha despertado la construcción de la identidad europea y de la búsqueda emprendida por los investigadores para especificar los factores determinantes para su adopción, pocos estudios han abordado, desde un marco teórico unitario, el análisis conjunto de las actitudes de identificación positiva entre los jóvenes de Europa y los valores que perciben como típicamente europeos. Entre los valores comunitarios compartidos que se examinan aquí, la apreciación de la diversidad lingüística y el multilingüismo, el respeto a la alteridad y el desarrollo de una conciencia intercultural son premisas fundamentales para que las personas puedan coexistir en un mundo de creciente heterogeneidad. Dentro de este panorama, hay cabida para que las identidades lingüísticas y la enseñanza de idiomas extranjeros jueguen un papel emocionante en la educación para la democracia.

Por consiguiente, el otro foco fundamental de esta obra es el proceso de europeización, entendido como el efecto combinado de la integración europea sobre las normas, los valores y las identidades en la vida de la ciudadanía europea, lo que desde el punto de vista sociológico adoptado aquí exige inevitablemente que se preste atención a cuestiones como los encuentros transfronterizos en el contexto de la Unión Europea (UE), así como a la forma en que los ciudadanos de la UE perciben los valores promovidos políticamente y las decisiones emanadas de las autoridades comunitarias. Con este fin, se aborda empíricamente la plausibilidad de que el apego a Europa se derive de, o se intensifique por, las experiencias de aprendizaje transnacional.

Por último, tras examinar los principales vínculos entre los paradigmas pedagógicos de la Competencia Comunicativa Intercultural y la Mediación Intercultural, se traza su impronta en la reconceptualización del papel del docente, sustentando la necesaria conversión del profesorado, de proveedor de conocimientos de la lengua y cultura meta, a facilitador de sensibilización intercultural. De manera similar, se analiza la gestión de los procesos pedagógicos asociados al desarrollo de estrategias de aprendizaje, como subproducto de una cultura del aula democrática.

## Introduction

The early years of the twenty-first century have witnessed a considerable momentum for the globalising trend which had begun in the previous decades on the economic, scientific, and socio-cultural spheres. Intensified mobility, both physical and virtual, has enriched and brought diversity to Western societies, as communities now host people who speak different languages, hold different beliefs and outlooks, but also sometimes embrace competing worldviews and behaviours (Coste & Cavalli, 2015). Technological advances facilitate worldwide information exchanges and give access to reliable and affordable communications with people across the globe. Terms like *global villag*e and portmanteaus like *glocal* and *globish* have swiftly slipped into everyday language, accounting for a phenomenon which offers today's society ample opportunities but also presents significant challenges (Rosamond, 1999). To this effect, Kunschak and Girón (2013) emphasise the way in which global flows disrupt established mores of space, time and meaning and generate new scenarios of knowledge and experience, reinstating language, redefining culture and reconfiguring identities.

The profound effect on people's identities that living in culturally diverse societies exerts requires us to ponder deeply over how to nurture a set of common values around which to organise (Barrett et al., 2016), to support ideals and styles of behaviour across national borders (Bandura, 2001), or to gain citizens' endorsement of a supranational identity and their readiness to adopt democratic values (Kennedy, 2013). In fact, opinions vary widely on how national territorial democracy is affected by globalisation, or on whether state-centric democratic visions should be relinquished in favour of developments in transnational arenas (Anderson, 2002) which de-emphasize the nation-state.

In the European context, internal and external migration flows are a discernible sign of the globalised market economy. A recent population recount[1] shows that, in January 2018, over 22.3 million people born outside of the EU-28 were living in an EU Member State, while almost 18 million persons were residing in a different EU Member State from the one in which they were born. This increasing level of diversity has

[1] EUROSTAT: "Migration and migrant population statistics." Migration and migrant population statistics - Statistics Explained. Accessed April 26, 2019. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics#Main_statistical_findings.

triggered unprecedented efforts to revise EU policy documents and to explicitly acknowledge the salience of multiculturalism and multilingualism in Europe (Fragnière, 2015), providing guidance to national educational systems on the preparation of learners for life as competent democratic citizens (Barrett et al., 2016). However, in contrast to such language policies, English language effectively holds lingua franca status in Europe and is medium of communication par excellence in interlingual encounters (Gnutzmann et al., 2014).

On the other hand, as national borders dissolve and staff mobility increases, linguistic and multicultural resources are a greatly appreciated asset in the labour market today. As employees and managers across companies increasingly encounter and tackle intercultural differences, the business sector progressively demands an interculturally effective workforce who can display multicultural sensitivity. Interestingly, current academic literature on transnational business management pinpoints cross-cultural misperceptions and misattributions among the main reasons for cross-national venture failures. Naturally, the practical and goal-driven business world has sought viable solutions to avert these cross-cultural corporate communication hiccups, which in turn has triggered a substantial body of research and generated empirically validated constructs like *global mindset*, Cross-cultural Training (Bennett et al., 2000), and Earley and Ang's (2003) Cultural Intelligence (CQ) model.

Setting aside the efforts aimed at securing the success of cross-border entrepreneurial endeavours, the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (Council of Europe, 2008) advocates for an holistic approach to managing culturally diverse communities, anchored in shared fundamental values the democratic governance of citizens. In this document, intercultural and democratic competences are deemed co-dependent and fundamental for the provision of spaces for cross-cultural dialogue. Thus, an appeal is made for imbuing member states' curricula and educational policies with guidelines to promote democratic values, open-mindedness and openness to the world, fostering the conditions for intercultural dialogue. Living in pluralistic democracies requires, as Nussbaum (2006, p. 390) affirms, a multicultural education which "acquaints learners with some fundamentals about the histories and cultures of the many different groups with whom they share laws and institutions". This awareness is crucial for promoting the respect for others, for exercising critical self-reflection and questioning cultural assumptions, all of which are fundamental underpinnings for dialogue and

democratic culture (Banks et al., 2005; Barrett et al., 2016). So is the overcoming of concerns or of the resistance aroused by the project of further EU integration, branded by some as a threat to their national cultural identity (Luedtke, 2005; McLaren, 2004), which could be tempered by a focus on the shared values that unite European societies (Banús, 2015).

The Council of Europe's *Recommendation on Common values, Inclusive Education and the European Dimension of Teaching* (2018b) openly states that the democratic principles shared by the Member States which are laid down in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union are "the bedrock of our national democracies and a reflection of who we are" (p. 1), claiming these core values as an inalienable part of the collective identity of EU nationals. Hence, two key guidelines contained in the document are (1) that education at all levels and from an early age should encompass the promotion and teaching of those common values; and (2) that further learning opportunities should be provided for citizens to become active and critically aware, and to increase their understanding of the shared *European identity*.

In the field of foreign language training and education, it has become a priority to establish a European education policy that enhances the students' human capital and provides learners of all age groups with the necessary skills and attitudes to fully benefit from the interlinked and cross-fertilised world in which they live (Van den Brande, 2015). Thus, an updated version of the European Parliament's *Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*, adopted in May 2018, has expanded on the original *Framework on Key Competences* (2006) to incorporate *multilingual competence*. Similarly, the *Companion Volume* (CEFR/CV, 2018) to the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR, 2001) has introduced descriptors that stimulate the promotion of cross-linguistic mediation and plurilingual/pluricultural competence. Notably, the scale labelled *Creating Pluricultural Space* assigns language users the role of intercultural mediators, according to which they must play an active part in overcoming any potential difficulties encountered in cross-cultural communication. This seemingly modest addition to the European standardized description of language ability entails a significant change in the consideration of language learners' capacities, as they are now entrusted with narrowing the gap between themselves and linguistically or culturally different interlocutors (Piccardo, 2012).

No longer does it suffice to tackle linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic elements of the target language-culture in a meaningful and cohesive manner; foreign language curricula is now to envisage the development of an ample spectrum of socio-emotional expertise which may allow language users to navigate uncertainty, embrace non-linearity, respond creatively to challenging communicative encounters and adapt to alterity during interpersonal exchanges (Bauer et al., 2006; Kramsch, 2008; Paige, 2003; Piccardo et al., 2011), ideally through a plurilingual lens (Piccardo, 2017). Accordingly, the CEFR/CV calls for language users who engage in such mediation activities to have a refined emotional intelligence, or the willingness to cultivate it, so as to "have sufficient empathy for the viewpoints and emotional states of other participants in the communicative situation" (p. 106).

In the political sphere, as the viability of the European project is presently seriously challenged and strong uncertainties around its future have been spawned by Brexit, the initially haphazard EU authorities' response to the Covid-19 pandemic (Dimitrakopoulos & Lalis, 2020) and its foreseeable economic aftermath, understanding the citizens' national sentiments and supranational affiliations and attaining social cohesion within these diverse European societies is a pressing matter.

Furthermore, by stimulating the sense of belonging to a pan-national *imagined community* (Anderson, 1983, pp. 6-7) through emotional identification and cultural affiliation to it, higher levels of civic and political participation are to be expected (Hüller & Kohler-Koch, 2008; Painter, 2002). Whether it be by impelling the citizens' attachment to a European identity or by promoting common future projects, policy makers have hoped to spark a stronger spirit of Europeanism and remove the threat of further fracture of the Union or polarisation of the political spectrum in the years to come. Nevertheless, and however worthy their objectives, attempts at obtaining greater rates of civic endorsement of the EU seem to have born little fruit thus far, according to the European Political Strategy Centre (*10 Trends Shaping Democracy in a Volatile World*, 2019). Core to this work, though, it the conviction that only by rekindling the spirit of the 1973 Copenhagen Declaration on European Identity and its allusion to our shared values of representative democracy, civil rights and the rule of law, will the EU's future have any prospects of social stability and consensus.

In this vein, over the last few decades a robust research corpus has looked into the different approaches adopted by the political and intellectual elites to gain popular support

for the successive milestones of the European integration agenda (Dalton & Welzel, 2014; Klicperová-Baker & Košťál, 2016). Traditional top-down approaches, by dint of which decision-making fell exclusively under the responsibility of the parties in office, only required the laypeople's tacit agreement as mandated every five years in the European parliamentary elections, otherwise known as *permissive consensus* (Hooghe & Marks, 2009). As a result of what was perceived as an overly technocratic system, public support for EU polity floundered and Euroscepticism rose (Usherwood & Startin, 2013). Currently, however, EU institutions favour bottom-up approaches, in that consensus and support for social, geopolitical and monetary policies require the explicit endorsement of the electorate and civil society organizations (Rasmussen & Reher, 2019).

Nevertheless, one of the main obstacles for the desired participation and majority support of the decisions taken at European level is the palpable disenchantment of citizens with supranational institutions, which resulted in a trend of decreasing voter turnout[2] in many member states from the 1980s to its trough in the 2014 elections. In view of the above, Community officials and institutions have endeavored to infuse citizens with a sense of civic duty and active engagement, promoting the practice of a culture of democracy and the adhesion to classic European democratic values and attitudes. For instance, the "Conference on the Future of Europe" to be held in the 2020-2022 biennium under the patronage of the European Parliament, intends for citizens' voices to be at the heart of broad discussions on how to address internal and external challenges that were unforeseen at the time of the Lisbon Treaty and "could result in treaty review and the establishment of a permanent citizen participation mechanism" (2020, p.5).

On this point, it is worth remembering that the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (2008) asserts that the competences which citizens need to acquire in order to effectively partake in a culture of democracy are not acquired automatically, but instead need to be learned and drilled. The Council of Europe's *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (RFCDC), published in 2018, thus provides national education systems with a common focus to develop civic-minded, democratically competent learners and to foster citizen engagement with political decision making. In a compelling fashion, the *Framework* seamlessly ties democratic competence to attitudes

[2] Europarl Portal. Accessed October 10, 2019. https://europarl.europa.eu/election-results-2019/en/turnout/

of openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices, as well as to linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills. In this regard, the RFCDC echoes Byram and Zarate's (1996) Intercultural Competence (IC) theory and its notion of critical cultural awareness, which ultimately pursues abandoning ethnocentric perceptions, developing cultural self-awareness, and encouraging appreciation, interest in and respect for cultural diversity. As such, Europe is intended to incarnate the finest values and visions of a global and enlightened cosmopolitanism (Beck & Grande, 2007).

Within the field of psycholinguistics, the term *languaging* (North & Piccardo, 2019; Phipps & Gonzales, 2004; Swain, 2006) has been developed to acknowledge the social nature of the process and mechanisms involved in making sense of the world and becoming conscious of oneself through language use. In the context of *superdiverse* societies (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011), terms like *translanguaging* (Williams, 1996, in Piccardo & North, 2020; Stathopoulou, 2016) and *polylanguaging* (Jørgensen, et al., 2011) or *plurilanguaging* (Piccardo, 2019), on the other hand, refer to the transaction by which construction of meaning may take place across languages and draw upon user/learners' plurilingual and pluricultural repertoires. It follows that these relational processes also allow the foreign language learner to better understand their own culture and identity, as well as to perceive and harness contextually-situated affordances that they would not otherwise notice (Piccardo, 2017). Hence, centrality of the development of IC in language learning makes modern language programmes and language centres pivotal sites of intercultural awareness (Sercu, 2005), and raises the need to articulate more clearly and explicitly the contribution it can make to the reinforcement of civic competences, and their future direction.

It thus emerges that language education has a duty to endow individuals with the capacities which they need for life as active democratic citizens, guiding and supporting learners in acquiring the competences which they require to participate effectively in democratic processes and intercultural dialogue (Coste & Cavalli, 2015). Plurilingual and pluricultural approaches to language teaching are, as Piccardo points out (2019, p. 188), fundamental to "being comfortable with the complex and ever-changing linguistic and cultural identities of oneself and others and, above all, to being aware of and at ease with further developing one's own identity". The alignment between the overriding purposes of Community language policies and those pertaining to the civic education of European citizens have also been remarked upon by Little (2019), who anticipates further joint

research efforts by the Council of Europe and the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML, an institution whose purpose is to stimulate excellence and innovation in language teaching and to support EU countries in applying effective language teaching policies), aimed at exploring the commonalities between the CEFR and the *Competences for Democratic Culture*, and the ramifications of such connection for FL classrooms.

Therefore, the central question that this work aims to clarify is whether the foreign language (henceforth, FL) classroom setting is suited for the active promotion and development of democratic competences, identifying, at least, a methodological approach that could lead to significant experiences of democratic and civic learning for adults. This is a relevant matter, as it calls for the reconsideration of the purposes of language learning within the European context of contrasting national identities and cross-border mobility flows. To this effect, poststructuralist theories on language learning, which pay closer attention to the sociological and anthropological dimensions of linguistic communication conceptualising language "not only a linguistic system of words, phrases and sounds, but also a social practice that engages the identities of learners in diverse and often contradictory ways" (Norton, 2018, p. 243) provide the argumentative thread that runs through this work and lends it analytical coherence. Addressing such issues also entails empirically substantiating the existing theoretical foundations of topics like European citizenship, diversity and multiculturality, all within the FL classroom.

The first part of this work is devoted to laying down the theoretical foundations of the research conducted, structuring the information around three background thematic chapters. As previously mentioned, the position advocated herewith is in line with Kunschak and Girón's (2013) proposition that it is necessary to reformulate the way in which language, culture and identity interrelate, in order to respond to the current globalised environment. In this sense, the full agreement with Rivers and Houghton (2013) posed here arises from the fact that teaching professionals and researchers should be more attentive to the impact of students' assumptions about their own identity, as well as that of other groups, on possible areas of interaction within FL education contexts. While most of the topics covered herein may be of interest to the overall language education field, the focal point of discussion in certain sections will concentrate on the teaching of EFL.

It is the remit of this thesis to empirically explore how the mainstreaming of *communicative mediation* as part of the CEFR/CV might help to raise group

consciousness and to vindicate the centrality of the social dimension for language learning, given the potential outreach of this document among language teachers in Europe.

Thus, chapter 1 examines the coinage and development of mediation, its methodological outlet through collaborative learning tasks and the opportunities it affords for communal decision-making, the negotiation of individual viewpoints and the integration of socio-cultural minorities, all of which would presumably lead to the strengthening of the democratic stances of language learners.

Chapter 2 explores collective identity formation, citizens' territorial affiliations and their identification with subnational contexts and supranational entities, as well as the relationship between the endorsement of European values and both deliberate and incidental learning experiences, from which conclusions for the deployment of educational interventions in the FL classroom can be drawn.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the conceptualisation of European ethos, shaped since its onset by democratic ideals and civic values. It also relates the tenet of democratic culture to Byram's (1997) formulation of IC and its reception in the current complementary volume to the *European Framework for Language Teaching*, putting forward possible means to develop intercultural reflexivity, metacognition and visuacy across the FL curriculum. In the second part of the text, the methodological approach chosen to gain a detailed understanding of the phenomena studied is established.

Accordingly, chapter 4 presents the investigative hypotheses and breaks them down into the specific research questions addressed, showcasing the results obtained which have inspired the three scientific papers produced to advance knowledge in the field of study, and relating them to the research questions formulated.

Finally, chapter 5 delivers the conclusions reached by the joint consideration of the published findings, discusses their applicability in the field of FL teaching to adults and points to new areas of research which could elucidate the aspects that have remained unresolved.

# Part 1: Theoretical framework

As outlined in the introductory section, the theoretical premises of this research revolve around three seemingly disparate but ultimately intersecting themes, which shall be addressed from a single socio-constructivist perspective. Firstly, the idea of mediation as a communicative language activity, recently popularised by the most widespread frameworks of reference among FL teachers, according to which the focus of teaching has shifted from teacher-centred approaches to collaborative methodologies whereby students take a more active role; secondly, the formation of collective identities as a relational, contextually imbued process of identification with and belonging to different groups based on individual perceptions, affective investments and allocations of worth to each of those identities, driven by subjective elements of social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1991) such as the languages spoken by each user, their cross-national experiences, their partaking in communities of practice or their tertiary socialisation in educational institutions; and thirdly, the projection of fundamentally European values such as democracy and civic participation, their significance and endorsement by citizens, and their potential cross-cutting insertion into adult FL teaching.

The notion of languages being a vehicle for mutual enrichment and understanding amongst nationals of European nations is not new. For instance, during the opening conference of the Rüschlikon Symposium (1991), considered to be the event which sparked off the idea of developing a common *European Framework for Language Teaching and Learning*, the Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe stressed the role of language learning in empowering young Europeans to consider themselves "not only as citizens of their own regions and countries, but also as citizens of Europe and of the wider world" (Trim, 1992, p. 11).

In fact, such proposition has been at the heart of the Council of Europe's agenda since the 1990s, when the organisation's three main objectives became enshrined in the safeguarding, strengthening and development of human rights and pluralist democracy, the raising of an awareness of European identity in a context shaped by its diversity, and the pursuit of joint strategies to meet the needs of European societies (Sheils, 1996). Similarly, the vision of the language learner as a cultural intermediary, that is to say, an actor capable of mediating between their fellow citizens and those who belong to the target community, had already been proposed by Byram and Zarate over two decades ago (1994, 1996). In the same vein, Trim (1997) recounts, among the Council of Europe-sponsored aims for language teaching for adults, the furtherance of learners' personal

fulfilment through self-awareness, self-confidence and action-oriented critical consciousness, as well as the realisation of their individual "social responsibility as an active agent in a participatory, pluralist democratic society" (ibid, p. 6), consequently urging the teaching-learning process of languages in itself be more democratic (Starkey, 2003).

Despite the wealth of theoretical foundations and specific EU policy statements hitherto made recommending an alignment of language learning and the related development of pluralistic views and of democratic civic competence, the reception of these propositions in national educational curricula and their implementation in the praxis of FL teaching for adults, on the other, have not generally been particularly successful, nor have practitioners been utterly sensitive to this need (van Lier, 2004; Ziegler, 2013).

Furthermore, an added challenge has been that of student performance evaluation in mediation tasks (Deygers, 2019; Stathopoulou, 2016) or the "narrow, insufficient, subtractive, national approaches [which] provide a skewed view of identity, one that promotes monolingualism while overlooking the local languages of many different regions and nation-states" (Shohamy, 2013, p. 235), which further hamper the full integration into the FL curricula of the diversity of current societies. The last point pertaining to FL testing, although undoubtedly relevant to the overall interpretation of prevailing FL teaching models, lies beyond the scope of this work.

Thus, from a conceptual point of view, the contribution of this chapter involves drawing the possible linkages between the students' sense of community and mutual engagement that are expected to arise from mediated learning experiences and the development of democratic skills, such as empathy, conflict-resolution and co-operation, as defined in the *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (2018), to which further attention will be given in chapter 3.

# Chapter 1: Mediation

The theoretical exploration of mediation is presented in reverse chronological order, by addressing first the documents which have recently mainstreamed the concept in the field of language teaching, notably the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001) and its *Companion Volume* (2018). The epistemological foundations of mediated learning experiences are presented thereafter, so as to further the understanding of the broad pedagogical implications of mediation for the development of democratic values in the context of FL, which are examined at a later stage. This means that a chronologically sequenced account of the academic contributions on this concept has been discarded, as this inductive method favours a gradual approximation to the more complex elements of the discussion.

## 1.1. Mediation as a communicative language activity

The publication in 2001 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) signalled the emergence of a new paradigm for countless language teachers in Europe and across the world (Byram & Parmenter, 2012), as it devised a rich infrastructure of descriptive scales for different types of discourse, each with its own conventions and socio-pragmatic rules. Indeed, the CEFR contemplates not only the linguistic skill of learners, but factors in sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences when determining the users' overall language proficiency level (Council of Europe, 2001, p.13).

However, one of the main conceptual novelties introduced by the CEFR was to replace the Four Skill Model proposed in 1961 by Lado which had informed the communicative approach, and to eliminate its artificial division of language into production and reception tasks in speech and writing (North, 2007). The CEFR proposed to reconceptualise language use around varied modes of communication and "types of activity" (Council of Europe, 2001, p.14) that involve reception, production, interaction and mediation, each of which can be accomplished either orally, in writing, or in a combination of the two. Figure 1 depicts the dynamic, interwoven relationship between the four types of communicative language activity devised in the CEFR and its companion

volume, manifesting the interdependence of mediation and the language user's receptive and productive skills.

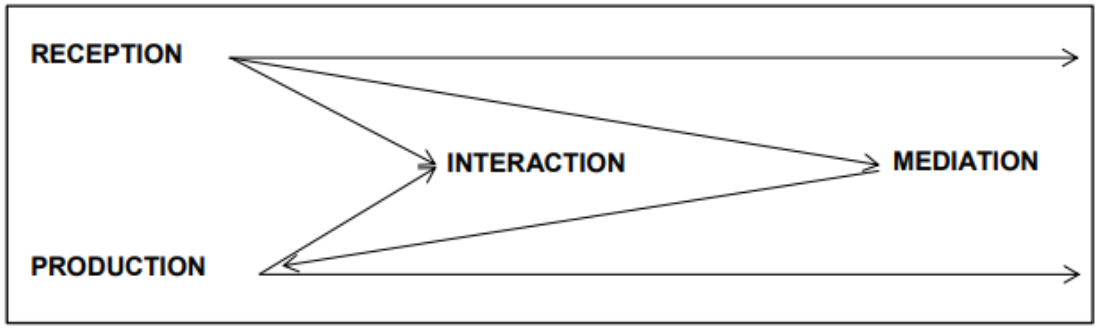



Figure 1: The relationship between communicative language activities (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 32)

The approach adopted by the CEFR is an action-oriented one, as it regards users and learners of a language as *social agents*, that is, members of society who have (communicative or otherwise) goals to attain in any given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 9). Therefore, language education aims to equip learners with the tools and strategies needed to manage impending endeavours with decisiveness and creativity, in order to succeed in being able to react to new professional, personal and social challenges. Even more significantly to the socio-constructivist/socio-cultural view, for which language stems from social interaction that is subsequently reflected upon, reconstructed and internalised by learners (Block, 2003; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Lantolf, 2007), the CEFR moves away from traditional methods of teaching and learning, adopting an approach which is based on the language users' cooperation to jointly construct shared meanings during the course of communicative acts (Huang & Wu, 2012). Thus, the social dimension of languages has thoroughly permeated the CEFR description of the new modes of language activity. Interaction has not been formulated as the mere combination of reception and production, but has accounted for the added value of the cooperative co-construction of meaning which occurs during communicative encounters (North & Piccardo, 2017; Piccardo, 2012). This relational aspect of communication was further emphasized by the inclusion of mediation and its explicit depiction of the constant link between social dimension and individual dimension in language use and learning. As Danks (1997) had enunciated, mediation by a third party was required when a linguistic barrier hindered the target's reception of the message which entailed that the intended

recipient of the communicative act could not make sense of it without assistance (namely, provided by an interpreter). Thus, mediation is not operationalised here in the Vygotskian sense, as a mental function used by learners to appropriate and generalise language activities, and internalise knowledge (Lantolf, 2011), but as *conveying received information.* In the wording given in the CEFR, activities of mediation "make communication possible between persons who are unable, for whatever reason, to communicate with each other directly" (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 14).

Regrettably, the 2001 text did not develop the concept of mediation to its full potential. A number of the practical specifications that were present in its 1996 and 1998 preliminary drafts, such as a descriptive scheme and the illustrative diagram which graphically represented the relations between the different modes of language activity, were omitted from the published version of the CEFR and mediation was reduced to its professional scope in the field of cross-linguistic translation and interpretation (Valero-Garcés, 2005). This absence from the official version of the text, in turn, proved detrimental for mainstreaming and acknowledging the broader role of mediation as an everyday communicative activity (Piccardo, 2012), as well as for infusing FL curricula (Alcaraz Mármol, 2019; De Arriba García & Cantero Serena, 2004) or proficiency examinations (Alderson, 2007). As North and Piccardo (2016) have observed in retrospect, the official release of the CEFR occurred when time was not yet ripe for a more comprehensive and far-reaching perspective on mediation.

Nevertheless, attention should be brought to the trailblazing work of Dendrinos (2006), who envisions the role of the language learner as a mediator and proposes to define such figure as that of "a facilitator in social events during which two or more parties interacting are experiencing a communication breakdown or when there is a communication gap between them" (ibid., p. 11), while aptly questioning the monolithic monolingual approach prevalent in EFL classes or the equating of the *ideal speaker* with the native speaker of English for language learning purposes.

The publication of the *CEFR Companion Volume* (CEFR/CV, Council of Europe, 2018a) remedied the shortcomings of its predecessor by providing a fully-fledged re-interpretation of the concept of mediation which is more nuanced and of greater conceptual complexity. Overall, its thrust was to shift the interpretation of mediation to that of any procedure, arrangement or action designed to reduce the distance between two (or more) poles of otherness (Council of Europe, 2015).

Thus, mediation appears interlaced with the other three modes of communication in a prolongation of interaction, which in turn combines aspects of reception and production (North & Piccardo, 2016, 2019). In this vein, the CEFR/CV highlights the social, collaborative vision of language by explicitly vindicating the user/ learner's role as a social agent, as well as recognising that mediating spans the linguistic, cultural or social dimensions and seeps into language users' public, personal, educational and occupational domains (North & Piccardo, 2016).

More specifically, the CEFR/CV defines mediation as the language activity which entails rephrasing a text, orally or in writing, with the purpose of enabling mutual understanding of other people involved in a communicative exchange. Hence mediators are not concerned with their own linguistic expression, but their function as intermediaries is to create the appropriate space and conditions that allow communication or learning, where language users may collaborate with their interlocutors to build meaning together (De Arriba García & Cantero Serena, 2004).

Although a great deal of previous research has broadly adopted the view of translation and interpreting as mediation (Liddicoat, 2015), some very sound contributions have questioned such conceptual proposal and warned about the semantic and terminological issues it poses (Pöchhacker, 2008). Furthermore, the notion that mediators are not limited to mediating text cross-linguistically has also been fully explored, for their assistance may be needed in monolingual settings where bridging communication gaps is required due to different limiting factors that can lead to breakdowns (North & Piccardo, 2017).

In fact, a comprehensive application of the mediation process also pertains the misunderstandings which are bound to occur between speakers of the same language due to a lack of knowledge, experience, or familiarity with the area or field concerned (North & Piccardo, 2016). Terms *intralinguistic* and *interlinguistic mediation* (Cantero Serena & De Arriba García, 2004; Dendrinos, 2013; Valero-Garcés, 2005), *interlingual mediation* (Stathopoulou, 2015, 2016) and *cross-linguistic mediation* (Piccardo & North, 2020) have emerged in the literature to mark the distinction between mediation which is conducted among speakers of the different languages and speakers who share the same mother tongue, although they have not been incorporated into the CEFR/CV terminology.

Other communication barriers that are envisaged in the CEFR/CV scheme are those of a cultural, pedagogic or relational nature, as well as those arising between subcultures or between jargon and plain, standardised language (Piccardo, North, & Goodier, 2019). Thus, the role of the language user as a communicative mediator is to facilitate access to knowledge, the grasping of concepts, the reduction of tensions, the tending of bridges towards alterity. This role is to be carried out through a number of *strategies*, which chiefly include encouraging others to (co)construct meaning, relaying information to which they lack access or which they are unable to decipher, explaining things to others when they do not understand them, simplifying something that is too dense or summarizing something that is too extensive, all while adapting their own language or code-switching (King & Chetty, 2014) in the process. Practitioners and a limited number of scholars have also referred to these strategies as *mediation microskills* (Cantero Serena & De Arriba García, 2004; De Arriba García & Cantero Serena, 2004), a terminology, however, which has not gained much traction in subsequent research into the subject.

## 1.2. Mediation scales in the CEFR Companion Volume

The CEFR/CV explicitly acknowledges the hitherto existing need to embody descriptors for mediation, as this language activity "has assumed even greater importance with the increasing linguistic and cultural diversity of our societies" (2018, p. 22). Thus, the CEFR/CV illustrative apparatus complements the original set contained in the 2001 text and delves into a comprehensive categorisation of mediation types, activities and strategies. The updated descriptor structure, comprising 19 scales for mediation activities and 5 scales for mediation strategies, is not restricted to foreign language teaching, but rather could be applicable to all contexts of language use.

As discussed above, in its original drafting, Section 4.4.4 of the 2001 CEFR (pp. 87-88) succinctly describes mediation activities and execution strategies but it does not comprise a set of illustrative scales or indicators capable of measuring the competence levels of each language user or of setting standards against which to certify said competency levels. The examples of mediation activities listed in that section pertain to the category 'mediating a text', as they entail transactional uses of the language and are aimed predominantly towards the fields of formal interpretation and translation.

Correspondingly, social and informal mediation are mentioned, albeit residually, within oral exchanges (Piccardo, 2012).

The CEFR/CV widens the spectrum of mediation activities, adding the categories 'mediating communication' and 'mediating concepts' to the pre-existing scheme. However, not all of the activities included in this new classification are radically novel, since in some cases they resonate and expand on activities categorised in the 2001 version of the CEFR for 'cooperating strategies' under Section 4.4.3.5. (interaction strategies, pp. 84-87) and for 'processing text' under Section 4.6.3 (p. 96). An overview of the macro-functional basis for each of these mediation categories and activities is presented in table 1, distinguishing different purposes of language use:

Table 1: Macro-functional basis of CEFR/CV mediation categories and activities (adapted from Council of Europe, 2018, p.31)

| | CATEGORIES | ACTIVITIES |
|---|---|---|
| CREATIVE, INTERPERSONAL LANGUAGE USE | Mediating communication | - Facilitating pluricultural space<br>- Acting as an intermediary in informal situations<br>- Facilitating communication in delicate situations and disagreements |
| EVALUATIVE, PROBLEM-SOLVING LANGUAGE USE | Mediating concepts | - Collaborating in a group<br>- Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers<br>- Collaborating to contrast meaning<br>- Leading group work<br>- Managing interaction<br>- Encouraging conceptual talk |
| TRANSACTIONAL LANGUAGE USE | Mediating a text | -Relaying specific information<br>- Explaining data<br>- Processing text<br>- Translating a written text<br>- Note taking<br>- Expressing a personal response to creative texts<br>- Analysis and criticism of a written text |

In the CEFR/CV schemata, it is through the process of conceptual mediation that language users can gain access to knowledge and concepts which they would be unable to acquire by themselves. In this sense, mediating concepts is an essential craft for the day-to-day dealings of teachers, parents and mentors in their role as facilitators. Naturally,

the descriptors pertaining this type of mediation have similar groundings to scholarly work on group facilitation, which concerns individual roles and interactions, teamwork, balancing the contributions from each member or moving the group forward when resistances arise (Bentley, 1994).

Mediating communication, on the other hand, aims at facilitating successful communication and mutual understanding between users who may have diverging stances due to their individual, socio-cultural or sociolinguistic traits by providing *social language affordances* (Aronin & Singleton, 2012), that is, spaces or situations in which sociological and cognitive factors converge to accelerate and stimulate language acquisition (Riestenberg, 2020). Similarly, Byram and Zarate (1994) introduced the notion of foreign language learners as *cultural mediators*, whose learning experience would inevitably conform to their extant socio-cultural identity as members of their native culture, but which would also forge them as mediators between that and the target culture. In effect, in order to successfully mediate communication within a pluricultural milieu, language learners ought to have:

> the ability to see and manage the relationships between themselves and their own cultural beliefs, behaviours and meanings, as expressed in a foreign language, and those of their interlocutors, expressed in the same language – or even a combination of languages - which may be the interlocutors' native language, or not. (Byram, 1997, p. 12)

Hence, cross-cultural sensitivity and awareness – also referred to as *intercultural mindset* and *skillset* (Bennett & Bennett, 2004) are paramount for mediating communication. The former implies a certain insight into one's own culture, as well as some guidelines for developing appropriate cultural references and a clear appreciation of how to use cultural generalizations without stereotyping, while at the same time maintaining attitudes like openness and tolerance of ambiguity, which act as drivers in the search for cultural diversity; the latter involves the capacity to analyse interaction, anticipate misunderstandings and adapt one's behaviour accordingly, so that it might be more in keeping with other cultures.

Another insightful take is that of McConachy (2017), who underscores the potential of intercultural mediation for developing learners' meta-pragmatic awareness. To this effect, McConachy (2017) argues that the systematic comparison between

languages triggers the juxtaposition of the cultural frameworks of understanding drawn from the multiple linguistic sources. However, mediation transcends the comparison of the linguistic forms and allows learners to grasp what those particular forms imply in social interaction contexts, the ways in which meanings can be culturally dependent, and the realisation that they themselves construe the L2 according their own cultural interpretations and biases.

However, as Bennett and Bennett (2004, p.149) affirm "although the primary emphasis of intercultural communication is on behavior, no behavior exists separate from thought and emotion". In this sense, yet largely unexplored, empathy offers the emotional context in which to build a more collaborative and supportive classroom environment, paving the way for more successful cultural mediation and providing a yardstick for the assessment of mediation skills in intercultural communication (Irishkanova et al., 2004).

Other than language teaching, the descriptor scales related to mediating communication also have conceptual links to the fields of diplomacy, negotiation, pedagogy and dispute resolution, both in everyday social encounters and/or in occupational or educational domains (Bassole, 2018). Quite interestingly, the findings yielded by previous research have correlated language users' positive attitude towards members of other language communities with the probability of engaging in involved mediation behaviours (Rubenfeld & Clément, 2012).

Even more revealingly for the purposes of this work, the authoring group of the CEFR/CV attribute the inspiration for the development of some of the new descriptors for mediation to the same sources which kindled the work *Competences for Democratic Culture: Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies* (2016) (CEFR/CV, p. 24). This would indicate the existence of shared principles from which the competences required for communicative mediation and those required for democratic dialogue to originate.

### 1.3. Cognitive and Relational Mediation

Among the categories of mediation seen in the previous section, textual mediation, as defined by the CEFR/CV, generally involves passing on to another person the content of a text to which they do not have access because of linguistic barriers, coinciding with a

cross-linguistic interpretation of mediation. However, the notion also includes the mediation of a text for personal use (for instance, note-taking to register what has been said in a lecture) or for reacting to texts, namely creative and literary ones. Thus, mediation of texts encompasses an array of strategies which pertain to learners' cognitive domain, such as reading between the lines, sieving relevant information, retaining information and deploying it in a new context, combining previous knowledge and experience with new information, merging information obtained from a variety of source texts, forecasting, hypothesising, inferring and drawing conclusions (Dendrinos, 2013).

On the other hand, within the categories 'mediating concepts' and 'mediating communication', in addition to finding elements alluding to the cognitive sphere of language users, relational elements have been incorporated to reflect the contribution of mediators to the establishment of optimal conditions to shape successful communication, by "facilitating and stimulating conditions that are conducive to conceptual exchange and development" (Council of Europe, 2018a, p. 106).

Thus, communicative language activities included in the 2018 descriptor set can be categorised around two types of mediation: cognitive mediation, which is related to the transmission and construction of knowledge and the assimilation of what is initially perceived as otherness; and relational mediation, which concerns the actions performed during the mediation process itself rather than in preparation for it, leading to the enhancement of mutual understanding and dispute avoidance or resolution (Coste & Cavalli, 2015). According to Coste and Cavalli, the pedagogical process developed in the classroom pertains to the ethical, affective and emotional dimensions related to the individual learning experience, so "it is through these two types of mediation that the values on which all education is based" can flourish in students (2015, p. 34).

As such, relational mediation has important meeting points with the approaches to language teaching which vindicate its affective dimension, since it deals, for example, with the ability of language users to establish a positive atmosphere for communication, to encourage the participation of their interlocutors, or to adopt empathic attitudes towards the perspectives and ways of thinking and feeling of the participants in the communicative situation. It is thus very much in line with the work applied linguists who have focused on the strategies and meta-strategies which underscore affect (Stevick, 1999) and the socio-cultural-interactive dimension to language learning (Irishkanova et al., 2004; Oxford, 2010). In fact, North and Piccardo (2016) point out that pedagogic mediation

comprises three main actions, two of which are cognitive in nature: scaffolding knowledge by fostering critical thinking skills and endowing learners with collaborative team-working competencies. The third one, which is attributed an equally relevant role by the authors, is creating the conditions for the other two by setting up and monitoring space for creativity, thus amounting to relational mediation.

As listed in table 2 below, the relevance of relational mediation for the development of democratic, civic-minded, pluriculturally-competent citizens, lies in its concern with situations in which creating a pluricultural space, facilitating discussion, dealing with misunderstandings and delicate situations, and above all increasing pluricultural awareness is needed (North & Piccardo, 2017).

Table 2: Cognitive and relational mediation activities performed when mediating concepts and communication (the author's proposal)

| | **COGNITIVE** | **RELATIONAL** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Cognitive domain** | **Social domain** | **Cultural domain** |
| **MEDIATING COMMUNICATION** | - Acting as intermediary in informal situations (with friends and colleagues) | - Facilitating communication in delicate situations and disagreements | Facilitating pluricultural space |
| **MEDIATING CONCEPTS** | - Collaborating to construct meaning<br>- Encouraging conceptual talk | - Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers<br>- Managing interaction | |

## 1.4. Mediation and collaborative learning

The social perspective of learning has been a focus of academic attention for decades (Oxford, 1997). Forerunners of communicative mediation research highlight its centrality in the process of socialisation into communities of practice which takes place when acquiring a foreign language (Kramsch, 2002, in North & Piccardo, 2017).

In his seminal works, Wenger (1998, 2009) argues that learning is fundamentally social, and elaborates on the definition of *communities of practice* as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 4). The Wengerian view of learning does

not limit the knowledge acquisition process to the interpersonal sphere, as learning is an ongoing process which is inseparable from individual human being's existence; nevertheless, even when occurred at the individual level, new learnings do entail the capacity to transform people and their way of engaging in social contexts by participating, belonging and negotiating meaning.

While the tennet of communities of practice encompasses primarily non-formal or informal learning contexts, in which a network of people sharing a domain of interest attain new competences through sustained interactions (Etienne Wenger, 2008), its application to the formal instructional space is possible, under the right circumstances, provided that the course design and classroom culture are so stimulating that both students and teachers can create a social learning environment (Etienne Wenger, 2009). Such setting would comprise, among other things, providing equal participation opportunities by granting novice individuals entry into the community of practice through *legitimate peripheral involvement*, via the exposure to "mutual engagement with other members, their actions and their negotiation of the company, and their repertoire in use" (Wenger, 1998, p. 100). This entails the embracing of values such as openness to others, readiness to transfer knowledge and to welcome outsiders, as well as the ability to make decisions collegially. But as Wenger argued, "to be on an entry path, newcomers must be given sufficient legitimacy to be treated as potential members" (1998, p. 101). In turn, such peripheral involvement relies on the newcomer's *integrative orientation*, a theoretical concept which reflects on the desirable attitudinal dimension of motivated language learners as "reflecting a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 132, in Ushioda, 2006).

Similarly, Donato and MacCormick (1994) assert that *language learning communities* provide situated learning opportunities. The FL classroom and its intrinsic culture thus become "a social arena in which learning is constructed as gradually increasing participation in the values, beliefs, and behaviors of a community of practice" (p. 454), which allows for the acquisition of language learning strategies to occur, but mainly as a by-product of mediation and socialisation into the said milieu. While the concept of mediation used in Donato and MacCormick's study is Vygotskian and diverges from its reception in the CEFR/CV - mediation being operationalised here as the genesis of higher mental functions -, the overlap of the two notions is precisely that human behaviour in social interaction is the main outlet for mediation, since all types of

mediation are situated within a given setting, which renders them intrinsically socio-cultural in nature (Donato & MacCormick, 1994). On this basis, learning strategies are drawn first and foremost from the primary social practice of the classroom culture, which in turn allows learners to become competent and insightful members of the learning community.

The reception in the CEFR/CV of the socio-constructivist conceptions is essentially articulated in the provision of descriptors for collaborative activities (Piccardo et al., 2019) and in the referencing of the opportunities for pedagogical mediation arising from small-group task design. In this vein, as Piccardo et al. (2019) note, when collaborating in small groups success relies on having well-defined common objectives and a sense of collective efficacy, as collaborative activities must "meld diverse self-interests in the service of common goals and intentions collectively pursued in concert" (Bandura, 2001, p. 7). Thus, in order for students to capitalise on the affordances of being in a group, in addition to boosting the motivation of each of its members, the development of group agency is critical (Fukada et al., 2017).

## 1.5. Mediated Language Learning Experiences

First coined in the 1950s, the concept of Mediated Learning Experiences (MLE) gained momentum and penetrated diverse areas of application in the late 1980s and early 1990s, introducing a novel field of educational research. Rooted in a socio-constructivist conception of learning, for which cultural context plays a fundamental role in the teaching-learning process, MLE constitute the cornerstone of the Theory of Structural Cognitive Modifiability. Thus, Feuerstein and Feuerstein (1991) define MLE as "a quality of interaction" between the organism and its environment, which is ensured by "an initiated, intentional human being who mediates the stimuli impinging on the organism" (p. 7), as opposed to the direct exposure of the organism to such stimuli. The adult initiated fellow human (mediator) and his/her culturally determined intentions have a pivotal role in the process of unfolding the expansion and transformation that mark the progress of learners or beginners.

Consequently, the conceptual framework emanating from MLE places socio-culturally contextualized interpersonal interaction as a central factor of educational

success, especially for those whose early socialization has been deficient. One of the most salient tenets in Feuerstein and Feuerstein's (1991) paradigm is the interdependence between culturally charged MLE and the development of efficient learning strategies by students.

In the same vein, when tackling the centrality of communication and interaction to the development of the learners' linguistic proficiency and social identity within the context of a democratic community of language learning, van Lier (2004) unravels the indirect sociocultural affordances or opportunities that collaborative FL classroom environments allow, as "cultural and social artifacts and activities provide tools and resources to mediate (language) learning and action" (p.80).

Another sizable implication of Feuerstein and Feuerstein's work is that the lack of MLE results in *reduced modifiability*, that is, "rigidity, and low level of adaptability of the individual and of the group" (1991, p. 6). In the educational realm, this notion implies that didactic inputs would yield limited results if they were not mediated by a facilitating agent, be it the teacher or initiated students in the group (see figure 2 below):

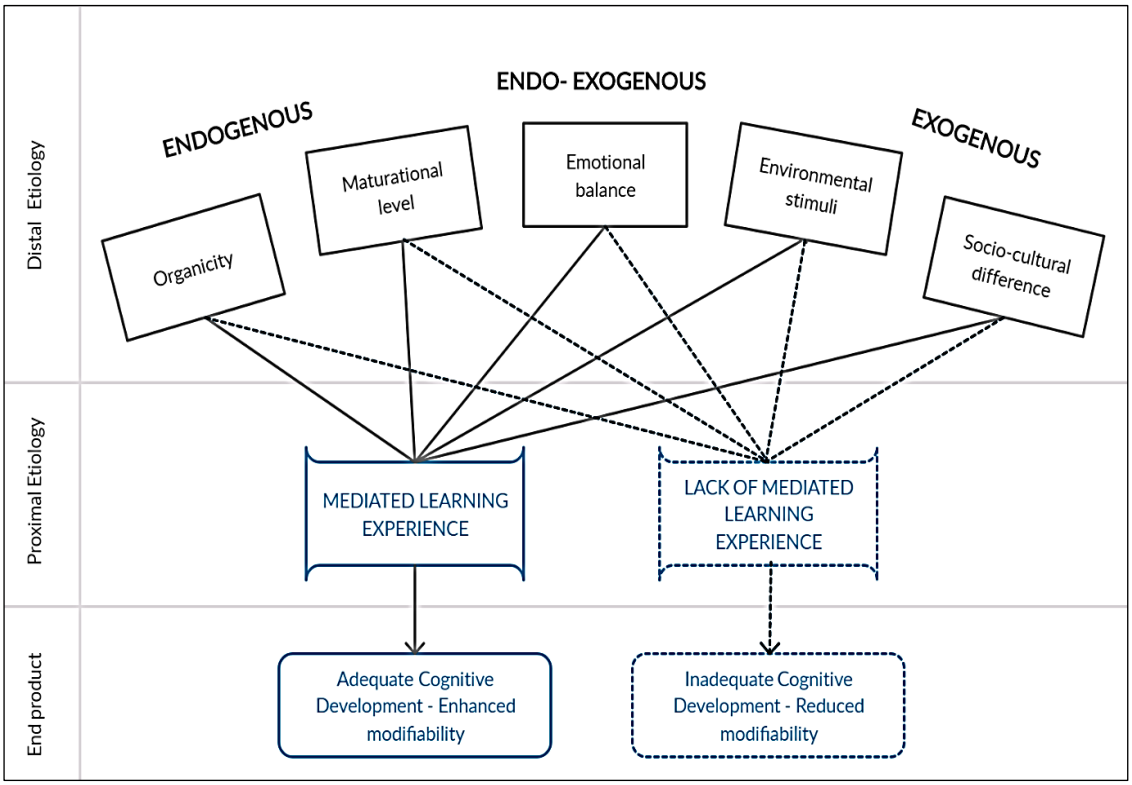



Figure 2: MLE cognitive development scheme (adapted from Feuerstein & Feuerstein, 1991, p.8)

Although the conceptual framework enunciated by Feuerstein and Feuerstein (1991) is primarily concerned with the cognitive domain of educational activities, the ineffectiveness of direct exposure to exogenous stimuli as an instructional technique also becomes apparent when the activation of complex social behaviours is required, challenging the individual's assertiveness and well-being, that is, their emotional balance.

In contrast, when coupled with MLE, direct stimuli elicit a considerable degree of "plasticity, modifiability, and diversity of development" (ibid, p. 12) which will in turn have a profound effect on the extent to which *mediatees* develop their ability to adapt to unfamiliar situations. Piccardo (2012) adopts the postulate of mediation as a cognitive process, in which learners assign meaning to things through language, whilst mediating the mental processes which are involved in performing a given task.

MLE can foster the students' feeling of competence, provided that the mediational interactions factor in emotional as well as cognitive features. In this regard, there is an undeniable theoretical convergence with Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977), which refers to an individual's confidence in their ability to perform the behaviours which are necessary to bring about specific achievements. Arguably, students sporting an enhanced modifiability and an enhanced feeling of competence would also more keenly rely on the transferability of their capabilities across activities, thus manifesting increased levels of *generality* of their self-efficacy beliefs (Zimmerman, 2000).

Feuerstein and Feuerstein (1991) briefly consider the practical applicability of MLE for the acquisition of foreign languages. In their view, the mediatees' feeling of competence should first be prompted by equipping them with the general or specific prerequisites, like foreign sounds and meanings, and strategies, like discriminating between the known and the unknown, in order to "create conditions of successful mastery" (Feuerstein & Feuerstein, 1991, p. 33) of increasingly complex tasks. The relevance for foreign language acquisition of MLE in general, and the mediation of feeling of competence in particular, is further studied by Brown (2002), who describes its interconnections to motivational psychology.

Brown (2002) also remarks that the sparse reception of MLE in the field of foreign language education is largely due to the role therein attributed to the teacher-mediator as the buffer between students and the environment, placing the responsibility for making learning possible almost exclusively on teachers. A more fine-tuned

explanation for the inattention to MLE in educational practice is that innovative pedagogical approaches can sometimes arouse reluctance or resistance among educators due to a lack of familiarity with their theoretical underpinnings or with their practical application in the classroom (Fonseca-Mora, 2020).

According to socio-cultural pedagogical approaches, its necessary to understand language acquisition as developing in the social realm and being intimately connected to social interaction and mediation between individuals (Lantolf, 2011). A recent development which combines MLE theory and a socio-cultural perspective is that of Mediated Language Learning Experiences (MeLLE) reported by Fonseca-Mora and González Davies (In press), which postulates that the deliberate use of CEFR's mediation strategies delivers greater social participation and emotional engagement from adult foreign language learners.

## 1.6. Mediation for the inclusion of linguistic and cultural minorities

Cultural differences and social diversity have been consistently identified as sources of dispute in the school setting, susceptible to resolution via peer mediation (Schrumpf et al., 1997). In this vein, as Coste and Cavalli (2015) indicate, mediation becomes the means of reducing the distance or facilitating a contact between the social agent and perceived socio-cultural otherness. Concurrently, Beacco et al. (2016) acknowledge that the fact that mediation activities in foreign languages have as much of an impact on the multilingual dimension as on the cultural dimension means that "mediation is an important part of any curriculum for multilingual and intercultural education" (p. 12).

Nonetheless, the most consequential aspect of the descriptors of the new categories of mediation is arguably that, in the keeping with the abovementioned texts, their scope is not restricted to the teaching of FL. Instead, a more holistic understanding of mediation consistent with educational literature in and outside the field of languages leads to a delineation of mediation competences that are possibly pertinent to all types and contexts of language use, such as public, professional, academic and migration contexts (North & Piccardo, 2016). This is a significant and deliberate departure from the aim of the original illustrative descriptors, which were designed specifically in relation to the FL classroom, to meet all other forms of language communication. In essence,

mediation should be integrated as part of the educational model, harnessing its broad social and academic scope (Coste & Cavalli, 2015). This is particularly noticeable, as the authors of the CEFR/CV assert that the companion volume itself ultimately "aims to promote valorisation of the plurilingual profiles of learners with an immigrant background" (Piccardo & North, 2020, p. 283).

There is a growing number of studies exploring the role of intercultural mediators as facilitators of the relationship between the school and migrant families (Catarci, 2016), of these with the host community or within the work environment (Dusi et al., 2014), as part of the efforts to further and ease their social inclusion (Barbieri & Zani, 2015) or as a synthesizer, whose purpose is to harmonise conflicting cultural practices (Archibald & Garzone, 2014). In fact, this body of recent empirical research on cultural mediation has ascertained that in order for appropriate interactions between actors in the mediation to occur, in addition to being culturally savvy, mediators must be competent in the affective domain, having a high level of self-knowledge and social skills. This socio-emotional expertise is central to communicative-relational skills, as "knowing how to establish contact with each other, (being) able to weave a bond of trust between the operator and user, […] is the sine-qua-non for the success of the mediation" (Dusi et al., 2014, p. 542).

Dendrinos (2013) points to the growing stature of the cultural mediator, since their role involves conveying the social significance of certain cultural codes or customs, bridging gaps in information on social matters, norms and values, or reporting on the functioning of social establishments. Similarly, Backus et al. (2013) highlight the relationship between the growing socio-cultural diversity in society and a greater use of interlinguistic mediation strategies by speakers of different linguistic profiles, who can "achieve successful understanding in these situations, despite sometimes limited linguistic resources" and who have been reported to "to openly intervene in the course of the on-going interaction to prevent or solve disturbances and failures of communication and to help interlocutors achieve their goals" (p. 203). In these everyday mediated exchanges, the authors observed a remarkable level of collaboration and acceptance of deviations from the standard course of action. Despite the lower degree of accuracy of expression, people were satisfied as the purpose of the interaction was generally achieved. Such relativising attitude facilitates intercultural communication and underscores "the positive effect of not strictly adhering to the norms and standards of native speakers" (ibid).

From an educational lens, McConachy and Liddicoat (2016) assert the importance of cultural mediation, it being the process by which the language user endeavours to be conscientious of the cultural frameworks that determine the "interpretation of pragmatic acts in each language, how these differ across languages, and what the consequences of these differences are for use of these languages in intercultural communication" (p. 17). According to Piccardo and North (2020), modern language teaching should seek to incorporate more systematically the findings emerged from the wealth of theoretical studies pointing to communication difficulties arising not from language itself, but from "different perspectives or expectations, and from different interpretations of behaviour, rights and obligations" (p. 287). For instance, as Stern (1992) noted, the teaching of culture should be incorporated in the FL classroom and approached from a cognitive, affective and behavioural perspective to help students understand other speakers, their cultural values, their attitudes and their diversity. In the same token, Zacharias (2010, p. 33) defines EFL teachers' role as that of mediators between the "classroom community and the communities of practice whose language students learn". Thus, when addressing cross-linguistic mediation, a parallel process of cultural mediation should be undertaken.

Furthermore, when scaffolding intercultural communication competence, Devoss et al. (2002) state that teachers can no longer be seen as the only source of cultural information. Instead, teachers should acknowledge students as cultural informants and promote their engagement in the teaching-learning process by capitalising on the multicultural knowledge and experience brought into the classroom by students. As Bautista Pérez (2017) reflects, such an approach can allay the prejudices that breed and perpetuate misunderstandings and miscommunications that might otherwise surface in intercultural communication. Along the same lines, the CEFR /CV itself affirms (ibid, p. 43), the mediating role of teacher-student(s) interaction and collaborative interaction between pupils is patently clear in settings such the Language of Schooling for pupils from migrant origin and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), mainly driven by organising collaborative work and developing rapport between participants, thus encouraging access to and co-construction of knowledge. The realisation of this potential has aroused lively research interest and, as this work is being finalised, roughly 30 case studies are being collected into a report by the Council of Europe's Directorate of Democratic Participation, as a follow-up to the official launch at the conference "Building Inclusive Societies through Enriching Plurilingual and Pluricultural Education

at a Grassroots Level: the Role of the CEFR Companion Volume", which was held at the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg in May 2018 (Piccardo et al., 2019).

Finally, a further initiative under the aegis of the Council of Europe's Educational Policy Division that delves into the potential of mediation for the social inclusion of all citizens, regardless of their origin, is the project which has developed descriptors for *Competences for Democratic Culture* (North & Piccardo, 2016). Solidifying the pursuit of the objectives set out at the 1991 Rüschlikon Symposium, which at the time were enunciated in a programmatic manner, and its purpose being to safeguard the rights of linguistic and cultural minorities, to promote the linguistic integration of adult migrants and to enhance education in skills for democratic citizenship (Piccardo et al., 2019). It represents a new landmark for civic development of European society. Due its relevance for awareness-raising and for the visibilisation and valorisation of the democratic competences of Europeans, as well as for the conceptual contributions it yields for the development of the theses being upheld in this work, particular attention will be devoted to the *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (2018) in chapter three.

## 1.7. Conclusions

The exploration of the implications of *mediational systems* (Kramsch, 2000, in North & Piccardo, 2016) from a holistic perspective has preceded the remainder of this conceptual journey. Collaborative learning and the dialogical acquisition of knowledge, skills or attitudes that mediation affords, in essence, the socialising role of educational institutions, plays an immense role in the identity construction process of people who are in a position to engage in learning (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000) and affords both civic and intercultural learning opportunities.

Figure 3 recapitulates the main conclusions resulting from the discussion presented in this chapter and previews several elements for further analysis in Chapter 2. Language learning is at the heart of the FL classroom mission, and is also the main medium of linguistic mediation exercised by students; in its realisation, activities focus primarily on developing the linguistic and pragmatic competences needed to dispel misunderstandings, rephrase what has been said, paraphrase within a language or from

one language to another. If students have different mother tongues, the linguistic diversity available in the group should also be incorporated in multiple ways, adding a new dimension to linguistic mediation and fostering the development of multilingual communication.

However, it is equally important to build in cooperative tasks that stimulate the relational aspects of peer learning, as they induce the exchange of ideas and experiences, situating communication within the social arena to which it is inherent. Teachers act as pedagogical mediators in this process, as they provide support with new knowledge, information and scaffolding; additionally, by adopting pedagogies based on student cooperation into project tasks and collaborative activities, they can stimulate not only their learners' cognitive development, but also propitiate their emotional well-being, which in turn will cement the social aspects of teamwork that can nurture the sense of community in the classroom.

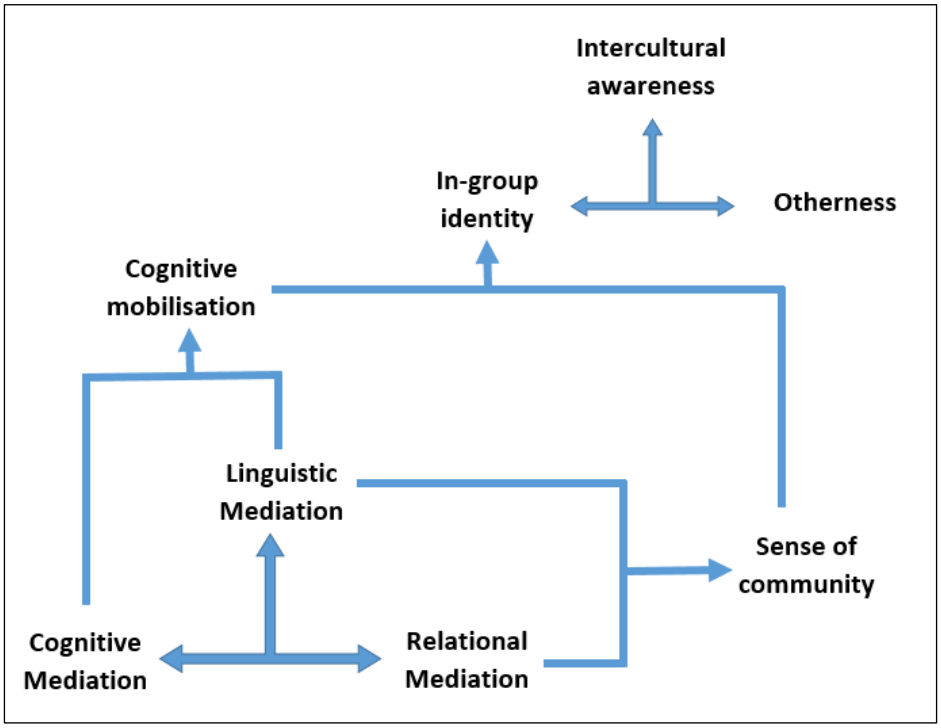



Figure 3: Conceptual model of the relationship between mediation, the development of a sense of community and inter-group relationship processes (the author's proposal)

Building on these conclusions, and as elaborated on in the next chapter, this work posits that the perceived group membership that emanates from that sense of community should be imbued with deliberate pedagogic interventions that channel and orient the learners'

perceived in-group identities at a local, regional, national and supranational, equipping learners with the intercultural awareness necessary for their encounters with social, linguistic and cultural otherness.

Concurring with Wenger's affirmation that learning transforms our identities, as it reshapes "our ability to participate in the world by changing all at once who we are, our practices and our communities" (1998, p. 227), the next chapter is devoted to examining the collective national and European identities that citizens hold, and which conform intercultural encounters. Furthermore, language learning as a transformative experience is a particularly compelling field of enquiry, in which multiple modes of encounter with alterity through symbolic mobility, real physical mobility abroad, virtual mobility and remote exposure to the target culture through the Internet and mass media, typically intersect. All this makes FL learning settings the ideal breeding ground for the study of the interrelationship of learning, identity formation and the reception of pan-national values and principles.

## Chapter 2: Identity

One of the tell-tale signs of the social complexity arising from the rapid change in late modern western societies has been the scholarly widespread focus on collective identity in Europe over the last two decades (Antonsich, 2009; Catterall, 2011; Hadler et al., 2012). Fligstein (2009) defines collective identities as socially constructed and bestowed upon themselves by a community of people who acknowledge an intrinsic and significant kinship that leads them to feel mutual solidarity. Such collective identity entail "the construction of an 'Other' and is anchored in sets of conscious and unconscious meanings that people share" (Fligstein, 2009, p. 127).

As referred to in the introduction of this work, features of the modern age such as the sense of immediacy and the apparent fading of space and time, the accelerated pace at which mobility and communications evolve or the exposure to distant cultures, provided both by ubiquitous media outlets and in-person cross-cultural encounters, have created radically new, liquid (Bauman, 2005), socio-cultural landscapes (Triandafyllidou & Wodak, 2003). The rate and scale of such changes have been reported to elicit feelings of insecurity (Wodak & Boukala, 2015a) or have been perceived to jeopardise the perceived isomorphism of ethnic and territorial identities (Bhatia, 2008; Paasi, 2009), challenge the coherence of cultural frameworks (Sánchez, 2010) and question the relations between particularistic and cosmopolitan interests.

Among the opportunities for contact between citizens across national borders, the Erasmus programme, reformulated in the framework of the Bologna process, is particularly relevant to the internationalisation of higher education (Teichler, 2012), in addition to providing a unique window into data collection on students' self-identity changes resulting from medium to long term academic stays abroad, as witnessed by the intensive research output it has generated, and to which section 2.4.3 in this chapter is dedicated.

Conceptualisations of identity within foreign and second language education have been the subject of much research interest (Gao, 2007; Kanno & Norton, 2009; Norton, 2010, 2018; Norton & Toohey, 2011). Similarly, the democratic empowerment of FL students in transitional societies (Al-Zubi, 2017; Han, 2014) is increasingly becoming the focus of academic attention. However, insufficient consideration has been given to charting FL acquisition in terms of patterns of identity development, negotiation and management in relation specifically to supranational ideals and systems of governance. In this vein, Díez

Medrano (2017) points to the need for further analytical and empirical research "on the impact of language on people's hyphenated, pan-ethnic, supranational, and cosmopolitan identifications" (p. 414).

Thus, the centrality of collective identity formation for the overall contribution of this chapter lies in elucidating how FL learning and identity formation processes affect community behaviour, especially in terms of civic participation (Sabucedo et al., 2010), and lead to the endorsement of democratic values, as such knowledge might have widespread repercussions for FL education policies and the construction of pluralistic European societies, open to those who hold different ethnic, cultural, linguistic or territorial identities.

## 2.1. Collective identity formation

Collective identity formation has customarily been a topic of particular interest for Sociology and Social Psychology scholarship, as it is the conceptual backdrop when studying the mechanisms and circumstances that explain perceived group membership or affinity, and that affect behaviour, notably pertaining to the political mobilization of citizens (to delve into the genesis of this concept, see Turner, 1975 and Tajfel, 1978).

Although the notion of collective identity itself has been widely criticized by political scientists for its conceptual vagueness, at present there is a broad academic consensus about its status as meaningful social arrangement (Duchesne & Frognier, 2008) stemming from collective negotiations and assertions on who people perceive themselves to be (Tilly, 2003). Thus, a strong collective identity is assumed by individuals when they perceive the social desirability (Falanga et al., 2010) or salience of that *qualitative identity* (Kantner, 2006), with self-identification entailing a reflexive appraisal of group values and the ethical commitment of the people concerned, particularly when regarding distinct joint future undertakings (La Barbera et al., 2014).

Historically, however, the theories offered to explain the construction of collective identity have mirrored those that dealt with national identities, the nature of which has been profusely contested by primordialist and constructivist traditions. To the former, national identity was invariable, historically determined and closely associated with standardised demographic characteristics (Cram, 2012). Similarly, cultural identity was bestowed on a

given community, providing homogeneity and unifying its members. It could not be altered; consequently, people were unable to change their own characteristics as they were predetermined by the cultural group they had been born into (Haas, 1997, in Polonska-Kimunguyi & Kimunguyi, 2011). In contrast, the constructivist conception relies on the processual and malleable nature of identity-taking, which can be redefined if the subject's conditions and interactions, including interests and perceptions, change (Rosamond, 1999), which admittedly captures more accurately the liquid nature of today's society (Bauman, 2005).

Analogously to the primordialist approach, the essentialist or substantialist paradigms rely on a primordial homogeneity for a sense of social community to be developed (Kadianaki & Andreouli, 2015). Intergroup differences, such as ethnicity or culture are deemed instrumental in fostering common ingroup and contending outgroup identities. This approach sustains that groups are characterized by an immutable essence based on common attributes and common history (Brewer et al, in La Barbera, 2015). In the same vein, other recent contributions, operationalise the tennet collective identity into two basic components: sameness and distinctiveness, the latter of which anachronously differentiates the members of a group from *others*, the non-members (Lapresta, 2014), and presumes consistency and durability over time.

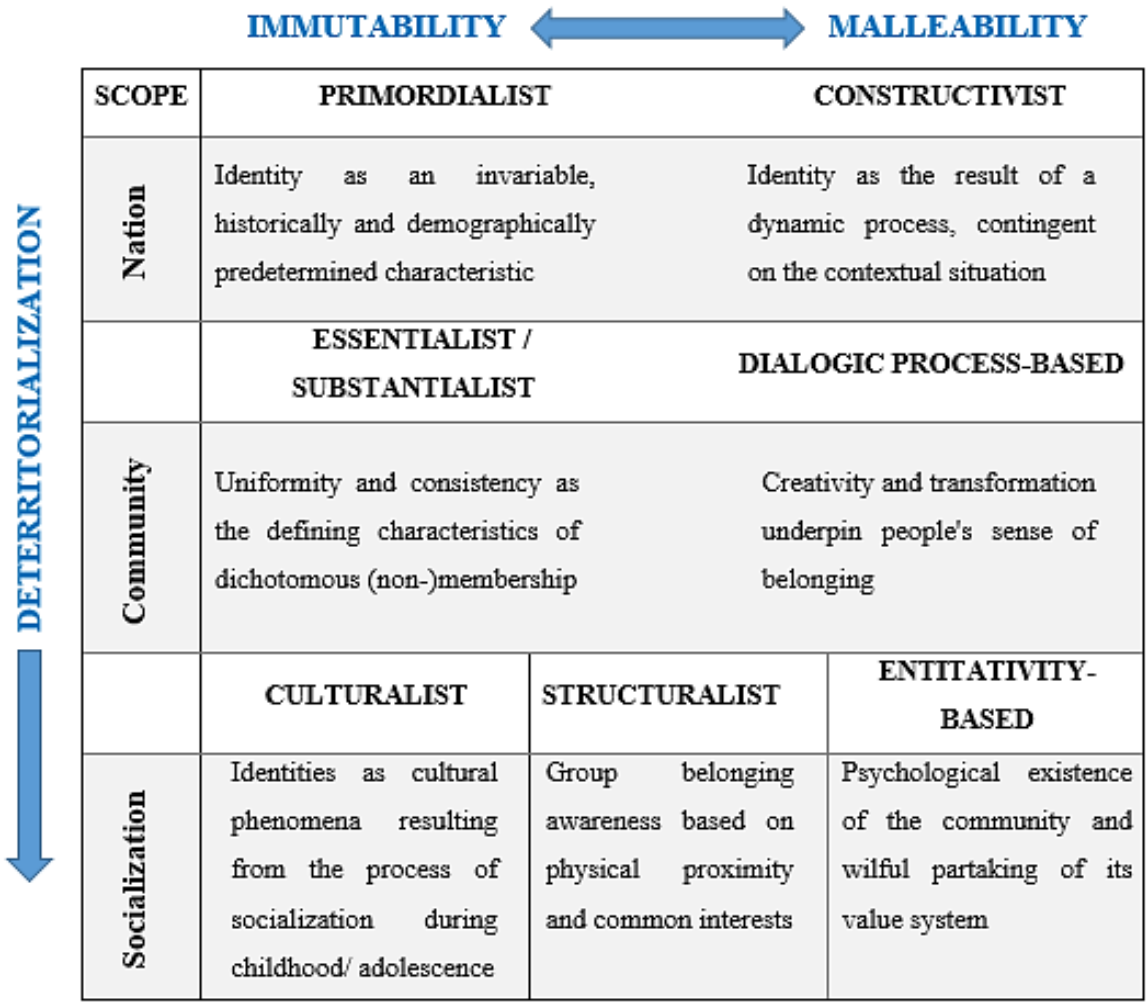
Among the obvious pitfalls associated with the essentialist view, Reijerse et al. (2013) found that an ethnic and cultural representation of national citizenship negatively affects attitudes towards multiculturalism and positively affects attitudes towards social exclusion. Indeed, if we posit that one of the underlying objectives of the European integration process is precisely the prevention of intergroup conflict and marginalization, it only follows that the essentialist view must be rejected. Accordingly, the *sameness versus otherness* dichotomy has been generally discarded (Lapresta, 2014), in favour of a creative dialogic process that enables transformation and frames people's sense of belonging.

From a sociological perspective, the *culturalist* political socialisation approach argues that collective identities are cultural phenomena, and as such are initially acquired in childhood or adolescence (Quintelier et al., 2014), but are also susceptible to alteration in adulthood through exposure to influential targeted messages (Recchi, 2014). In contrast to the former, the *structuralist* tradition attributes the emergence of a sense of collective identity to a *consciousness of belonging* to a group whose development requires a certain

physical accessibility to the group and the pursuit of a common interests, that is, the involvement in "space-situated associative relations" (Recchi, 2014, p. 4).

The classic culturalist approach which relies on the assumption of inherited cultural homogeneity has been increasingly refuted (Fred Dervin, 2009), with authors like Castano et al. (2003) proposing it be reframed within the broader issue of *entitativity*, that is, the psychological existence of the community. Similarly, Kantner (2006) posits that individuals are first socialised by their families and immediate entourage into the basic ethical convictions of the community, choosing later in life whether to wilfully share part of these beliefs and contest others. However, she also concludes that the strongest attachment to collective identities is experienced by the people who unite and establish new groups with the pursuit of a common value-laden project in mind.

Table 3: Paradigms explaining collective identity formation (the author's proposal)



Several efforts to consolidate the various existing theories have resulted in empirically applicable and verifiable instruments. For instance, in the field of psychology, and drawing on the contributions of multiple conceptual frameworks, Roccas et al., (2008) have proposed a multidimensional model of group identification which encompasses notions pertaining to social identity with those of research on individualism-collectivism, nationalism-patriotism, and identification with organizations. As such, the four possible modes of identification are operationalised in terms of importance (how firmly individuals relate the group as part of who they are), commitment (how strongly they wish to benefit the group), superiority (to what degree members perceive their group as superior to other groups), and deference (how much members abide by the rules, display its emblems and revere the leaders of the group). The results yielded by the study indicate that it is the commitment mode that relates most strongly to pro-group behaviour.

For the purposes of this work, the implications of the model proposed by Roccas et al. (2008) are consequential, as it also envisages means to improve intergroup relations by inducing members of different groups to perceive themselves as members of a single, more inclusive one. The proposed strategies cater for the different modes of self-identification that different individuals might experience towards that inclusive identity, as

> enriching the inclusive identity with group symbols and leadership might appeal more effectively to people who are strongly identified in the deference mode, emphasizing the extraordinary moral worth of the inclusive group might appeal more effectively to those who strongly identify in the superiority mode, and portraying the inclusive group in ways that make it an attractive object of love and support might appeal more effectively to people who strongly identify in the commitment mode.
>
> (Roccas et al., 2008, p. 302)

The conclusion reached by Roccas et al. (2008) that moral principles play a decisive role in the identification with and endorsement of authority figures is particularly illuminating, insofar as it might be extrapolated to the ways in which citizens identify with the institutions of the European Union.

Citizen support for pan-national identities depends largely on their perception of supranational political structures, a vision which has given rise to the distinction between *identity politics* and *politics of identity* (Hill & Wilson, 2010). For Hill and Wilson, the

former illustrates the top-down approaches, anchored on matters like ethnicity, race, language and place, which are taken by political and socio-economic actors to categorize collective identities into relatively fixed and naturalized frameworks.

By contrast, politics of identity describes a more bottom-up approach whereby local laypeople challenge or negotiate culture and identity, questioning the structures of power and wealth that limit their social life. As Hill and Wilson outline (2010), there is a prevalence of studies whose approach follows the identity politics paradigm. The directionality of initiatives aimed at raising citizen support for European symbols, principles and values, that is, whether they are generated at the supranational institutional level or at the regional or local community level, has led to mixed results as set out below.

## 2.2. Territorial identities and loci of sentiment

Self-categorisation and social identity processes rely heavily on place identity, the cognitive structure which ascribes group membership to residents of a physical space. In this sense, political geographers have provided an additional perspective to further frame the study of collective identity by incorporating a territorial reference to the main ethnocultural and socio-economic components of identity formation theories (Abela, 2014). To this effect, Nario-Redmond et al. (2004) argue that people's interaction with a place influences and subsequently shapes their social and personal identities. In turn, people perceive and mentally construct the identity of a place through a reciprocal, ongoing and perennial process (Ramos et al., 2016). Similarly, Peng et al. (2020) claim that endeavours to nurture a place's identity can strengthen the identities of its inhabitants. As a result, issues such as the definition of home, territory and landscape have been found to play an important role in identity construction, with particular incidence among transnational communities for whom globalisation has led to dissociations between identity and place (Hernández et al., 2007; Hill & Wilson, 2010).

According to Lewicka (2008), most environmental psychologists agree that the development of emotional ties to a place is a precondition for psychological stability and good adjustment, at it helps to overcome identity crises and gives people the sense of steadiness they need in a constantly changing world. Having an emotional bond with a place may also facilitate community engagement (Brown, Perkins, & Brown, 2003) and

civic action (Anton & Lawrence, 2016). Similarly, recent research has revealed a singularly social interpretation of place identity, showing how the perceptions of hometown, region, nation and supra-national locales can potentially turn into powerful and controversial scenarios of subjective feeling of identification and collective belonging (Stöttinger & Penz, 2018).

Against this conceptual backdrop, territorial identity has been articulated around two parallel constructs: place identity and place attachment. According to Hernández et al. (2007), place attachment chronologically precedes place identity. Place identity lies in the scope of cognitive mechanisms, as it is a component of self-concept and/or of personal identity which is determined in relation to the place where one belongs (Peng et al., 2020). In contrast, place attachment can be operationalised as the individuals' emotional bond toward multiple loci of sentiment within their spatial environment, thus measuring the affective dimension of people's interpretations of their physical setting (Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010).

When exploring place attachment, the primary focus of researchers falls on the meanings and importance attributed by people to those spaces within their personal biographical narratives. To that end, research hinges primarily on questions about people's attitudes and feelings about a place, which are often value-oriented (Peng et al., 2020). In the same vein, research dealing with locales of different scale has revealed the conceptual challenges to a strictly *territorial* approach to affective engagement with territories on a national and supranational level (Kanno & Norton, 2009; Phillips, 2002), particularly in the case of markedly heterogeneous territorial units such as Europe, for which Anderson's (1983) concept of *imagined* community is much better suited, as will be discussed hereunder.

Interestingly, empirical findings based on Eurobarometer data do suggest that an actual Europeanisation of space-based self-identifications is currently taking place, although it is still subsidiary to national self-identities (Cirlanaru, 2016). Accordingly, in order to fully substantiate identification with transnational spaces, coupled with the feelings of belonging to the community generated by place attachment, incorporating deterritorialized modes of identity and belonging is inevitable (Ulrich Beck & Grande, 2007; Vieten, 2006), as the following section examines.

## 2.3. European identity

European identity has been the subject of a profuse body of scientific literature, ranging from the exploration of its emergence and attributes (Shore, 2006); the inquiry of whether it can be accurately measured (Luhmann, 2017); the determination of the complementarity or opposition between feelings of attachment to Europe or the EU and national identity (Kaina et al., 2016; Thomas Risse, 2003); and the reconsideration of the pertinence or even the existence of such supranational self-identification (Cram, 2012).

As Wodak and Boukala (2015b) note, the definition of European identity still remains fairly ambiguous and opaque. Duchesne (2010, p. 7) defines European identity as a "psycho-sociological or socio-political process of citizens' attachment to the European space or to the political community designed by integration". Nevertheless, this conceptualization may become blurred by the duality of tracing citizens' identification with Europe to either a public space, which lacks specificity, or to a political community, which is inherently devoid of physical or material concreteness. Similarly, based on the work of Anderson (1983) and Phillips (2002), among others, Risse (2003) conceives Europe as an imagined community, that is, an artifact of particular cultural and social formations and not a natural, evident and perennial entity, neither immutable nor autonomous. Proponents of this approach underscore the salience of education, symbols and communication mechanisms in the shaping of a European identity (Calligaro, 2013; Shore, 2000, 2006) which, they argue, is in the process of being built by "membership, the external projection of an EU identity, the appropriation by the EU of the concept of Europe, and the cement provided by the founding values and the addition of EU symbols to Europe's forest of symbols" (Laffan, 2004, p. 76).

Increasingly, European identity researchers are turning to the notion of *feeling of belonging* over the idea of Europeanness, which is being dismissed as too essentialist. In this sense, identification with Europe "refers to whether somebody does in fact feel related to […] European people, whether they feel concerned by what happens to them, and whether they feel themselves to be part of this citizenry" (Duchesne & Frognier, 2008, p. 144). However, this seems to make European citizens once again responsible for their own allegiance to an abstract entity or for their sympathy towards other European nationals, even though the average citizen may perceive the supranational sphere as being detached from his or her own daily life and interests (Bee, 2008).

Reframing the concept of imagined communities, Hirschhausen and Patel (2010) state that these are more than mental constructs, and they therefore rename them as lived communities. This new approach abandons the traditional inquiries into the definition of Europe or the existence of innate and perdurable characteristics of European identity to focus on Europeanness as a category of *social practice* which has been planned and carried out, "experienced and exported, labelled and legitimized, appropriated and emulated by people in the past in a range of contexts" (Patel, 2013, p. 23). In a similar way, Biedenkopf et al. (2005) remark that Europe's identity is a matter to be periodically redefined by its peoples and institutions, placing their shared values, traditions, and conceptions of life "as a basis of a common identity through ever-changing conditions" (p. 6).

Thus, among the array of perspectives pursued to illuminate the debate on European identity, an area which has received particular scholarly attention is, as advanced in the previous section, the identification of predictors of endorsement of such identity (Boehnke & Fuss, 2008; Bruter, 2003; Ros et al., 2008; Verhaegen & Hooghe, 2015). Identity process theory (Garib, 2012) presents three fundamental variables that would explain the greater or lesser predisposition of people to embrace European identity within the range of individual subjective identifications, namely continuity, self-efficacy and distinctiveness. According to Garib's conceptualization, continuity occurs when a social identity is deemed enduring, as people will relate more to a European identity they perceive as steady and sustainable, as opposed to identities which are regarded as feeble, volatile, temporary or easily dissolvable. In this sense, Bandura's self-efficacy proposition (1977) is conceived as the confidence in one's own competence as an EU citizen to devise and implement the courses of action necessary to bring about certain achievements, such as successful transnational mobility, setting up a business or working abroad.

Distinctiveness refers to the features that set group Europeans apart from other people. As Garib puts it, "the distinctiveness of a European identity resides in the fact that its supranational nature makes it different from narrower geographic, cultural, and national identities or other supranational identities" (2012, p. 267). Indeed, in the case of Europe there is a strong argument to be made that a sense of belonging cannot be fostered through the formation of a unique, intermutually homogenizing, shared, distinctive cultural identity, but rather by a process of *inner cosmopolitanisation* that acknowledges the *entangled modernities* in which European societies are immersed (Beck, 2006; Beck & Grande, 2007). In this vein, more recent research (Curtis, 2014) has revealed that citizens

who feel European hold more favourable views toward immigrants than those holding exclusive national identities.

In an enlightening way, Vertovec (2007) coins the term *super-diversity* to account for variables other than ethnicity that interplay in contemporary migrant population in European countries but which are often ignored, such as divergent legal standings, unequal prospects in the labour market, varying demographic profiles and geographical distribution trends, as well as mixed responses from local authorities and residents. Dervin (2019) broadens and deepens the scope of Vertovec's (2007) concept by proposing the idea of *diverse diversities*, which accounts for every individual's singularity, regardless of their ethnicity, social status, religious sensitivity or political affiliation. Dervin (2019) points out that the external representations of diverse diversities are context-sensitive, so they are subject to change depending on the given interlocutor and setting.

From a more utilitarian standpoint, and retracing the abovementioned concept of self-efficacy and the construct of entitativity as the psychological existence of a community which was discussed in the previous section, when a group's perceived entitativity is based on economic, social, and political goals to be achieved in the future and when it relies on the arrangement of collective actions to attain those goals, it is said to adhere to an *agency-based* common project perspective. In this sense, La Barbera et al. (2014) conducted a study comprised of three separate experiments, in which two independent groups of higher education students were exposed to a different textual message regarding the genesis and prospects of the EU, one focusing on its future goals, the other on the past shared heritage of its members. The results obtained by La Barbera et al. (2014) empirically evince that EU representations based on agency-based entitativity achieve far greater support than those relying on common heritage outlooks alone, thus concurring with the proposition formulated by Roccas et al. (2008) regarding commitment modes of group identification.

### 2.4. Nested identities: from local to European self-identification

Social Psychologists assert that individuals can chose to hold multiple collective identities and allocate affective attachments to each of those group memberships (Lawler, 1997). The Multiple Senses of Community model proposed by Brodsky (2009, in Barbieri, 2015) suggests that individuals perceive multiple communities in which they actively engage and dwell, and thus acquire multiple senses of belonging to those multiple communities

(Brodsky & Marx, 2001). In the same token, the tennet of *multiple cultural identities* is central to understanding the ways in which individuals often identify with a range of social groups, some of which can be defined as cultural groups (Yampolsky et al., 2016). Broadly understood, these can stretch from small local subcultures, through wider ethnic, political or gender-based cultures and collective national cultures.

In psychological and social terms, collective identities are context-dependent and discursively constructed and adjusted as required by the environment or the circumstances (Triandafyllidou & Wodak, 2003). Moreover, the cognitive-developmental model of social identity integration posits that during the course of individuals lives, configurations of identity shift and "potentially conflicting social identities change over time and become integrated in the self" (Amiot et al., 2007, p. 383).

Thus, robust national or local identifications do not necessarily stand in the way of European identity (Citrin & Sides, 2004; Díez Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001; Erling, 2007). Insofar as the different elements of an identification layer are perceived as culturally and institutionally compatible with the other levels, in a nested rather than a mutually exclusive way, citizens are generally able to add a European dimension to their self-conception, without this giving rise to any incompatibility between their national and local identifications (Fuchs, 2011).

While the layers of identity are often arranged in a hierarchical order and subjects may report similar, complementary, and superordinate identification levels with each of the groups, national identity is generally most salient. However, there is evidence that feelings of European identity are often not entirely overridden by national identifications. Some studies indicate that European identity, while not the primary marker of identification, can be activated as an additional mechanism to ensure social effectiveness. Other studies have documented strong correlations, with national identities yielding a positive effect on European identity (Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez 2001; Fuchs, 2011). This would appear to endorse the claim that European identity is viewed as an extension of national identity (Risse 2004).

However, an equally substantial body of research has unveiled the opposite phenomenon, with firm national and subnational identities present entailing a complete lack of identification with Europe/EU (Duchesne & Frognier, 2008), particularly amongst respondents from the British Isles (Grundy & Jamieson, 2005). Although exploring the

complex specificities of British nationals' perceptions of European identity is beyond the purview of this work, some authors have identified a sparse socialization on European affairs through education and culture meaning systems (Kohli, 2010). This non-identification could also stem from under-exposure to *banal European symbols* whose presence would promote "a reservoir of implicit attachment to the EU" (Heinrich, 2019, p. 13), having an impact on instrumental rather than affective attitudes (Cram et al., 2011). On the other hand, difficulties in linking the national political system with that of EU polity (Schmidt, 2004), and the paucity of political communication strategies on European issues (Gould, 2011) are some of the factors that may hurdle citizens' self-identification as Europeans, as discussed in chapter 3.

At any rate, the position here advocated coincides with Olausson's (2010), in that approaching the struggle between different identity positions should be undertaken as a critical and creative journey that allows transformation and roots people's sense of belonging. Investigating the reconfigurations of identification is essential for education for citizenship, as learning means dealing with boundaries and bridging them, involving multi-membership in the constitution of identities, thus connecting multiple forms of participation as well as belonging to various communities (Etienne Wenger, 2008). This concurs with an application of Inglehart's *cognitive mobilization thesis* (1970), according to which "the more educated and the more knowledgeable about the EU are more likely to hold both stronger affective and cognitive European identity than the less educated and the uninformed" (Ceka & Sojka, 2016, p. 497).

Investigating the reconfigurations of identification similarly applies to language learning amidst the changing landscapes of present-day European society, marked by linguistic and socio-cultural plurality, in which "language use, ethnicity, identity and hybridization have become complex current issues" (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009), eliciting considerable interest for Language Pedagogy researchers, as explored below.

## 2.5. Language learning and identity

The natural transition from hieratic positions to the fluid conceptions of identity described above in the context of psychological and sociological research can be directly translocated to the field of language learning. Having overcome conceptual premises such as

ethnolinguistic vitality (Giles & Byrne, 1982), which considers language as a prominent marker of ethnic identity and group membership, and explains the readiness of members of linguistic minorities to assimilate and learn the second language (L2); or those having to do with the modes of acculturation available to immigrants (Berry et al., 1989), at the time of writing the predominant conception held by academics is that of poststructuralism, which examines the role of discourse in the construction of reality and draws connections between language, meaning and subjective identity. From this perspective, it is through language that we produce socially marked meanings that reflect "our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity" (Weedon, 1997, p. 19). This does not equate to saying that *languaging an identity* entails altering one's own personal self-categorisation, but rather that subjective linguistic identities are experienced in unison within the multiplicity of self-identifications available in each individual's repertoire, allowing pluriligual speakers to seamlessly "move from language through language and from community to community" (Young, 2017, p. 506). Nevertheless, foreign and additional language learning processes have been found to elicit changes in learners' self-concept. In this sense, Duff and Uchida (1997, p. 452) identified a change in FL learners' self-concept, resulting from the experiences gained "in educational practice as in other facets of social life, (where) identities and beliefs are co-constructed, negotiated, and transformed on an ongoing basis by means of language".

The poststructuralist conceptualisation has ushered in a significant shift for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory, introducing greater complexity in the operationalization of what until then had been regarded as a good student or language teacher (De Costa and Norton, 2017). As Blommaert and Rampton (2011) explain, instead of seeing language learning as a phased individual process of assimilation of a neutral set of rules, structures and vocabulary of a standard language, authors such as Bakhtin (1981), Bourdieu (1991) or Lave and Wenger (1991) developed theories that allowed the redefinition of language learning from a community-based perspective. Under this prism, meaning and identity are not fixed, but rather created through social discourses and practices (Deters, 2011), identity being considered circumstantial, fluctuating, context-sensitive, and amenable to negotiation (Ushioda, 2006). Poststructuralism has thus become "the approach of choice among those seeking to explore the links between identity and L2 learning" (Block, 2007b, p. 864), with identity taking the centre stage in second and additional language acquisition research.

Combining these theories, the definitional features of SLA are, according to Norton (2018), that learners must seek to embrace their peers' opinions while also mastering how

to engage their intended listeners. In doing so, “they must negotiate language as a system and as a social practice; and they must understand the practices of the communities with which they interact” (2018, p. 240). Therefore, language learning is seen as a pivotal factor in the complex process of identity building which arises, but also evolves, through inter-subjective verbal communication itself. It is under this conceptual setting that SLA is understood as an essential asset for each subject to claim his or her identity, for “every time learners speak, they are negotiating and renegotiating a sense of self in relation to the larger social world, and reorganizing that relationship in multiple dimensions of their lives” (Norton & McKinney, 2011, p. 73).

Understandably, the concepts of identity and community membership have been frequently invoked in integrative socio-psychological research on second-language communication and intergroup behaviour to explain the readiness of ethnolinguistic minority students' to adopt the particular language codes and speech patterns of the target reference group (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009). Similarly, they have been deployed to explain the ways in which power relations amidst social clusters affect students' access to the target language community in either formal or informal language learning environments (Norton & McKinney, 2011).

Language is regarded as a sort of symbolic capital that may later evolve into economic and social capital, providing societal as well as economic affordances for academically successful learners. This belief provides the opportunity to "link the individual and the social in the L2 learning process, tracing ways in which certain language varieties and practices are legitimised and imbued with values or stigmatised and devalued in the language market" (Pavlenko, 2000, p. 88). Therefore, one of the focuses of SLA is to determine the comparative status of, and value associated to, a language culture versus that of the dominant language, in the mind of the speaker. In the same token, Lu and Corbett (2004) assert that the negotiation of identities, based on those same valuations, is dependent on language users’ agency, as they are constantly seeking “new social and linguistic resources which allow them to resist identities that position them in undesirable ways, produce new identities, and assign alternative meanings to the links between identities and linguistic varieties” (p. 326).

However, a number of studies have come diametrically opposed conclusions, as they have identified pockets of learners for whom social integration requires renouncing FL learning (Alim, 2005, in Zacharias, 2010). Although highly relevant to certain contexts,

this work departs from those latter conclusions on the basis that such conclusions cannot be generalised to the broader field of FL teaching.

Thus, the stance that language learning provides social affordances is consistent with the positions set out in this chapter, as is Norton's (2001) application of the tenets *imagined community* and *imagined identities* to second and foreign language education. Further elaborated on in Pavlenko and Norton (2007), these concepts allow learners to "imagine who they might be, and who their communities might be, when they learn a language" (Norton & Toohey, 2001, p. 422), thus leading learners to rely on the acquisition of a foreign or additional language as a means to better themselves and as the gateway to desired social networks. The imagined communities that Pavlenko and Norton allude to "include affiliations, such as nationhood or even transnational communities, which extend beyond local sets of relationships" (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 422). The poststructuralist scheme, therefore, also accommodates the affective sphere of language learners, since the fluid and evolving essence of identity directly touches upon motivation for access to imagined linguistic communities, as Dörnyei's (2005) take on the theory of *possible selves* and his coining of the *ideal L2 Self* points to.

In a similar fashion, language embodies the cultural values of a given group and shapes its identity as a community of speakers. It therefore offers an additional perspective and another way of perceiving the world (Gu, 2009). Acquiring a new language with the alternative vision of the source culture from which it spawned calls for a significant leap from one worldview to another (Byram, 1992), allowing, in turn for the learners' own process of identity formation to unfold through communication, personal contact and, consequently, social identification (Tost Planet, 2000). In the same vein, Block's definition of linguistic identity as the "relationship between one's sense of self and different means of communication, understood in terms of language, a dialect or sociolect, as well as multimodality" (Block, 2007a, p. 43) underscores the social and communicative dimension associated to users' linguistic repertoires. At any rate, this work seeks to join the few that have explored the practical importance of fostering identity development in the foreign language classroom (Taylor et al., 2013).

### *2.5.1. Distinctions between ESL and EFL identity building opportunities*

A large sector of sociolinguists use SLA as a comprehensive term that encompasses, among others, studies of English as a second language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language

(EFL), English as an International Language (EIL) or English for Migrants (Block, 2007b; Deters, 2011). Some studies have even sought to expressly vindicate the futility of such distinctions in language teaching, arguing that the *foreign* element is currently outweighed by new *language ecologies* arising from social mobility or access to digital technologies (Mora, 2013). Dissenting from such positions, this work assigns the term *foreign* and its specificities the significance of being integral markers in the discourse of language acquisition and identity development, and deems it unfortunate that they have been largely overlooked (Rivers & Houghton, 2013).

In this regard, the application of some of the SLA premises discussed above to the EFL context might be problematic, as there often is no distinct target reference group of language users in the students' immediate social setting (Ushioda, 2011).

| | **SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION** | **FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING** |
|---|---|---|
| **SCOPE** | - Language learning in a *natural* setting<br>- *Supervened* self-reflection on identity | - Deliberately maximizing exposure to linguaculture[3]<br>- Reflection on identity raised by FL practitioner / researcher |
| **MAIN CONCERNS** | - Uprooting and alienation of minority language speakers<br>- Degree of identification with the majority language culture<br>- Instrumental motivations for learning (social and professional identities) | - Desired self-representations as members of (global) communities<br>- Latent social identities to be invoked in the classroom<br>- Teacher and student roles / identities |
| **LIMITATIONS** | Integrative motivation fails to capture fluid realities | Status of English as a global language / lingua franca |

Table 4: Identity in SLA and FLL (the author's proposal)

[3] The terms linguaculture, languaculture, 'language and culture' or other variants are used generically in this work as synonyms, whose alternation is mainly due to the preference of the author who is being referenced in each extract, thus not reflecting the nuances outlined by Risager (2013).

As summarised in table 4, the traditional environment for the study of identity within SLA is typically one of immersion, in which learners who have a differing linguistic and cultural heritage are socialised into the dominant language culture. Thus, SLA identity research often addresses minority language speakers' hybrid identities, which imply plural language affiliations and national loyalties (Holt & Gubbins, 2002). On the other hand, a continuing concern of SLA researchers is the power struggle between the dominant language culture and minority languages (Norton & Toohey, 2011) and whether the former be contested, resisted or denied by speakers who hold on to their cultural heritage, the legitimacy of L2 language users (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007), and the value placed on different languages by a given community of speakers (Riestenberg, 2020).

The consideration of identity in the context of Foreign Language Learning (FLL) differs in its general concerns, in that the motivation of language learners is not based on an integrative perspective toward external reference groups (Ushioda, 2011), but on the aspiration for membership in communities of language practice (Cole & Meadows, 2013). Furthermore, in the case of English, these communities happen to be global (Young, 2017) and substantiate identities ascribed to English speaking by non-native users (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). The reality in Europe is that, de facto, English language still predominates in foreign language teaching and that, although a social reality in the modern global world, plurilingualism has pervaded educational institutions to a lesser extent than anticipated by EU authorities (Backus et al., 2013), as is next discussed.

### *2.5.2. Plurilingualism and European identity building*

The 1995 *White Paper on Education and Training* proclaimed the importance of learning languages for fostering the citizens' feeling of belonging in the EU, in the following terms:

> Languages are also the key to knowing people. Proficiency in languages helps to build up the feeling of being European with all its cultural wealth and diversity and of understanding the citizens of Europe. […] It opens the mind, stimulates intellectual agility and, of course, expands people's cultural horizon. Multilingualism is part and parcel of both European identity/citizenship and the learning society.
>
> (European Commission 1995, p. 47)

The phrasing of this recommendation has been contested, as it seems to imply a causal relationship between learning languages and developing a socio-political affinity, whereby European identity and citizenship could be regarded as interchangeable terms (Kindermann, 2007). As per the resolution of the Council of Education Ministers of 31 March 1995, this document also initiated the policy endeavour that every European should be able to communicate in at least two Community languages in addition to their mother tongue, whose advisability has been debated by academics (Backus et al., 2013; Piccardo & North, 2020).

Despite its pitfalls, one of the developments brought about by the *White Paper* was to disseminate among language teachers the importance of introducing topics relating to social identity along with the study of purely linguistic content, which until then had been the primary, if not the sole focus of their efforts (Byram, 2000). As Byram (2000) affirms, one of the issues that had been disregarded up to that moment was that language teaching should necessarily entail equipping learners for interaction with "people who not only speak a different language but are also from a different country, with a different culture and different social identities" (p. 21). Thus, the acquisition of a foreign language and the familiarisation with the cultural traits of its community of speakers, in the eyes of proponents of plurilingual and multicultural takes on language education, has since required the development of empathy and sensitivity to points of view or worldviews that may differ considerably from students' own .

On the basis of Eurobarometer data, Díez Medrano (2017) undertook the empirical verification of the possible causal relationship between the ability to speak more than one language and individuals identifying themselves with Europe, in order to substantiate the theoretical proposition that the mastery of foreign languages eases interpersonal contact with fellow European citizens, which in turn infuses a greater sense of being European. Díez Medrano concludes that "interpersonal interaction is at best only part of the explanation for the relationship between multilingualism and European identification" ( 2017, p. 412), indicating other possible linkages, such as the prospect that when faced with a dilemma in choosing their identity, multilinguals may resolve such quandary by distancing themselves from the primary identifications in which they were first socialised and adopting new ones of pan-national nature. In the same token, Agirdag et al. (2015) point to the advantages of European identity, as being "more civic and more inclusive category than national identities that are more ethnically defined" (p. 291). Another alternative contemplated by Díez Medrano (2017) is that, owing to the salience of language

in individuals' self-categorisation, and because linguistic diversity is one of the most outstanding cultural traits of the European Union, multilingual people have greater awareness of being European and more inclination and entitlement to call themselves European than single-language speakers.

Most recently, and in line with the Council of Europe's *Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*, which identifies multilingualism as one of the eight key competences necessary for self-realisation, active citizenship and social insertion, several scholars have argued that (foreign) language teaching must account for the fact more than half of the world population is bi- or plurilingual, performing practices such as translanguaging, polylanguaging, cross-languaging, code-switching and code-mixing. Thus, instead of reproducing the native/non-native speaker dichotomy, scholars propose to regard formerly branded non-native speakers as plurilingual, legitimate users of L2 (Piccardo & North, 2020; Stathopoulou, 2015).

Hence, against this background of multilingual and multicultural societies, (foreign) language teaching ought to be managed differently, responding to the emerging communication needs of language users, who are subject to the new realities, challenges and demands of such environment. However, the current promotion of multilingualism through the single-language teaching paradigm; or through the acquisition of several languages in successive stages of schooling, or even through the simultaneous teaching of more than two foreign languages, but in a disjointed manner, by professionals who have usually been trained as one language specialists, defeats the whole purpose of the *multilingual turn* in FL education (Meier, 2017) and underscores the necessity to establish a shared conceptual basis by defining the rationales and implications of a multilingual teacher training, such as that defended by Ziegler (2013).

However, despite the adamant adherence to plurilingual approaches to language education laid out in European policy documents and adopted by most academics, dissenting authoritative voices such as that of Seidlhofer (2011, p. 134) assert that "although plurilingualism is often directly associated with inter-culturality, it is English that so often serves as a means of making connections across cultural assumptions and values". Empirical studies on English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and identity have delivered results which support Seidlhofer's position. Such is the case of the inquiry into English learners' views on European language policy conducted by Gnutzmann et al. (2014). Although considering themselves as Europeans, the participants in the study attributed such identification to their being influenced "by ideas and symbols, less so by language-based

notions such as language diversity" (p. 455). The study thereby disputes that the current European linguistic policy will be successful for identity building and foresees an intensification of the importance of English for young Europeans as the preferred language in intercultural interactions. However, in spite of the fact that it serves as a bridging element, the authors discard the idea of ELF being a marker of European identity.

Authors such as Gubbins (2002) have similarly been pointing to the existing gulf between the spirit of EU language policy regulations and the practical application of those provisions, and the multiple yet ineffective measures proposed to safeguard the multilingual nature of European institutions. Furthermore, Wodak and Boukala (2015a) denounce a perverse usage of the EU language policy, through which mastery of the domestic languages of the members of the European Union is utilised as a pretext for the marginalisation of migrants and the assertion of "a (supra)national identity via border and body politics" (p. 268). Therefore, despite the pronouncements of policy informed by these concepts, the scope of multilingualism within the EU seems to only be applicable to the national languages of the member states, denying comparable coverage to either the non-state minority languages of the continent (Fishman, 1991) and the exogenous linguistic varieties brought in by migrants from third countries. It stands to reason that "the treatment of minority languages will be crucial in providing a balance between the need for unity and the acceptance of diversity" (Gfeller, 2000, p. 258) under the umbrella of European identity.

In light of the abovementioned contributions, the potential that promoting the traditional-style learning of multiple foreign languages from schools holds in itself for generating pro-European feelings might be called into question. Nevertheless, encouraging an appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity, both internally and across national borders, remains one of the most important aspects of the European project. Concurring with Stathopoulou (2015), this work endorses cross-linguistic mediation as one of the communication practices which ought to be embedded as a pedagogical resource in the FL curriculum and classroom practice, and through which plurilingual and multicultural awareness can be accomplished.

### *2.5.3. International academic sojourns and incidental acquisition of supranational identities*

As stated in the introduction to this work, cross-border mobility has become one of the distinctive signs of our times, becoming the axis of *mobility turn* sociological paradigm

(Urry, 2000), according to which movement is deemed a pivotal concept for comprehending contemporary societies. Social phenomena are all seen as never static and situated in one place, but "necessitating diverse 'connections' that are more or less 'at a distance', more or less fast, more or less intense and more or less involving physical movement" (Urry, 2008, p. 13). Along the same lines, Mau and Mewer (2012) underscore the swiftness with which the social and territorial cleavages that used to characterize nation-states are fading, which is being manifested, among other instances, in transnational social integration, mobility, affiliations and networks.

The structuralist theory of identification, for which space-situated associative relations are paramount (Recchi, 2014), asserts that in order to assume cosmopolitan attitudes, active engagement in transnational interaction is imperative (Van Mol et al., 2015). However, superficial exposure reduced to mundane matters rather than meaningful communication is unlikely to produce significant and enduring results (Deutsch, 1966, in Sigalas, 2010). The underlying principle of this model is the prominence of experienced cosmopolitanism, be it (sub)conscious and (un)sought or not, which emerges in the individual domain of social actors as they partake in interpersonal transactions spanning across national borders (Vertovec, 2010). In this regard, Sigalas (2010) undertook the empirical verification of Deutsch's (1966) long-standing *transactional theory* that increased interpersonal contact is one of most powerful channels for promoting European identity and a cosmopolitan world view, finding that direct contact with nationals from other European nations does indeed seem to lead to a supranational *we-feeling*.

However, beyond quasi anecdotal experiences, or exchanges limited to particular contexts of interaction, cross-border practices should comprise "the behaviour of any potential individual actor in any aspect of daily life", according to Favell et al (2011, p. 19). This broad conceptualization would allow for the coverage of activities and behaviours that extend across national borders, whatever their nature, duration and periodicity, thus emphasizing the bottom-up take on the sociological phenomena, which centres the transnational encounters of regular citizens and lends a more nuanced insight to an otherwise rather general debate on cross-border flows (Pötzschke, 2012). Similarly, Mau and Mewes (2012) empirically gauged different forms of horizontal Europeanisation through two specific manifestations of social transnationalism, such as fraternising with fellow EU citizens and travelling to foreign EU countries, concluding that the intensity of taking part in such practices does in fact correlate to the furthering of supra-national values

and identification. In the same token, manifestations of social capital, such socialising with other people from other regions in Europe have been found to positively interrelate with European identification (Yurtsever, 2012, p. 14).

Thorpe (2008) associates European *cultural capital*, that is, Europe-related experience and knowledge, such as speaking Community languages, having transnational travel experiences or being acquainted with European cultural patterns and customs, as the most significant factor disposing individuals to positively identify with Europe and the EU. Consequently, the belief that mobilities across borders may prove instrumental to European identity building has permeated policy-making, as evidenced by the initiatives concocted by the European Commission in the *citizen's Europe* agenda on "culture, education, communication and social policy but also the so-called European symbolism" (Bee, 2008, p. 434). Along the same lines, Community initiatives during the first years of the twenty-first century, like the Socrates II Programme, revolved around providing citizens access to a European experience that could forge a "common sense of identity and belonging to a common area" (Tost Planet, 2000 p. 26).

Understandably, academic mobility programmes have been commonly seen as a springboard for identity development and as playing a key role in supporting students' assumption of a sense of European belonging by familiarising them with a new European culture, introducing them to different educational structures, ideas, approaches and skills (Mitchell, 2012; Van Mol, 2018). Indeed, existing scholarly research on international study placements and their effect on the intercultural competence acquired by higher education students suggests that the intercultural experience expands students' repertoire to reappraise their own cultural patterns (Hadfield & Summerby-Murray, 2016; Llurda et al., 2016; Wilson, 2011). However, other research pertaining to the impact of academic sojourns in other member states has yielded conflicting results (Fred Dervin, 2009), and although some studies point to the experience having bolstered most participants' European identity (Mazzoni et al., 2018; Mitchell, 2015) or their recognition of common European values (Jacobone & Moro, 2015), a substantial number of authors have either failed to establish causal relationships between the two (Keating, 2016; Sigalas, 2010), have revealed that students' ratings of the host country have remained stagnant (Teichler, 2004) or have even observed an ex post rejection of the host culture (Udrea, 2013). Moreover, as pointed out by Dvir and Yemini (2016), physical mobility only meets one of the aspects of internationalisation pursued by the European Commission. Thus, mobility is considered as

a minor variable in relation to the intercultural dimensions needed for internationalisation, which may be best developed through formative experiences in heterogeneous local environments.

Even more interestingly, in a revision of his *Mobile Sociology* paradigm published in 2000, Urry (2008) contests the need for propinquity, and advocates the construct of *imagined presence* that is generated through "objects, people, information and images travelling, carrying connection across, and into, multiple other social spaces" (ibid, p. 14). As *travelling-in-dwelling* practices of communication replaced physical mobility to remain in contact with loved ones back home, the use of ICTs was initially studied as a differentiating factor of the migrant community; however, these practices are now being reconsidered due to the widespread use of social networks by all social strata, which is in turn influencing the ways in which researchers think about mobility. Thus, instead of charting a bicomponent relationship of migrants and residents, or of mobile and immobile individuals, Salamońska, Grifone Baglioni, and Recchi, (2013, p. 11) suggest thinking of this phenomenon in terms of a *continuum of mobilities*.

However, as Mau and Mewes (2012) conclude, it is cultural elites that could be considered precursors of social transnationalism, while the European working classes stay fairly committed to social spaces determined by national borders. In this sense, it would be highly relevant for those in charge of the European integration process to provide "new forms of transnational activities and connectedness which also involve less transnationalised parts of the populations" (Salamońska et al., 2013, p. 11). As outlined below, in lieu of physical mobility when travelling is not possible, domestic transnational experiences could yield fruitful results. Similarly, internationalising experiences carried out at a local level could be intended as a preliminary preparatory phase to improve the results of subsequent participation in a sojourn abroad, since spatial and virtual mobilities have been found to mutually reinforce each other (Urry, 2007, p. 157). The joint consideration of imagined presence and mobility continuum theories could enable the incorporation of virtual mobility activities, carried out within the educational community or the local community, as a pedagogical tool for the development of cosmopolitan attitudes and orientations.

### *2.5.4. Identity-themed, domestic transnational experiences in the EFL classroom*

Based on the approaches described in the previous sections of this work, it can be surmised that the foreign language classroom should become an arena for social learning. However, since educational settings are extremely sensitive to social dynamics, as Wegner (2009) points out, successful learning spaces often mirror the work of educators who empower participants and grapple the social dynamics of learning. The teachers who facilitate these spaces must be, in Wegnerian terms, *social artists* who stimulate these subtle and complex dynamics (Wegner, 2009, p. 2).

Some authors posit the central role of domestic transnationalism, understood as "transnational experiences gained domestically without physical border crossing" whether it be in-person or via electronic media, and frequent cross-cultural encounters in the development of open-minded citizens and inclusive social architectures (Fernández, Eigmüller, & Börner, 2016, p. 2). However, while most educational researchers who have analysed classroom environments as transnational social spaces have done so on the basis of students being either migrants or transnationally affiliated individuals (Hornberger, 2007), the approach proposed here calls for the widespread adoption of domestic transnational methodologies both for local students enrolled in EFL courses in their own home country and for international students with different cultural backgrounds.

From this perspective, cross-cultural exposure in the EFL setting can occur "via mediated means, such as print and digital media content or interpersonal interactions on Internet-based or social media" (Lum, 2018, p. 4), as these outlets, together with other cultural artifacts, can furnish real-life manifestations and patterns to heighten awareness of the target culture. Similarly, observational approaches, facilitated by in-person or remote visits to the class of native informants from the target culture, whose purpose is to interact with the learners by reacting to their personal questions and observations, can provide analogous cross-cultural learning experiences (Olivares Garita & Altamirano Alvarado, 2013).

Interestingly, in addition to the physical and virtual modes of intercultural encounter, some authors have explored the possibilities offered by the Imaginary Intercultural Contact (IIC) model (Rivers, 2011) as a convenient solution to the challenges posed by the paucity of opportunities for real intercultural contacts available to EFL

students in some countries. IIC has proven to be useful in highlighting and challenging "established intergroup dynamics and stereotypes" in the FL classroom (p. 850), which might hold potential interest in preparing real contact encounters, bringing a more positive approach to diversity and helping students gain meaningful and durable communicative relationships with people from other ethno-cultural origins.

On the other hand, as has been advocated since the beginning of the chapter, the development of a vibrant community of language learners is essential for boosting the students' identification with the group. Based on the Wengerian notions of shared repertoire, joint enterprise and mutual engagement (1998), Petersen et al. (2008) assert that one way to encourage and improve the connection between learners within the language classroom is to use digital tools such as blogs, learning platforms or peer messaging systems that enhance group awareness and act as "triggers for communication between community members", as well as allowing for contributions to be displayed, so as to "make (individual) learning paths more visible", which would also stimulate learners' ability to relate to others (p. 376). All these interconnections afforded by the selected learning tools would support the internal communication of the group, playing a key role in creating a community identity, of fostering a feeling of membership and ensuring its sustainability. Moreover, the use of digital technologies, social networking and online communication in the EFL classroom has substantial ramifications for the students' motivation, interests, and identity (Ushioda, 2011).

## 2.6. Conclusions

In this chapter, the main contributions related to collective identity formation have been presented. They are tributaries of the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), which establishes that identities derived from group membership are an integral part of individuals' overall identity, giving them a sense of self-esteem and social belonging; in conjunction with the Self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987), which posits that when integrating into a social group, its members undergo a process of self-stereotyping based on favourable comparisons between their own group and others. Thus, the perspective upheld herein assumes that collective identity can only be shaped, adjusted, and preserved through relational processes of social interaction and social comparison.

As the dawn of a wave of internationalisation has reshaped the linguistic expectations of society and multiplied the possibilities for language learning, it has become necessary to identify possible links between fostering plurilingualism and forging a European identity. Following Díez Medrano (2017), relevant literature from both the interaction-communication approaches and socio-psychological perspectives has been examined, and similar conclusions have been reached. Thus, concurring with Diez Medrano (2017), this work supports the thesis that the feeling of belonging to communities of practice that is attached to linguistic identity could account, to a large extent, for the fact that plurilingual speakers experience high levels of identification with Europe, with actual opportunities of transnational interaction contributing to a lesser degree to developing a sense of Europeanness.

Such conceptual breakthrough has led to the proposal of a three-tiered model of linguistic socialisation. Following Berger and Luckmann (1966), the participation of individuals in society is deemed to have a dialectic nature, requiring a succession of three moments for situational reality to be fully grasped: externalisation, objectivation and internalisation. Thus, for human beings to comprehend one another and the social reality around them, meanings must be apprehended and subjectively interpreted. In Berger and Luckman's words (1966), "the ontogenetic process by which this is brought about is socialisation, which may thus be defined as the comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or a sector of it" (p. 150).

In this sense, two levels of socialisation are distinguished, *primary socialisation* being understood as the initial socialisation that individuals undergo in infancy, through which they acquire membership in society, and *secondary socialisation* being any ensuing induction of already socialised individuals into further segments of their societal target world. Interestingly, the authors point out the discrepancy between the socialisation of individuals in their mother tongue and culture and that which occurs when entering other societies, by affirming that "the process of internalizing such a world as reality - a process that exhibits, at least superficially, certain similarities with both primary and secondary socialization, yet is structurally identical with neither" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, pp. 150-151).

Drawing on these concepts, Doyé (1992) coined the term *tertiary socialisation* to denote how the learning of a foreign language can lead students past their own cultural group "into experience of otherness, or other cultural beliefs, values and behaviours"

(Byram, 2008, p. 34). As Alred and Byram (2002) note, the pedagogical impact of tertiary socialisation is remarkable, as it allows for the accommodation of deeply rooted beliefs, values and behaviours attained through primary and early secondary socialisation, side by side with the new set of beliefs and schemata which pertain to the L2.

Gfeller's *extensive trilingualism model* (2000) has served as a springboard for the synthetic representation of mediated language learning as socialising element, as proposed in Table 5 below. The point of departure is set in positions of allegiance to the immediate social context and in a firm attachment to the identity ascribed to the mother tongue(s) (L1), as described by authors such as Fishman (1991), who confer L1 the ability to connect the person with his or her *rooted identity*, that is, their ethno-cultural essence, and the spheres of "intimacy, family, community, identity and affiliation" (p. 5).

The second developmental phase would be prompted by secondary socialisation which occurs when being admitted into a community of practice, as well as tertiary socialisation which is corollary to SLA or FLL. Concurring with Alred and Byram (2002), in addition to paving the way for geographic and virtual mobility of learners and providing them with higher levels of social capital (further discussion into this notion is provided under heading 3.3), this stage would foster a sense of affiliation to the community of practice established in the language classroom.

The culminating developmental stage (whose hypothetical nature is represented in the table by a dashed line) towards the individual uptake, reinforcement or extension of European cultural principles and the adoption of flexible, cosmopolitan dispositions would derive from mediated language learning experiences (MeLLE, as discussed in Chapter 1) through which FL and values can be pursued in unison. The context for such experiences would be social interaction in a multilingual classroom setting, in which language teachers could capitalize on students' linguistic multicompetence (Pavlenko, 2003) to spur discussion, self-reflection and students' sense of entitlement to becoming part of the *FL speakers community*.

Table 5: Language education, socialisation and Europeanness (the author's proposal)

| ***Rootedness*** **L1** | **Encounter with otherness SLA/FLL** | ***Value-ladenness*** **MeLLE** |
|---|---|---|
| - Social acquisition of local /regional cultural capital | - Geographical mobility<br>- Virtual mobility<br>- Intellectual mobility (cognitive mobilisation) | - Situated social interactions<br>- Mediated plurilingual and multicultural experiences<br>- Legitimisation into imagined communities |
| - Identity construction (primary socialisation) | - Development of further identity layers (tertiary socialisation) | - Contextual activation of identity in multicultural contexts (tertiary socialisation) |
| - Local community civic engagement | - Feeling of belonging to communities of practice (secondary socialisation) | - Access to European cultural capital and entitativity<br>- Identification with EU/Europe |

As stated by Risse (2010), social identities not only provide ties between individuals and social groups, but include specific substantive elements, like norms and rules, that distinguish the social group itself and its adherents, its aims and the collective outlook on the world that the group members share. As a result, the model here proposed encompasses the two perspectives pointed out by Diez Medrano (2017) and also suggests the integration of democratic competences in a transversal manner, and through the promotion of democratic learning processes in the classroom, for the comprehensive education of democratically empowered and competent citizens (van Lier, 2004). Consequently, exploring the interplay of language learning, European identity development and the espousal of civic and democratic values are the central theme of the next chapter.

## Chapter 3: European democratic values in plurilingual and multicultural societies

In the preceding chapter, the point has been made that the foundations of European identity should not be overly abstract. As *civic* components seem to have a bearing in citizens' identification with Europe as a political structure (Bruter, 2004), one feasible option that has been raised to make the issue of supranational identity more relevant to the average citizen is to trace an explicit connection to European identifiers like "borderlessness, circulation of citizens, common civic area, new policy making, and prosperity" (ibid, p. 36). Another strand of the civic approach advocates "an inclusive Europe-oriented education, covering responsible citizenship, multiple identities and citizens' dialogue" (Van den Brande, 2017, p. 20) whose curriculum content reflects European values and symbols. In fact, the intended outcome during the first stages of the EU's higher education project policy was to "produce European-minded citizens, engaged with the expanding Community [and European Commission], and committed to the concept of 'European' culture and values" (Robertson, 2010, p. 26).

Moreover, although those early expectations remain unfulfilled, the focus of European education policy is unchanged, as can be deduced from the Paris Declaration on "Promoting Citizenship and the Common Values of Freedom, Tolerance and Non-discrimination through Education" (2015) which seeks to prevent radicalisation and extremism through training and youth work. The continuing prevalence of this matter has been highlighted by the regulatory initiative establishing and allocating a hefty budgetary endowment to the Rights and Values programme (2021-2027)[4], which designates, as common policy challenges to be addressed: promoting European identity and common values; promoting rights and equality; supporting active citizenship, democratic participation in society and the rule of law; and promoting social inclusion and justice.

Greater academic consideration should be therefore given to whether the public perception of the moral values embodied by the EU and its institutions, and the extent to which individuals share these principles, can affect their degree of endorsement of a European identity (Ros et al., 2008) or whether they might even conflict with citizens' national values (Klein et al., 2003). Along these lines, nationals of candidate countries' viewpoints have been measured against values specified by the EU for their accession

[4] https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/1788-Multiannual-Financial-Framework-Rights-and-Values-programme-2021-2027

(Kuşdil & Şimşek, 2008), as research has been conducted to gauge the interplay between citizens' internalized values and the variability in support for democratic values in post-communist countries (Voinea, 2014). Yet further research, whose target populations comprised inhabitants of consolidated democracies and long-established member countries, would be useful in determining the interconnection between civic and democratic values on the one hand, and the attachment to Europe, the support for EU political initiatives or the enlargement of the EU to candidate countries, on the other.

Tying in this theme to first chapter of this work, which laid forth that a holistic approach to language teaching must inevitably result in examining the role of FL learners as critical citizens, the following pages make the case that the FL classroom is an ideal environment for encompassing intercultural education, the promotion of mutual commitment, and the nurturing of democratic values which are required in order to meet the new demands of the multicultural European societies of our time. Indeed, the adoption of common values and principles is not achieved automatically, nor do these values shape the identity of citizens on their own. Shared values must be interpreted within the frameworks of culture, history and political tradition (Lucarelli, 2008). As Coste and Cavalli (2015) affirm:

> The development of critical citizenship accordingly requires the acquisition of a habitus through activities that involve mediation dependent on language competences. These include […] the mediated resolution of differences of opinion or disputes; regular reflection on hate speech; and the adoption of discourse that respects other people.
>
> (Coste & Cavalli, 2015, p. 36)

Thus, while it cannot ensure the development of democratic attitudes, there seems to be a profound nexus between language education and the acquisition of democratic competence, as FL teaching can be regarded as a cornerstone of respect for otherness and the development of non-ethnic perceptions and attitudes which are conducive to intercultural competence (Krumm, 2004). In a similar vein, the realisation that nations are polyethnic and polyglot brought about by language education may engender a sense of *identity distance* from ethnocentric positions, where an awareness of multiple identity prevents the adoption of intolerant or exclusionary views towards alterity (Holt & Gubbins, 2002). Thus, Heyward (2002, p. 10) defines intercultural literacy as “the understandings,

competencies, attitudes, language proficiencies, participation and identities necessary for successful cross-cultural engagement". Similarly, the triangular model of intercultural communication competence, as proposed by Chen (2014), outlines the three pillars on which the interactants' competence rests: the understanding of both their own and their counterparts' cultural conventions; their ability to display a favourable sense of recognition, respect and acceptance of cultural differences; and their willingness to act in an appropriate and effective manner in the process of intercultural interaction.

Indeed, the Council of Europe (2018b) highlights the potential of plurilingual skills and attitudes, which are relevant for the appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity, as a contributing force to the enhancement of democratic competences. In a similar spirit, a current report on the status of *Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education* (EDC/HRE) (Council of Europe, 2019) concludes that there is a need to give renewed impetus to educational initiatives that foster pluralistic attitudes, discard parochial mindsets and generate respect for those belonging to other cultural groups, raising awareness of the inherent value of diversity. The end goal of EDC/HRE is to ensure synergies in mutual support that "the diversity of values and standards that have represented the individuality of the various nation states must be reduced to a common framework" (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 134), as it is hoped that common values will nurture citizens' drive for participation in the European public sphere and in intercultural dialogue, EU policies and programmes (Taulègne, 2015).

Accordingly, civic education for intercultural dialogue is considered relevant in all age groups, across formal, informal and non-formal context (Bekemans, 2015). In parallel, however, it is also acknowledged that the compliance with the "Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education", developed under the guidelines of Recommendation CM/Rec (2010)7[5], has been uneven across Europe, and national education authorities are encouraged to further address civic education in an interdisciplinary way, stimulating social cohesion and intercultural dialogue. In the same vein, when exploring the teaching of common values (TCV) in Europe, Veugelers et al. (2017) have found that "EU Member States differ in the extent to which they steer TCV policy" (ibid, p. 9), and advocate that both specific disciplines, cross-curricular activities as well as subjects like languages, culture and arts are suited for the igniting and

[5] https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cf01f

undergirding of the value learning process, with particular focus on democracy and tolerance.

The European Elos[6] Network (2010) undertook the complex task of delineating a joint European competence scheme for students in vocational training and higher education, by developing indicators that relate their FL communication skills, values and attitudes and their degree of cognitive mobilization on European issues. The resulting framework factors in the students' knowledge of Community structures and institutions and of current issues that have a European or global dimension; their ability to collaborate constructively with peers from other countries to attain a common goal; and their initiative in identifying informal learning opportunities combined with their entrepreneurial skills at an international level. More recently, the Council of Europe has published a reference *Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (CDC, 2018) which is be tailored for use in compulsory and higher education institutions throughout Europe, permeating national curricula as well as teaching institutions, and having the overriding aim of promoting democracy and human rights through learning in present-day educational domains.

Relevant to the content presented in the second chapter of this work, the accommodation of the multiple identities of citizens and the need to articulate *layers of political representation* were resolved in Held's seminal proposal for *cosmopolitan democracy* (1995, in Taylor, 2002) whereby the state level rivals the European and regional levels of representation for power and influence, conforming an intricate, triple pattern of governance. Thus, "such a relatively complex layered democracy attempts to directly address issues of identity by enabling multiple imagined communities to be formed while assuming the largest scale to be the new community of fate—beyond the 'nation-state'—in a globalising world" (Taylor, 2002, pp. 238-239).

As can be gleaned from the fragment above, the matter of group affiliation is once again central to the subject under discussion and closely aligned with the adoption of the democratic values championed by Europe. So is the role of civil society in legitimising polity decisions passed by European officials (Dogan, 2002). Nevertheless, as Kaina (2013) has pointed out, the extent to which the EU's *democraticness* influences people's

[6] http://www.tallinn.ee/haridus/Common-Framework-for-Europe-Competence-ELOS-students-.pdf

inclination to relate to the Union and its members; or whether this growing politicisation of the European Union is disruptive to the advancement of a joint sense of community for the citizens of the EU is yet to be fully explored. Thus, the following pages provide an opportunity to approach this issue.

### 3.1. European Democratic Culture and Euroscepticism

According to Veugelers et al. (2017), when researching democracy as a moral value, a careful distinction must be observed between the three elements of which democracy is comprised, namely participation, democratic politics, and democratic society. At the political level, the issue of legitimacy, alluding to the "inclusion and openness to civil society" (Iusmen & Boswell, 2016, p. 14) of the European technocratic institutions, and the pursuit of citizen participation are at the centre of scholarly discussion. The issue of democratic participation thus looms large, given that the EU and its member states have originally shaped and articulated their governance in rather diverse fashions (Schmidt, 2004). Moreover, as stipulated in the Lisbon Treaty (2007), the chief function of the EU is not to represent people, but to respond to political challenges that its member states are unable to cope with on their own.

Since Chryssochoou (1998, p. 89) defined the Euro-demos as a "community of citizens linked to each other by strong democratic bonds and pressing to acquire a measure of effective control through formal or informal means over government", there has been an ongoing passionate debate about whether European institutions are suffering from a *democratic deficit* that would undermine citizens' attitudes and the index of citizen participation in elections and decision-making initiatives (Kratochvíl & Sychra, 2019). The diverse contributions made by a number of theorists range in their diagnoses - from those who raise fundamental doubts that democracy can be established beyond the nation state or that Europe could ever function as such (Peters, 2005); to those who propose solutions such as strictly constraining the transfer of powers from the member states to the EU, leading to a *limited Europe* (Dahrendorf, 2005, in Beck & Grande, 2007); to even those advocating for extending the powers of the European Parliament, launching new models of post-national or post-parliamentary democracy (Beck & Grande, 2007).

In the volume *Political Confidence and Disenchantment with Politics* (Eder et al., 2014), the contributors affirm that despite the comparisons often drawn with other forms of attachment and the decay that those suffer in today's society, political participation does not show similar trends. Even if citizens are increasingly disenchanted with their national political representatives, conventional political participation or voter protest in Western democracies is not affected by a universal pattern of decline. Accordingly, the authors argue that the democratic quality of the EU ought to be determined by its achievements in improving the prosperity and well-being of EU populations, and only to a lesser extent by its ability to aggregate and integrate people's particular interests.

Similarly, some authors dissent from the alleged democratic decay of the EU (Bang et al., 2015; Moravcsik, 2002), as they discern the input and output elements of decision-making processes. As Schmidt (2013) notes, there is a distinction to be made between three democratic legitimising criteria: *input*, which is concerned with government *by* the people, centred on citizen participation, as proposed by Rousseau; *output*, which regards government *for* the people, centred on governmental effectiveness, dating back to Montesquieu; and *throughput*, a concept coined by Schmidt herself which refers to "the efficacy, accountability and transparency of the EU's governance processes along with their inclusiveness and openness to consultation *with* the people" (p. 2).

In the same token, although the institutional architecture of the EU impedes a more direct input or involvement of the common citizen in decision-making and precludes a direct democratic control, up until recently it was maintained that the principle of representativeness, through which voters legitimise their national officials to serve their best interest, guaranteed the democratic quality of the agreements reached and the policies adopted. Nowadays, though, alongside being represented by the appointed politicians, "citizens aspire more and more to have real, personal ownership of, and involvement in, the various public spheres" (Brande, 2017, p. 10), claiming to be regarded as active participants in policymaking and not its mere intended recipients.

In order to remedy the difficulties posed by not ensuring direct citizen involvement, as Warleigh (2006) points out, the forging of a shared European political identity by means of community building, or *demos-formation*, is crucial for a broader awareness of political identity and common interests to emerge, both at the policy-making and grassroots levels. This could be achieved by the *upskilling* of citizens, rendering them more competent to engage with EU governance in a meaningful manner, and by Europeanising the range of

existing national civil societies, easing the adoption of EU-related perspectives by its members so as to "construct a European public space, in which citizens can be socialized into EU governance and begin to feel part of the EU system instead of simply supporting or rejecting it as a result of analyses of the Union's capacity to cater to certain of their functional interests" (Warleigh, p. 69).

The Habermasian conceptualisation of the public sphere (1996) underscores the importance of informal deliberation within civil society, structured through a communication network of loosely organised audiences, from private associations to mass media, that can influence political decision-making. Following Habermas, Smismans (2006) refines the *deliberative turn* through which civil society ought to exercise a role of intermediation of interests and thus provide a participatory sphere in which the different actors, from political elites to stakeholders, are to align with each other through rational argument. In this manner, *directly deliberative polyarchy* "'decentralises' political decision-making into lower-level units, where citizens examine their choices in the light of the relevant deliberations and experiences of others" (p. 305).

In this context, the value of a citizenry that is trained in linguistic and relational mediation strategies is palpable, especially if the existing diversity in the EU is to be assessed as a favourable circumstance rather than a hindrance, allowing for mutual learning and feedback, and the redressability of common objectives and instruments (Smismans, 2006; Warleigh, 2006). At any rate, the idea of polyarchy and deliberation stresses the importance of careful reflection and mutual adjustment of the parties in direct interaction through rational argumentation and by being mindful of the ambiguities associated to the diversity of views exchanged (Smismans, 2006). Strengthening the quality of communication is thus relevant in two regards: (1) regarding the Habermasian notion of *communicative competence,* as an indispensable attribute for democratic governance, for the participation of civil society in decision-making and for the avoidance of asymmetry in knowledge and communication styles of the concerned parties (DeLeon, 1994) (2) positioning bilateral communication as a meeting point where political actors can direct messages about EU policies and their potential country-level impact to the public, thus averting their current dependence on national officials' efforts to sufficiently convey information about the impact of the EU on national agendas (Dalton, 2011; Schmidt, 2004).

For as Brande (2017) explains, one of the main grounds adduced by those who hold a Eurosceptic view is the flawed democratic culture prevalent in the EU and the fact that

citizens are not effectively brought to bear on matters that concern them, yet recent developments are prompting policymakers "to refocus not only on what the institutions can do to tangibly improve citizens' lives, but also on how to explain to the general public what is actually being done" (p. 6). Increasingly, and conditional on the restoration of confidence in Community institutions, citizens have been demanding a more prominent role in a more horizontally structured policy-making process, rather than being merely passive recipients of top-down decisions taken on their behalf.

Therefore, the desire of citizens to have a stronger voice in public affairs and the percentage of people who regard its attainment as an important milestone to be reached in the near future has been the subject-matter of research by the European Value Systems (EVS) study group. Drawing on data obtained in the 2008 wave, the online version of the Atlas of European Values[7] reveals significant proportions of the population supporting greater public involvement in governance, as illustrated in figure 4 below.

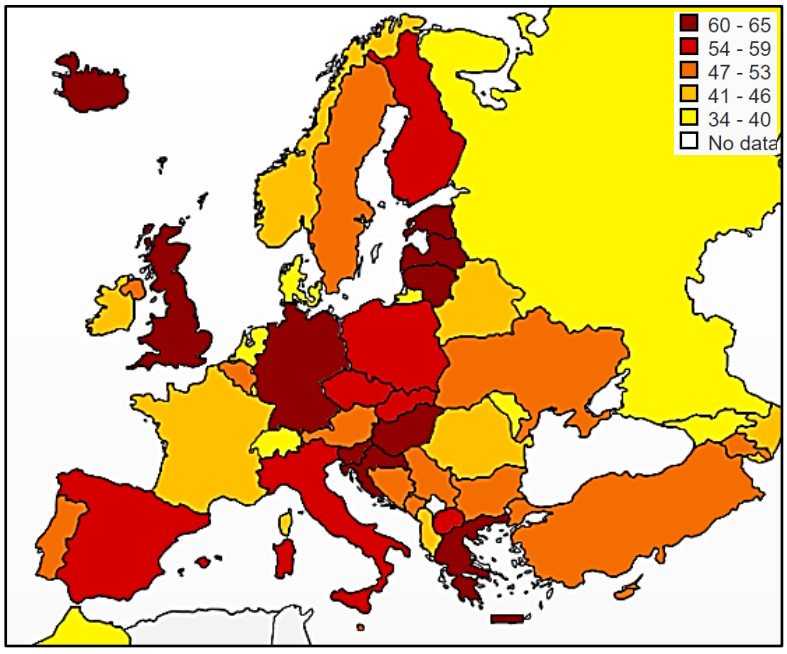



Figure 4: 'Giving people more say in important government decisions is an important goal to achieve during the next ten years' (Atlas of European Values, 2008).

[7] Available at http://www.atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu/new/europa.php?ids=2012&year=2008&country=

This sentiment is similarly reflected in the results of the 2019 Eurobarometer survey, which have evinced rising levels of citizen discontent with EU democratic system of governance and a sharp decline in the perception that public opinion is relevant to the decision-making authorities. Data yielded from the Commission's accompanying report reveal that 83% of respondents expect EU citizens' voice to be taken into consideration to a greater extent when decisions on the future of Europe are being made. The perception that citizen opinion is relevant at the Community level in 2019 has reversed the preceding continuous ascending trend observed since the spring of 2016 and echoes the levels seen in mid-2018, as depicted in figure 5.

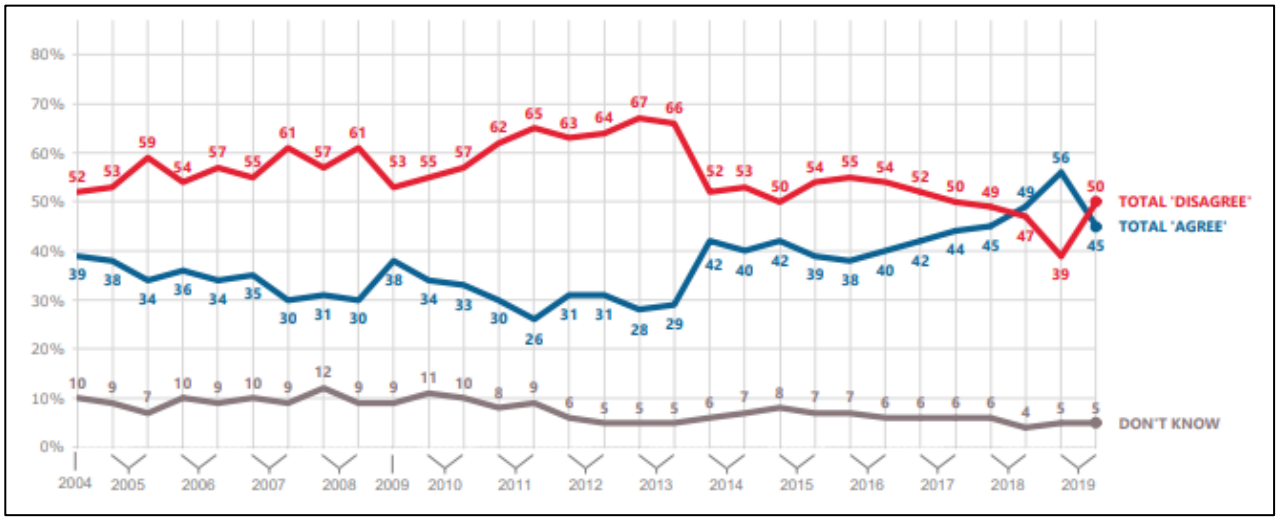



Figure 5: My voice counts in the EU: trend and national results ( Standard Eurobarometer 92, Autumn 2019, p. 10)

Such adverse results and some instances of civil unrest have recently led the European Parliament's *Parlemeter* (Schulmeister et al., 2019) to admonish that it is only through a bottom-up, transparent, inclusive, participatory and well-balanced approach that EU's priorities can be set, thus the need for civic participation to be mobilized within all groups of citizens, civil society representatives and stakeholders at European, national, regional and local level.

Concurrently, based on Habermas's work and on the normative standard of equal and autonomous individuals communicating candidly, Dryzek (2002) formulates the concept of *discursive democracy* whereby the term *discursive* implies that no interested person should be excluded and, where appropriate, certain educational programmes should enable the informed participation of stakeholders who might otherwise be side-lined. Remarkably attuned to the underlying purposes of communicative and relational mediation described in Chapter 1, Yankelovich (1991, in DeLeon, 1997) relays Harbermas's position

in the following way: “The goals of communicative action are to permit us to comprehend each other well enough so that common goals and understandings are possible. In Habermas’s view, communicative action is the key to building a democratic consensus” (p. 90).

A population traditionally dissociated from pan-national political decisions is that of the youngest cohorts, and there are numerous studies that attempt to explain the persistent withdrawal of this population from the electoral process and the low turnout at domestic and international elections (Henn & Foard, 2014; Print, 2007). By studying young people's values, Ros et al. (2008) ascertained the cardinal importance that principles such as equality, social justice, environmental protection, attaining one’s personal goals, demonstrating self-competence, being creative or enjoying life hold to them. However, the authors also established that neither European nor national identities are perceived by youngsters as conducive to achieving their personal value objectives, despite the fact that they consider these values, as part of their self-transcendence and self-direction, the most important principles guiding their lives. As a result, Ros et al. (2008) suggest that this outlook may be one of the reasons why young people feel less involved in national and European politics, recommending that EU and national policy makers reflect on the deficit that Europe and their respective countries still show in meeting young Europeans’ expectations. Upon identifying the values held by university students, Elexpuru Albizuri et al. (2013) formulate curricular proposals to stimulate the development of values linked to social commitment and to “broaden their view of international and multicultural realities” (p. 210) through the implementation of methodologies that integrate social responsibility and collaborative learning.

The foregoing discussion has revealed the complexity for policy makers and implementing authorities of accommodating the socio-cultural diversity of Member States, as well as the collective identities of the different groups. As advocated by Bekemans (2007, p. 652), the very future of the EU lies in the emergence of a sustainable “democratic public sphere based on increased civic participation, solidarity and inclusiveness” to be attained through civil society dialogue and debate.

### 3.2. European ethos: original construct, advances and paedagogical implications

The analysis of the common ethical principles, beliefs and philosophical foundations across member states and candidate countries for EU membership is complex and has given rise to contradictory interpretations (Williams, 2010). Defining such an elusive concept as *European ethos* is not without its challenges. According to Přibáň (2007), "the evolution of a spirit of European Union signifies a return of ethics and ethical politics which, according to adherents of European integration, can revitalize a sense of Europe and the search for a common European identity" (p.127).

However, as Přibáň (2007) also argues, European treaties hinder laypeople's identification with the comunitarian spirit due to their excesive technical nature and inherent administrative obscurity. To remedy this, he proposes to delineate the European moral foundations, which would in turn summon the popular faith of Europeans and create mutual bonds and solidarity. Bee (2008), on the other hand, attributes a more unidealistic role to the European ethos construct, seeing it as the means to achieving a utilitarian purpose of institutions like the European Commission, which would mainly pursue to legitimise a polity lacking the democratic basis coming from the demos (Weiler, 1999). A similar distinction is made by Risse (2010, p. 50), who argues that whereas Europe is generally associated with history, ethnicity, heritage and civilization, the EU "stands for the values of modernity: enlightenment, democracy, human rights, and peace".

Setting aside these considerations, values are conventionally regarded as deep-seated abstract motivations that steer, validate and justify attitudes, norms, opinions and actions (Davidov et al., 2008; de Moor, 1995), enabling citizens to arrange their political judgements on a relatively consistent basis; as such, values can thus furnish an overarching structure to the political stances of European constituents (Loughran, 2016). Values are said to be conditioned by the socio-cultural heritage, language, denominational and ideological orientations, political sensitivity, or academic background of individuals, who bestow upon themselves those moral standards they perceive as desirable (Giddens, 1991). However, in order to live as members of society, individuals are required to embrace certain shared values, and rules and norms that link and organise the community, society and country (Putman, 2000). Fortunately, recent studies (Vignoles et al., 2018) point to Europeans' inherent predisposition towards tolerance of diversity, fostered by the presence of values such as commitment to others and egalitarianism in the collective consciousness.

Creating a sense of commonality through that set of shared values, based on common civic European culture (Catterall, 2011) has been the goal of many successive EU policy initiatives. From the its founding treaties to the 1954 "European Cultural Convention", the promulgation of the Treaty of Lisbon and the 1973 Declaration of a European Identity, Community constitutional documents have outlined as fundamental *European values* the principles of representative democracy, rule of law, social justice and respect for human rights (Kennedy, 2013; Wodak & Boukala, 2015a). Much like the constructive participation of citizens and the linking of personal autonomy to the public good, social justice and democracy (Hüller & Kohler-Koch, 2008), democratic optimism is attributed to civil society, new social movements and voluntary associations with a wide range of functions that promote sound democratic governance (Print, 2013).

In essence, democratic values are embedded in a broader ethical framework, that of human rights, which is itself underpinned by universal moral principles such as freedom, justice and respect. Under this ethical logic, European educational researchers redefine democracy not only as a system of participatory politics and suffrage, but also as a dynamic social and cultural practice that protects minorities, promotes freedom of expression and guarantees the rights of individuals (Biesta, 2011; De Winter, 2012; Print, 2013). Thus, for democratic values to reach the citizenry and empower them, education must be the linchpin of the formation of the euro-demos. Warleigh (2006) emphasizes that

> Compulsory education until school-leaving age in both civics (including the workings of the EU as well as national systems and the principles of democracy) and a selected common second language for the EU should be instigated. […]. The goal of such changes is to create the framework for more active citizenship, both nationally and transnationally.
>
> (Warleigh, 2006, p.81)

Against this conceptual backdrop, and as previously mentioned, the Council of Europe's *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (2008) outlines a conceptual model of the competences which citizens require to engage effectively in a culture of democracy, designed to inform educational decision making and planning, and to enable the preparation of learners for life as competent democratic citizens. Thus, the fundamental role of education in teaching democratic culture is recurrently vindicated, with the aim being "not to teach students what to think, but rather how to think, in order to navigate a

world where not everyone holds their views, but we each have a duty to uphold the democratic principles which allow all cultures to co-exist" (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 7).

Similarly, the Declaration on "Promoting Citizenship and the Common Values of Freedom, Tolerance and Non-discrimination through Education" (2015) identifies joint objectives for the Member States and appeals to the EU to facilitate the pooling of ideas and good practice so as to, among other purposes, (1) guarantee the acquisition of social, civic and intercultural competences, by raising awareness on democratic values and fundamental rights, social inclusion and active citizenship and (2) foster intercultural dialogue at all levels of education in partnership with other competent actors and sectors. Coincidentally, Van den Brande (2015) stresses the humanistic function of education, its significance for the access of students not only into the job market, but also into sociocultural and civic life, and its centrality in the *citizens' Europe*, as it is "crucial in combating racism and xenophobia and in imparting basic values of private, social and civic life such as solidarity, tolerance and understanding of cultural diversity" (p. 353).

Similarly, when tackling academic European mobility, (De Groof, 2015) argues that higher education ought to be embedded in country-specific historical, ideological, philosophical or linguistic identities and other national features, while it is Europe's mission, in conjunction with ensuring equality and quality of education, to proactively celebrate cultural diversity. With regard to teachers' treatment of civic issues, Osler (2011) asserts that, in addition to integrating the curricular content dictated by educational authorities, teachers' preferred pedagogies are those which, "while embodying these official goals, extend beyond them to reflect their own values about the need for inclusiveness and active student engagement in learning for citizenship and democracy " (p. 14). In other words, teachers conceive active democratic citizenship education as including political literacy, in-class practices, and the pursuit of morally responsible community participation.

Published by Eurydice, the leaflet titled "*Overview of Education Policy Developments in Europe following the Paris Declaration of 17 March 2015"* (2016) gives a semblance of the headway made at the national level in education policy (including advances at the pre-implementation stage) to accommodate the aims sought in the Paris Declaration of 17 March 2015, concluding that policy efforts address school and vocational training, but much less so adult or higher education, as figure 6 below shows.

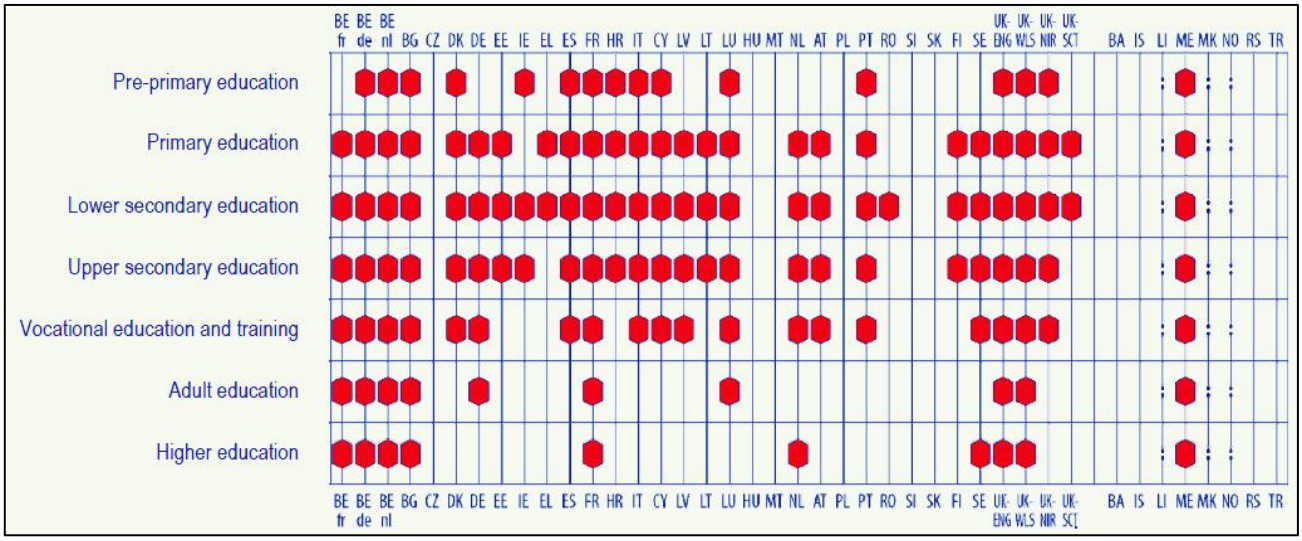



Figure 6:Citizenship and common values education in the EU (2015-2016, Eurydice)

According to the report, of the 41 regions surveyed, only 10 had launched initiatives related to the Paris Declaration in the field of adult education, and as many have done so in higher education. Disparities in the territorial adherence to the Declaration are also observed, the leaflet noting that whilst a majority of nations have implemented some form of education policy related to European citizenship and values, such policies remain under discussion in other countries.

### 3.3. Social Capital, Democratic Values and Language Learning

Social capital can loosely be defined as "an instantiated informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals" for either mutual economic or social benefit, within settings that can range from a reciprocal relationship between friends, all the way to a complex and articulated doctrine (Fukuyama, 2000, p. 3). Under this broad definition, community outreach, civil associations, and similar institutions, which have generally been associated with or equated to social capital, are in fact acknowledge as contributing to its consolidation. Nevertheless, Fukuyama's (2000) approach expressly points out that not every agreed set of group rules constitutes social capital, and in order to be considered as such those rules must lead to cooperation and be related to moral principles such as compliance with commitments, dependability in the performance of communal duties or reciprocity.

Similarly, Putman (1993, in Bartkowski & Jasińska-Kania, 2004) depicts the cultural and socio-psychological dimensions of social capital as encompassing norms of trust, confidence, and cooperation, as well as networks of social interaction. Concurrently, Bartkowski and Jasińska-Kania (2004) uphold the importance of social capital for the construction of civil society, because it fosters values, attitudes and behavioural patterns such as political involvement, reliance on institutions or empathy and trust in fellow citizens. Peters (2005) attributes to social capital, coupled with the accumulated stock of cultural, political and institutional repertories, the capacity to strengthen and Europeanise national democracies. Focusing on a bottom-up perspective to examine the factors that affect individual level identification with Europe, Yurtsever (2012) similarly observes that social capital wields a significant influence on European identification. Nevertheless, available evidence indicates that in the period spanning the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century, Europe witnessed a general decline in the dimensions of social capital connected to political engagement and social investment, in addition to conflicting patterns of trust in civic cooperation, suggesting that the pursuit of social cohesion should remain high on the agenda of policymakers (Sarracino & Mikucka, 2016).

In the field of education, there has been a growing recognition of the value of social capital. This attention on the part of education researchers responds in part to assessments made by other disciplines such as political science and political economy, whose authors state that the best means to increase the stock of social capital is through educational institutions, where it is transmitted, along with human capital, in the form of social rules and norms along. According to Huang et al. (2009), schooling has the dual function of enriching human capital through the dissemination of knowledge, and of cultivating the social norms that are at the core of social capital.

In this sense, the purpose of civic education, featuring knowledge, skills and civic values to help students become engaged citizens, is to support the formation of social capital (Print, 2007; Print & Coleman, 2003). There seems to be general consensus in that "the area in which governments probably have the greatest capacity to generate social capital directly is education" (Fukuyama, 2000, p. 15), which would apply not only to primary and secondary education, but also to higher education and vocational training. In the North American context, for instance, Putnam (2000) reports that the territories with higher indicators of social capital are also those with greater rates of high school

completion and university attendance. Similarly, increased levels of social capital found in cohorts with “rising general levels of education are likely to be accompanied by higher general levels of political and social engagement” (Helliwell & Putnam, 2007, p. 14).

Fernandez et al. (2016) stress the academic interest that has been aroused by the relationship between levels of education and attitudes towards the European project. They conclude that intellectual elites and citizens with higher education usually have pro-European attitudes, attributing this to the fact that these citizens are "better able to accumulate transnational social capital and face the challenges of transnationalization to their social networks" (p. 464). In their review of EU governance and collective identity formation research, Kaina and Karolewski (2013) reach similar conclusions, identifying social capital and language skills among the main resources that can predispose individuals to the development of a European identity.

In this context, language can be seen as a type of accrual of wealth, a tangible indicator of the substance of social capital, which is made up of all the systems of communication between people (Clark, 2006). Thus, from the prism of language teaching, Fukada et al. (2017) trace both the learners' agency to work together in groups and teams as well as the ability to capitalise on the affordances provided by collaborative work to their individual levels of social capital. Moreover, the Council of Europe (2019) has recently emphasised that education systems must fully uphold intercultural dialogue and collaboration, and contribute to the creation of social capital. In keeping with this approach, teaching revolves around students, who “act as role models and peer educators” (p. 40) by assisting others to gain self-awareness and to practise skills such as empathy, active listening, critical thinking, and mediation.

Nahapiet and Ghoshal’s operationalisation (1998), albeit initially formulated for the sector of organisational management, is highly illustrative of the confluence between cultural capital and the concept of communicative mediation discussed in Chapter 1. In the same vein, Schwieter and Ferreira (2014, p. 108) affirm that “social capital is a value of social interaction and is essentially a mediated phenomenon, guided by language, which is a fundamental matter in human contact”, underscoring the three-way relationship between social capital, language and mediation in in facilitating interpersonal understanding and collaborative learning.

Being a multi-faceted construct, Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) opt to arrange the elements that conform cultural capital into three clusters according to their cognitive, structural or relational nature. As table 6 shows, social capital and mediation represent two complementary sides of interpersonal collaboration in relational contexts. Social capital encompasses the embedded assets and social networks that each speaker has constructed upon intentional action or implicit associative networks of affinity based on intrinsic similarities (Schwieter & Ferreira, 2014), mediation concerning the effective deployment and action-orientation of those individual social capital assets. Naturally, as suggested by Clark (2006), plurilingual individuals and groups can draw productive value from the different networks to which they are ascribed. Thus, those individuals who can capitalise on socialising in several languages have unique access to greater levels of social capital.

Table 6: Commonalities between Social Capital and the CEFR/CV Mediation schemata (the author's proposal)

| SOCIAL CAPITAL DIMENSIONS (assets) | MEDIATION DOMAINS (actions) | |
|---|---|---|
| **Cognitive** | COGNITIVE MEDIATION | **Cognitive** |
| Shared understanding | | Mediating concepts and communication |
| - Shared language, codes, and narratives | | - Collaborating to construct meaning<br>- Encouraging conceptual talk |
| - Shared values, attitudes, and beliefs | | - Acting as an intermediary in informal situations |
| **Structural** | RELATIONAL MEDIATION | **Social domain** |
| Social structure | | Mediating concepts |
| - Network ties and configuration | | - Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers |
| - Roles, rules, precedents, and procedures | | - Managing interaction |
| **Relational** | | **Social and Cultural domains** |
| Nature and quality of relationships | | Mediating communication |
| - Trust and trustworthiness<br>- Norms and sanctions<br>- Obligations and expectations<br>- Identity and identification | | - Facilitating communication in delicate situations and disagreements<br>- Facilitating pluricultural space |

Following Taylor (2014, p. 92), and for the purposes of this work, the *relational context* alluded in most definitions refers to "a given social situation where the individual interacts

with other persons in a particular social capacity, responding to particular social expectations". Thus, in this work, social capital is regarded as providing ecological affordances for language acquisition and learning (Aronin & Singleton, 2012), equating to social language affordances (Aronin & Singleton, 2010); whereas mediation refers to the manifestation of those affordances in communicative situations, whether they occur in educational settings or extend beyond them.

### 3.4. Civic education for multicultural communities

The *International Consensus Panel on Education for Global Citizenship in Contexts of Diversity*, concluded that students "should be taught knowledge about democracy and democratic institutions and they should be provided opportunities to practice democracy" (Banks et al., 2005, p. 13) as one of the four fundamental principles for citizen education. For, as Ünal and Kaygın (2020) reflect, if social sustainability is to be pursued, education is crucial for democracies to function and for individuals to have the freedom to behave democratically.

On the other hand, the increase in and the greater recognition of diversity calls for a bold re-examination of the aims and means of civic education. In addition, as noted in earlier parts of this work, multicultural communities must embrace the diversity of their citizens and strive to adopt a broad "set of shared values, ideals and goals to which all citizens are committed" (Banks et al., 2005, p. 7) and of which education is custodian (Coste and Cavalli, 2015). Thus, a classroom-based democratic culture is defined as the set of attitudes and behaviours that prioritize the use of dialogue and cooperation, the settlement of conflicts by peaceful means, and active participation in the public space.

In the context of higher education, Fernandez (2005, p. 62) argues that "active citizenship requires the acquisition of cognitive and communicative competence through the social and educational process. […] Education for active citizenship is essentially a matter of education for the empowerment of the individual". From this perspective, education is a catalyst for change that promotes self-improvement and community advancement. Through the transfer of knowledge and know-how that it is intended to help students grow, education should equip them to act in the social milieu, which in turn requires that the school be considered as "an agency for and a place of mobility" (Coste & Cavalli, 2015, p. 17).

The *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (RFCDC) (Council of Europe, 2018c) outlines a conceptual architecture of twenty competences that enable citizens to engage actively in a culture of democracy. The aim of the framework is to map out the core competencies that individuals should acquire in order to become fully effective participatory citizens and to coexist harmoniously with others as equals in culturally pluralistic democratic societies. Rather significantly for the purposes of this work, the competences contained in the RFCDC are mainly concerned with social skills (empathy, co-operation, and conflict resolution abilities) and communication strategies, targeting practitioners and learners in the development of competences for democratic culture at grassroots level. In this sense, this framework has important overlapping areas with the CEFR/CV (p. 24), as noted in Chapter 1, which would indicate the existence of shared principles from which communicative mediation and democratic dialogue emanate.

According to Barrett et al. (2016), these competencies should reflect an upholding of the rule of law and of human rights, a determination that conflicts should be peacefully dealt with, an appreciation of diversity, a readiness to express one's own views and to listen to those of others, an adherence to majority decisions, a determination to safeguard minorities and their rights, and a resolve to engage in cross-cultural dialogue.

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the teaching of European values has been the focus of commendable research efforts (Veugelers et al., 2017). And it is precisely the inclusion of values within the RFCDC that most significantly sets it apart from other reference frameworks sponsored by the European Commission, whose conceptualization of competence is limited to cognitive, attitudinal, and conative elements. The values embodied in the framework extol human dignity, human rights, cultural diversity, and the principles of equality before the law, justice, equity, and democracy. In this sense, it is imperative to emphasize that the competence framework does not incorporate shared values in a strictly substantive way, but rather it encapsulates an appraisal of such values, as recommended by Lucarelli (2008).

On examining table 7, it can be concluded that, despite the plural nature of each of the categories included in the competence scheme, important correspondences can be identified between its components and the concepts analysed in previous chapters pertaining to communicative mediation and a social, poststructuralist conceptualisation of language. Thus, the similarities between the skills and attitudes envisaged in the RFCDC (2018) and those included in the CEFR/CV (2018) concerning multilingual communication

and linguistic mediation (in its relational facet, which encompasses the competences needed to maintain communication and resolve conflicts) are manifest.

| COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Skills | Knowledge and critical understanding | Attitudes | Values |
| · Autonomous learning<br>· Critical thinking<br>· Communicative / plurilingual skills<br>· Co-operation skills<br>· Conflict-resolution skills | · Intra-personal metacognition<br>· Linguistic metacognition<br>· World knowledge | · Intercultural sensitivity<br>· Civic mindedness<br>· Agency<br>· Tolerance of ambiguity | · Valuing human dignity and rights<br>· Valuing cultural diversity<br>· Valuing democratic principles |

Table 7: Overview of RFCDC competence scheme (adapted from Council of Europe, 2018c)

Similarly, critical thinking skills, as well as cultural awareness, are seen as the overriding focus for the advancement of cross-cultural dialogue, and for the development of "true dialogical relations (which) enable people to become responsible and dignified citizens who can speak with their own voice and recognize the voices of others" (Owczarek, 2009, p. 43). Based on Barnett's *criticality* model (1997), which was devised by for higher education, as well as on Owczarek's (2009) assertion that "dialogical pedagogy, together with language education, should promote the concept of cultural dialogue" (p. 43) the present work sustains the hypothesis that communicative mediation could become the output channel of action for the critically democratic person across FL contexts.

## 3.5. Democratic Culture and Intercultural Dialogue

Among the various components that make up a democratic culture, the foremost is, according to Ünal and Kaygın (2020), the resolve to accommodate the wishes and heed the concerns expressed by other citizens. Consequently, communication skills are essential for the establishment of a sustainable democratic society, whose members are required to

engage in decision-making through a process in which "it is not just about letting others speak, but about listening to what they have to say" (p. 2).

Closely related to the above, a general definition of intercultural competence (IC) would describe it as a broad spectrum of cognitive, affective and behavioural skills that enable effective and appropriate interaction with members of other cultures. More specifically, IC is the "ability to interact with 'others', to accept other perspectives and perceptions of the world, to mediate between different perspectives, to be conscious of difference" (Byram et al., 2001, p. 5). It is apparent, as a result, that IC assumes special relevance in the case of citizens living in democratic societies, for whom multiperspectivity constitutes an integral aspect of democratic competence (Council of Europe, 2018c).

In an almost parallel way, Intercultural Dialogue (ID) has been defined as an "open exchange of views, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect, between individuals or groups who perceive themselves having different cultural affiliations from each other" (Council of Europe, 2018c, p. 74), which naturally entails bridging perceived cultural divides by exercising the liberty and capability to speak out, along with the desire and ability to listen to the ideas of others. On the other hand, individuals' attitudes, particularly their willingness to engage in ID have been studied in relation to their level of intercultural competence. For instance, Lin and Rancer (2003) obtained empirical evidence that ethnocentrism is a hindrance to intercultural communication, as it may "result in misperceptions of people from different cultures and misinterpretations of their behaviors" (p. 63), as well as having a direct influence on students' intentions to participate in an ID training programmes.

Conversely, Barrett et al. (2016), postulate that ID is the foremost medium through which individuals may relay their views, expectations, worries and needs to people with different cultural affiliations, thereby playing a paramount part on the democratic pathways of culturally diverse communities. Concurrently, Owczarek (2009) posits that it is the processual role of dialogue itself, rather than the end product of attaining interculturally competent citizens, that intercultural communicative competence (ICC) should emphasize, "spurring students to action rather than to absorbing skills and knowledge" (p.44).

In this regard, cross-cultural communication research has profusely dealt with the considerable disparities in communicative appropriacy, that is, the existence of embedded cultural norms on communicative behaviour that render performances acceptable in one

cultural setting and inappropriate in another (Earley & Ang, 2003). Were the intercultural component to be neglected in language teaching, the quality of the training received by students would be undermined, as they would be at risk of becoming what Bennett (1993) labels as *fluent fools*, that is, connoisseurs of a FL but oblivious to the perception that their interactions can generate in social contexts, as well as the values, beliefs and thinking systems of the community of speakers of that language.

ICC is therefore pivotal in multicultural societies, with language learners being ideally placed to partake in cultural diversity, as they experience and reflect on how, by using a language, communities embark on different social practices based on their own values and beliefs, bring meaning to the world in which they live. As Lum (2018) puts it, the acquisition of a language "other than one's own is inherently an intercultural endeavor in that the learners are acculturating, or being acculturated into, a new linguistic structure and habit of viewing, ideating about, understanding, and representing reality" (p. 4). Consequently, as the Council of Europe's Head of the Education Department affirms, modern democracies cannot reach their full potential unless citizens are able and willing to engage in ID, and "intercultural dialogue is difficult to imagine without a democratic culture" (Bergan, 2015).

This work fully concurs with Bekeman's (2007) views that

> intercultural dialogue is strongly linked with both the practical use of such terms as identity, citizenship and democracy and their implementation in structures such as the dialogues' framework […]. They are both the fundamental values and conditions for effective and sustainable intercultural dialogue.
>
> (Bekeman, 2007, p. 653)

Therefore, in the conception of the RFCDC, democracy and intercultural dialogue were addressed in a complementary manner. Accordingly, for the purposes of this work, ID is placed at the intersection between IC, Plurilingual Competence, and the Competences for Democratic Culture (see figure 7 below). Indeed, the RFCDC itself points out that the development and application of democratic competences is closely related to the level of linguistic competence of citizens and should be the focal point of teachers' efforts, as it

expressly states that language learning allows students to "become increasingly aware of language and the significance of their language competences in exercising their democratic and intercultural competences" (Council of Europe, 2018c, p. 17).

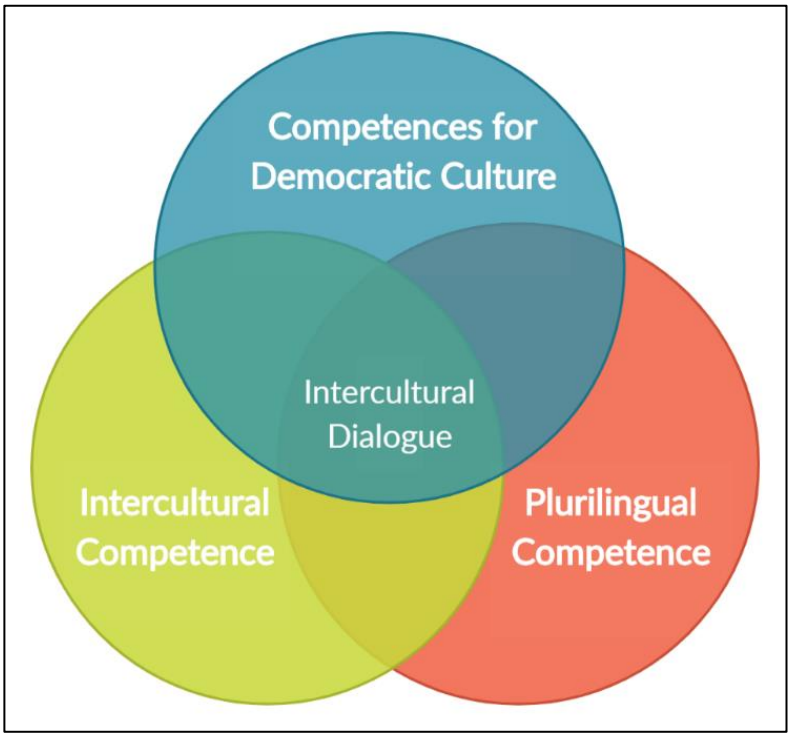



Figure 7: Intercultural Dialogue contributing competences (the author's proposal)

Along the same lines, facilitating a *third space/culture* in language education, or *thirdness*, in Zhou and Pilcher's (2019) interpretation of the tenet, is central to meaningful ID. The transformative potential presented by ID would entail "a political sensitivity and ethical responsiveness to the thirdness in the in-between space of communication" (p. 5) on the part of language learners.

In keeping with these definitions, and drawing on the Bourdieusian (1986) concept of social capital discussed above, Pöllmann (2013) proposes the term intercultural capital to encapsulate the intercultural experiences, skills, competencies and sensitivities accumulated by individuals, which would typically comprise the mastery of various languages or having resided in several countries. As with the concept of social capital, intercultural capital is made up of various types of symbolic capital, which furnish tools for success beyond the more conventional forms of affluence. Under this prism, the

affordances yielded by greater levels of intercultural capital for more fruitful ID are directly connected to the teaching methodologies implemented in FL education (Lapresta, 2014).

Until very recently, however, the existing European language education frameworks failed to embrace the advances made by scholarship in this area. Despite some interesting theoretical developments in the conceptualization of Intercultural Foreign Language Education (IFLE), most communicative approaches would tend to favour communicative objectives in detriment of *critical linguacultural awareness* in language syllabi, having cultural content frequently detached and exceedingly simplified, occasionally even stereotyped (Borghetti, 2011), disregarding its potential for the exploration of "the intersection of knowledge (of both the home culture [C1] and C2), attitudes, and interpretive or investigative skills" (Bauer et al., 2006, p. 33). Opinions on the approach to foreignness had also been divergent, and so, while Dörnyei (2005) indicates that the exoticity of encounters with a foreign culture should be underscored by FL teachers who wish to foster the emergence of learners' ideal selves, Byram (1997) argues that learners' "willingness to seek out or take up opportunities to engage with otherness in a relationship of equality" (p. 57), which is an attitudinal component of ICC, should prevail over attitudes of pursuing the exotic (Houghton, 2012).

Moreover, in most educational systems, rather than a content in FL syllabi, IC has been regarded as a "higher order educational goal which redefines the role of communicative and cultural competences" (Borghetti, 2013, p. 255). At best, national foreign language teaching curricula have traditionally integrated general intercultural learning goals, but as noted by Göbel and Helmke (2010), neglecting to indicate how such outcomes were to be accomplished.

The Intercultural Dialogue Model proposed by Houghton (2012) is rooted in Byram's (1997) theoretical Intercultural Communicative Competence model, to which a further stage is incorporated so as to reflect upon a person's broader identity development (Houghton, 2013). Houghton's ID model offers a remarkably insightful strategy for investigating the relationship between the cognitive development of criticality and perspective transformation through the "reprioritization of values within the existing value hierarchy that forms part of the broader structures of the Self" (Houghton, 2013, p. 197) and the affective implications of Self-Otherness difference appraisal. Thus, it could be exploited to "inform future cycles of inquiry into the development of critical *languaculture* awareness with a focus on value judgement" (Díaz, 2013, p. 133).

### 3.6. Intercultural literacies and European ethos

As argued in section 2.4.3 in relation to the acquisition of supranational identities, it is usually presumed that the best way to develop IC is through participation in curricular and study/travel abroad activities or the experience of significant situations in interactions with international peers. However, Pöllmann (2013) cautions that most types of intercultural capital are only within the reach of a privileged minority in global terms:

> Even in the comparatively prosperous and supportive context of the European Union, the type of lifestyles with intercultural mobility, which can be expected to facilitate the realization of intercultural capital, is disproportionately associated with higher levels of socio-economic status and majority ethno-racial backgrounds.
>
> (Pöllmann, 2013, p. 5)

In an analogous way to the argument formulated on the basis of domestic transnationalism, Soria and Troisi (2013) claim that the integration of curricular activities with intercultural content in local educational centres can have a greater competitive impact. In this sense, Bocanegra-Valle (2015) points out the role of language teachers as *intercultural agents* and students as *intercultural brokers*, concluding that language classrooms provide an adequate context to explore foreign cultures. Indeed, as it has been argued above, language teachers are in a uniquely privileged position to provide the means to explore and represent the cultural heterogeneity of Europe, and facilitate, among their students, the search, negotiation and critical awareness of European identity and its inherent civic and democratic values.

Nevertheless, although the synergy between language teaching and democratic and intercultural education seems obvious, as Starkey (2003) observes, in practice it is common for content to be heavily dictated by the commercially manufactured textbooks and teaching materials found in schools. Furthermore, as increasing intercultural exposure occur through media, both in print and digital outlets, as well as via interpersonal interactions that take place over multifarious types of social web-based media, it is crucial for competence in multiple forms of media literacy (Meyrowitz, 1998) to be embedded in the process of developing intercultural competence itself (Lum, 2018). It is in this setting that intercultural literacy, in the definition provided Hockly et al. (2014, p. 35), where it is

described as “the ability to interpret documents and artefacts from a range of cultural contexts, as well as to effectively communicate messages and interact constructively with interlocutors across different cultural contexts”, can be of service to FL practitioners.

Ideally, an integral, transversal methodologies would be best suited to spawn the learners’ reflection that is required for critical cultural awareness. Due to their usefulness in encouraging self-reflection on lived experiences, as well as in fostering empathy and tolerance towards alterity, narratives have traditionally been one of the main pedagogical tools for the development of intercultural literacy (Banús, 2015; Hornberger, 2007). Designed in response to the growing demand for materials which catered for the learners’ independent critical faculties while producing autobiographical stories (Byram et al., 2009), the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* (AIE) has sparked considerable academic interest. Studies based on its application have confirmed its suitability for fostering reflection on core intercultural issues and heightening EFL students’ self-awareness (Méndez García, 2017; Porto, 2014), as well as for generating local civic engagement and transnational identifications (Porto & Byram, 2015).

On the other hand, traditional observational approaches, which were framed around classroom visits by native informants from the target culture to interact with and respond to questions and observations made by the students in their own culture, or media approaches, grounded in films, documentaries and recordings containing real-life depictions of norms or social practices, have been implemented to reinforce appreciation of new cultural information (McGroarty & Galván, 1985). However, it was the Freirian notion of *generative theme* (1998) which first advocated for a combined approach of biographical accounts and visual information, relying on the allure of supporting images and the empowerment achieved through collective partaking in the interpretation of shared personal experiences to create a community feeling and lead to new understanding. In this vein, multimodality of inputs stimulates adult student engagement with complex topics at a variety of different aesthetic, cognitive and affective levels, as well as the integration of linguistic, visual, audio and spatial modes of representation when tackling narrative tasks, having rendered positive results in previous studies (Blummer, 2015).

By fittingly incorporating the visual element to the AIE, its proponents developed the *Autobiography for Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media* (AIEVM) (Barrett et al., 2013) so as to exploit the cultural input of the images to enrich the learners’ reflexive and narrative processes. In this regard, Lindner and Méndez García (2014) found that, by

consistently implementing the AIEVM, learners related to the *visually mediated other* (p. 234), which led to increased multiperspectivity and critical cultural awareness.

More recently, the CEFR/CV Volume (Council of Europe, 2018a) has also addressed the competences which are needed for ID. Thus, drawing on relevant literature, the approach given in the framework to plurilingual and pluricultural competences is indicative of its notion of languages and cultures as intermingling and contributing to the user's overall linguistic profile. This way, along with language user's willingness to act as an intercultural mediator, the CEFR/CV envisions the 'building on pluricultural repertoire' scale, which contains a set of descriptors to gauge learners' capacity to mobilise their plurilingual/pluricultural expertise. However, it is the allusion to the aim of providing support to curriculum developers and educators and the drive to "broaden the perspective of language education in their context and to acknowledge and value the linguistic and cultural diversity of their learners" (p. 158) that can mark a breakthrough in the implementation of IC-based methodologies in FL classroom settings.

In their forward-looking contribution, Gohard-Radenkovic et al. (2004) noted that cultural mediation is at the heart of the communication process in multilingual and multicultural situations, and is therefore conducive to improving civic reflection in a multicultural society through FL learning. Concurrently, in the FL classroom, intercultural communication supports the role of teachers as cultural mediators, insofar as they achieve self-awareness and awareness of the Other within a framework of principles transmitted by political society. This leads to their surprisingly current recommendation that "in-depth investigation is therefore still needed into whole areas of the concept of cultural mediation and of the mediator's role in the field of communication in foreign languages and that of the training of trainers" (p. 226).

## 3.7. Conclusions

Based on social identity theory, Byram (2000, p. 21) underlines the relevance that the language teacher should grasp the nuances of social identity in order to convey the ways in which people from different cultures interact, thereby helping learners to comprehend "how others see them and how they see others, how their perceptions are influenced by categorisations, and sometimes by the simplifications of stereotyping" as well as "their own perceptions and representations of themselves, of how they conform to other people's

expectations, how their membership of certain social groups influences their values, beliefs and behaviour".

Such awareness is paramount nowadays, as more than ever before the EU embodies an immense wealth of cultural, social and linguistic diversity. Against this background, this work concurs with Beckemans' (2007, p. 653) assertion that the shared values that bind European societies together, namely "freedom, fairness, democracy, human rights, rule of law, tolerance and solidarity, (have) become crucial for Europe's future". As has been argued, democratic culture, understood primarily as active civic participation and the public's perception that their opinions are held but in decision-making at the highest levels of power, endows EU institutions with legitimacy from the grassroots upwards.

In this sense, interculturally competent citizens are characterized by their flexibility and the willingness to accommodate and negotiate meaning in complex situations with speakers from different *lingua-cultures* (Jenkings et al., 2011, in Zotzmann, 2016), a trait that is the main prerequisite for the flourishing of a democratic culture, as discussed in this chapter. Thus, the role of FL teacher must also encompass preparing learners to be flexible and adapt to the intercultural communicative context by enhancing their intercultural competence and sensitivity to intercultural issues (Göbel & Hesse, 2004, in Göbel & Helmke, 2010).

Stemming from the premise that the contents of the FL class can embody affordances for the development of the learner's social self and identity within the context of a democratic community of learning (van Lier, 2004), and relying on the idea that social practices and mindsets are aligned to the multifarious literacies (Lankshear & Knobel, 2007) and new media outlets (Sawyer, 2011), relevant didactic approaches, which operationalise the IC model and which would equip FL practitioners with coherent teaching methods, have been discussed.

Thus, educational resources that combine biographical narrative elements and visual content appear to be well suited for the activation of critical cultural awareness. Nonetheless, a more extensive research effort is needed to verify the results obtained to date, particularly those concerning teaching and learning functions and processes for intercultural mediation activities.

# Part 2: Empirical studies

Individually considered, the three studies presented below provide partial insights into the overall phenomenon under investigation. When heeded in conjunction, however, they paint an overarching picture of the subject matter of this work, namely the aptness of methodologies based on mediated FL learning experiences and their impact on adult learners' collective identity patterns, their resulting receptiveness towards the adoption of European democratic values and the repercussions on individual in-group social skills as well as on general classroom social dynamics.

For the purpose of providing a more visual rendering of the general field of study in which this empirical research is framed, figure 8 is proposed. While stemming from the theoretical considerations presented in the preceding chapters, the umbrella structure illustrated seeks to disentangle the general contributing factors to *Communicative Mediation of European Values and Intercultural Awareness*, as well as the interplay between those tenets. The connections between the conceptual entities, attributes and type of relationship that are represented therein conform to a Chen's Entity-Relationship Diagram (ERD). This presentation format has been adopted in order to condense a wealth of information into a single visual layout. Thus, it enables the identification of the main *entities*, that is, the elements that make up the overarching conceptual structure (represented by rectangles), the attributes that characterise them (represented by ovals), as well as the type of relationship that binds them together (represented by triangles). In addition, the connectors that join the entities symbolise one-to-one, multi-to-many, or one-to-many relationships, visually indicated by the symbols at the end of each vector that links the entities together.

Thus, the main entities around which the *Communicative Mediation of European Values and Intercultural Awareness map* revolves, are those of (1) European identity, operationalised here in its double aspect of civic (identification with Europe) and socio-psychological / cultural component (identification as European); (2) linguistic identity, which is related to the legitimisation as a FL speaker and member of a community of practice, whose attributes correspond to a series of shared democratic values; (3) social capital, connected to intercultural awareness and civic engagement, and whose attributes refer to democratic competence and reliance on EU institutions and (4) Mediated Language Learning Methodologies.

However, due to the breadth of the scope of the relevant field, the remit of the empirical research conducted is restricted to analysing the learners' collective,

supranational identities and the extent to which Mediated Language Learning Methodologies may impact on students' individual sphere, through the development of social capital and the legitimisation of a linguistic group identity. Under the theoretical scheme devised, mediated experiences could subsequently lead to the critical assessment, and, where needed, the reformulation and reorganisation of the values shared by the group of language learners, with the consequent impact on their civic participation.

However, although it could be theoretically inferred that the ensuing activation of the learners' social capital and linguistic identities brought about by MeLLE might spur the enhancement of intercultural sensitivity, which in turn may strengthen the process of supranational identity formation, the empirical validation of such assertions falls beyond the purview of this work, albeit pointing to potential lines of future research.

Due to the variety of approaches that have been deployed so as to integrate the different perspectives underpinning the topic explored, as well as for the sake of clarity, separate sections are devoted to showcasing each of the three studies conducted. Notwithstanding their specificity as stand-alone surveys, the general research questions to be addressed by the contributions of the three investigations will be formulated in an integrated manner in section 4.1 below, and upon the respective exploration of each of the research papers, the conclusions drawn from a holistic interpretation of the combined results will be presented in chapter 5.

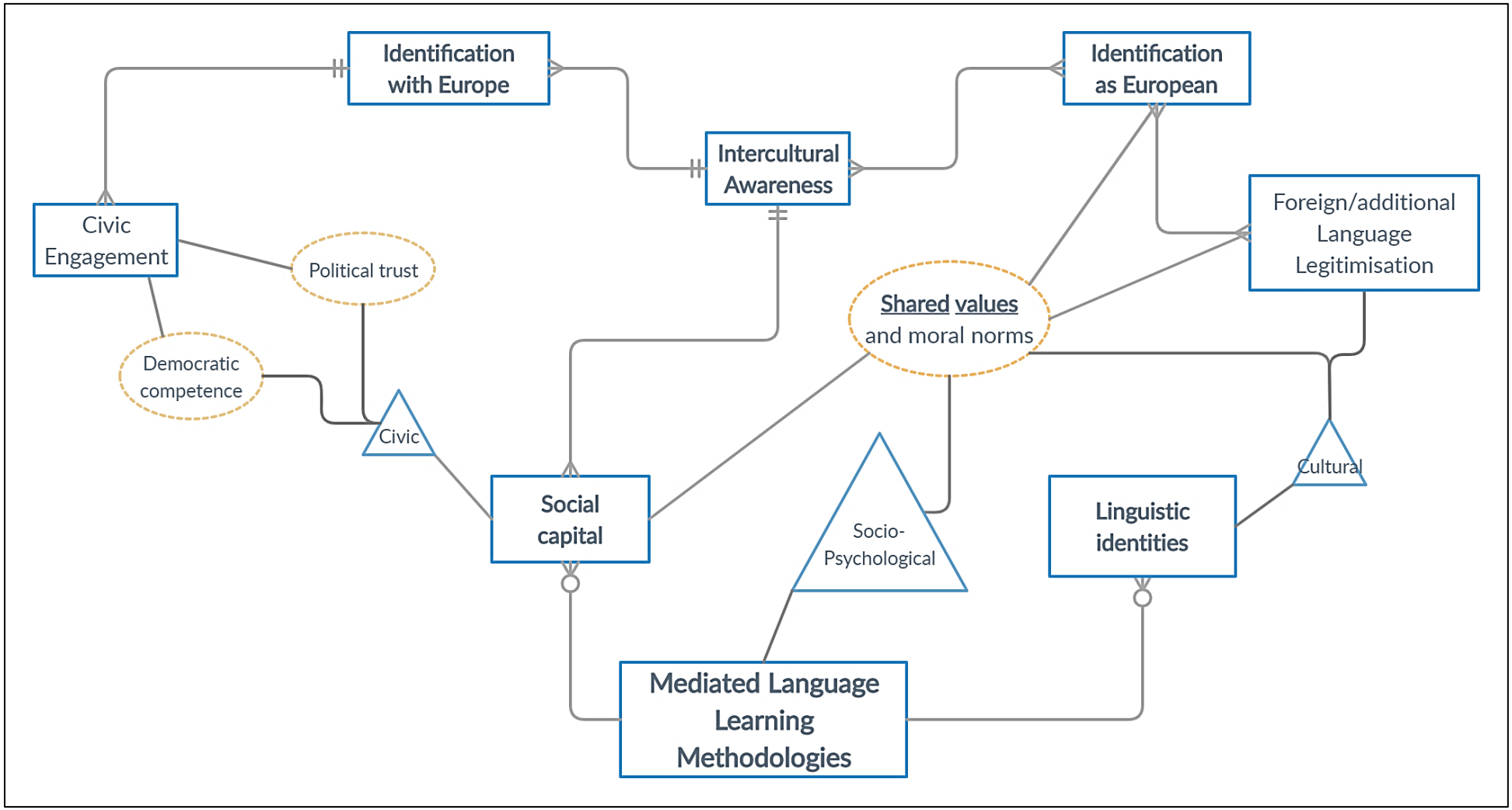



Figure 8: Broad theoretical overview of research field: *Communicative Mediation of European Values and Intercultural Awareness* (the author's proposal)

# Chapter 4: Methodology

In addition to the thematic adjacency of the three contributions featured below, their methodological complementarity is also noteworthy, insofar as each of the studies is approached through different research procedures.

Thus, the first study reported contains a synthesis of previous qualitative academic contributions on higher education students' identification with Europe, whilst weighing the quality of their pooled findings against GRADE CERQual (Confidence in Evidence from Reviews of Qualitative research) criteria, which in turn serves to lay the groundwork for the ensuing research and to contextualise their corresponding conclusions.

The second study features an original research effort conducted through in-depth, extensive interviews with university students, adhering to a qualitative methodology. The choice of the qualitative methodology reflects the desire to transcend the close-ended answers generally obtained through quantitative instruments, capturing nuances, yielding thoughtful insights, and exploring the underlying motivations of those interviewees, who have participated in international study programmes (ISP) as compared to those who have not (NIS).

The final study is structured according to a mixed methodology, presenting both a quantitative data set analysis as well as a summary of qualitative evidence collected during a follow-up stage of the inquiry. The preference for this methodology responds to the initial aim of obtaining results which are valid, reliable, and generalizable to a larger population, and the intent to subsequently collect fine-grained evidence for those issues that called for greater scrutiny.

## 4.1. General objective and research questions

The driving force behind this research is the formulation of pedagogically outputs whose implications are transferable to mainstream adult language learning practice.

Despite the fact that each of the published studies has its distinct set of research questions that guide its inquiry process, the overall scope of this work is formulated through the following four questions:

1) What have been the main qualitative contributions in the field of European identity formation of adult language learners enrolled in higher education?
2) How effective are current sojourn-based educational programmes to bolster the participants' attachment to Europe and the EU?
3) Do mediated language learning experiences (MeLLE) produce an increase in adult students' socio-emotional capital and, by extension, in their democratic values?
4) Could intentional interventions in the FL classroom contribute to the development of adult learners' awareness of European values?

While each of the first three questions posed above will be addressed by reference to one of the studies undertaken. The fourth research question, by contrast, will glean from the responses given to the preceding questions, and from the extrapolations thereof made.

## 4.2. Study 1: University students' representations of Europe and self-identification as Europeans: a synthesis of qualitative evidence for future policy formulation

### *4.2.1. Aim*

The purpose of this study is to collate, evaluate and synthesise the results of qualitative research from primary research that probes into the perceptions of European university students about their civic and cultural identity.

As the preliminary bibliographic analysis discussed in chapter 2 revealed substantial divergences among the results reported by different researchers on the topic under study, the systematisation and quality appraisal of the studies which have contributed to the advancement of this area of research make it possible to reach valid overall conclusions by pinpointing the determinants of positive self-identification with the EU and its institutions, addressing the effect that different educational initiatives have had on the attitudes and perceptions displayed by university students, and gauging the significance of FL learning for the attainment of such outcomes. Therefore, the end goal is to endorse the use of the best quality evidence available for future decision-making pertaining to curriculum development.

Furthermore, the completion of this study provides the theoretical basis for the original research reported in our second and third publications, as it furnishes a state-of-the-art insight into the European identity and identification processes in which higher education students are immersed.

### *4.2.2. Design and corpus selection*

A synthesis of qualitative evidence design was adopted as a way to clarify existing information and to dispel areas of uncertainty about the effectiveness of previous educational interventions. The study does not contain a merely descriptive review of the subject matter, but rather applies the GRADE-CERQual analytical method to assess the quality of the findings of a corpus of studies contributed by other authors.

This review covers both results obtained from primary qualitative research studies as well as qualitative findings drawn from mixed-method research papers. The eligible studies to be included were selected in a three-step screening process, conducted by two of the co-authors. The first step entailed conducting a search of electronic databases, whose results were rounded out by a manual search. The electronic search was conducted on

Proquest, Scopus and WOS from the start of the database until May 30, 2018. To avoid setting overly stringent initial inclusion thresholds, no date or location constraints were imposed, although difficulties with translation of documents reporting on qualitative research limited the screening to papers published in the languages spoken by the members of the review team (i.e., French, English and Spanish). The retrieval of information was carried out using a combination of search syntax to encompass quoted phrases, Boolean commands and fielded search options to obtain as many results as possible that met the two main criteria, namely that the research subjects were European university students and that the studies explored the participants' degree of identification with Europe.

#### *4.2.3. Instruments and research protocol*

The combination of electronic database search and manual searches yielded a wealth of papers published since 1998. The registries identified from the different sources were collected and sorted into one database, removing duplicates. The titles and abstracts of the identified records were independently assessed to gauge their potential eligibility. During this first screening, the studies that were clearly irrelevant to the topic of the review, based on the population age group described in article titles and abstracts, were permanently discarded.

The full text of all potentially relevant manuscripts was then examined and critically appraised against the scope of the review, weeding out purely theoretical research papers. Finally, the remaining empirical studies that met the inclusion criteria in terms of the defined study population were filtered to identify qualitative or mixed-method studies and rule out those of a quantitative nature. This final stage produced the final cohort of 19 studies which comprise the research corpus featured in the first publication, submitted in Annex I.

#### *4.2.4. Results*

The study evinces twelve separate findings that are clustered into four thematic categories. The first of the extracted categories pertains to the European ethos, and contains four substantial conclusions:

1) The moral principles that are most frequently regarded as representing European values are multilingualism, cultural diversity, and the safeguarding of human rights.

2) National geopolitical contexts play a decisive role in perceptions of what it means to be European, so the characterisation of the European identity prevalent in the founding members of the EU differs from that held by nationals of the countries pursuing membership. Similarly, the inhabitants of Mediterranean nations hold different conceptualisations to those of the citizens of Scandinavian countries, or of the British, who are recurrently pointed out as a singularity within the European demos.
3) EU bodies are portrayed as detached and overly bureaucratic entities which engage in cumbersome affairs and enact complex regulations that have little bearing on the daily lives of European laypeople.
4) Support for further Eastward enlargement is slim, particularly if the applicant countries are perceived as being culturally and religiously distant from the features traditionally associated with Europe. In this sense, the country whose candidacy has elicited a most vehement opposition is Turkey.

The second category of findings groups those dealing with students' self-identification:

1) Students' self-concept is multi-layered, and as such, consistent with the doctrine of *nested identities*. Students construct their local, regional, national, and supranational identities in keeping with their life-stories and with the most notable milestones that have contributed to composing their self-told personal narratives. Additionally, as identities are contextually bound, students choose to activate the most suitable identity for each setting of social engagement.
2) Affective factors are the root of the pervasiveness of national identities in the minds of students, over other levels of identification, which are eminently utilitarian in nature and assume a subsidiary role in students' minds.

The third category comprises indicators of support for or opposition to the EU as a supranational entity and to European identity as a form of pan-national identification:

1) Upholding the EU is motivated by instrumental reasons, given that participants tend to manifest positions in favour of their countries' membership of the EU or of their own status as Europeans, but always tied to the benefits that such membership brings them on a practical level. For instance, the accessibility of intra-European mobility, the feasibility of relocating and working in other countries in the EU, or the advantages of having a single currency for recreational travel are cited among

the arguments for supporting the Union. Conspicuously, scant regard is paid to the strategic importance of membership at the national level, or to the political, governance or economic ramifications of such affiliation for their country.

2) Subjects who define themselves as plurilingual demonstrate a higher degree of identification with and support for the European institutions and Europe. In general, these same subjects are also characterized as possessing a broader amount of cultural capital resulting from their more extensive cognitive mobilisation.
3) Among the disadvantages or risks claimed to be inherent in the adoption of a European identity is the loss of national identity or domestic culture. The intrinsic degree of abstraction of a pan-national identity that is intended to accommodate a heterogeneous citizenry is presented as hardly reconcilable with the maintenance of the distinguishing features of national identity.

The fourth and last category evinced by the analysis is that relating to transnational encounters and experiences:

1) Educational placements abroad stimulate students' upholding of the EU. Although there are some dissenting voices in the studies contributing to this finding, the prevalent view is that such stays have a positive, albeit usually modest, effect on sojourners' identification with Europe.
2) Social experiences in other countries, resulting from recreational activities or personal travel, also foster students' identification with Europe. Moreover, a number of studies contributing to this finding imply that higher frequency of exposure amplifies this positive effect.
3) Deliberate pedagogical interventions lead to an increased understanding and appreciation of Europe. Unlike purely amenity-based cross-cultural experiences, those that include a preceding induction phase about host country culture result in deeper levels of intercultural awareness.

#### *4.2.5. Preliminary conclusions*

Collectively, the conclusions drawn suggest a somewhat generalized rendering of the Community spirit, where multilingual and multicultural societies are ideally driven by typically European values and where democracy and human rights are upheld. It can also be inferred that the identification of university students as Europeans is subsidiary to, but

also compatible with, their more prominent and emotionally charged national and regional identities.

There is evidence that European identity is linked to certain contexts and is most often confronted during transnational experiences and encounters with international counterparts. Nonetheless, young people's support for the EU is consistently paired with economic concerns and assumptions that EU membership can deliver tangible benefits for their own daily lives and future prospects. In this respect, the European Commission's communication campaigns and educational initiatives addressing youths, which revolve around the utilitarian aspects of European citizenship, seem to have permeated the collective worldview of students and to have shaped the mental picture they entertain of Europe as an imagined community.

However, civic duties, politics and supranational decision-making appear to be too distant to bear any relevance to the daily dealings of young Europeans. One implication of this is the need to instigate structural changes at national and local level to enhance young people's understanding of the EU and its means of democratic governance. A further implication of the findings presented regards the legitimisation of the EU polities in the eyes of these young people, which must necessarily be rooted in their full awareness of, and accessibility to, the mechanisms available to them in order to speak out in European fora, where far-reaching decisions concerning their future are being made.

Hence, the endorsement of curricula that tackle the European public space in a transversal way, which feature concrete, tangible and relateable topics, and which are embedded both at the higher education stage and at the preceding levels of the education system, would possibly contribute to a more citizen-friendly European Union and to a greater popular ownership of European affairs. Strengthening the European dimension in education, which transcends individualistic views and is based on value-based approaches, would encourage greater identification with Europe by the young population segment. An inclusive education geared towards Europe, encompassing responsible citizenship, the balancing of multiple identities and dialogue between citizens, should therefore be central to the EU's lifelong learning agenda, reaching out to all stages of informal, non-formal and formal education, in particular within the sphere of higher education.

It is thus concluded that future education policies ought to provide for a broadly defined European curriculum that considers differentiated narratives and focuses on social effort, dialogue, solidarity and plurality, in order to mobilise young adults in support of the European process and so as to consolidate their European identity.

## 4.3. Study 2: Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity: international orientation and experiences

### *4.3.1. Aim*

The aim of the study is to examine the causal factors leading to Andalusian university students' identification with Europe, specifically apropos their participation in international study programmes (ISP). As previous studies investigating the relationship between academic mobility abroad and the perceived identity of sojourners in other national contexts have produced equivocal results, the study compares the different ways in which mobile Andalusian returnees and non-mobile Andalusian students understand and define their own Europeanness.

Thus, there are two fundamental research questions that frame the study, namely (1) how these two subsets of Andalusian students (those who have participated in academic stays abroad and those who have studied exclusively at their local university) define their European identity and (2) whether it could be empirically supported that participating in a study programme abroad can boost participants' international orientation and European identity.

### *4.3.2. Design and participants*

The sample population comprises 29 Spanish students from an Andalusian Spanish public university (for a comprehensive description of their demographic profiles and age group designation, see pages 4 and 5 in Annex II).

Almost two thirds of the sample (64%) consists of graduate and undergraduate students who, at the time of data collection, had not participated in study-abroad experiences at university. Their academic background is diverse, as they are affiliated to different areas (English Studies, Spanish Philology, Computer Science, Geography, Primary Education). For data processing and result presentation, these students are labelled as NIS (non-international students).

Just over one third of the sample (36%) are year-4 undergraduate students enrolled in the English Studies programme and postgraduate study abroad returnees with the same academic background. The host countries where their academic stays abroad took place are

predominantly within Europe, although there is one student whose ISP was spent overseas, in New Zealand. These participants are assigned the label IS (international students).

A qualitative approach is decided upon, as quantitative surveys do not allow accounting for the contextualization that is sought to better comprehend the phenomenon of collective identity formation.

### *4.3.3. Instruments and data collection*

The study is based on data collected from 5 semi-structured focus group interviews, whose size fluctuated between 5 and 10 students per interview session. Three of the groups were composed of students who had not participated in academic sojourns during their university studies, while mobile undergraduate students and graduate returnees were allocated the other two groups. The main rationale behind the distinction of these three core groups was the assumption that non-mobile students would be less likely to recognise a strong European identity than returnees from academic experiences abroad.

Several questions were raised to prompt group discussion, mainly focusing on how they define being European and whether they define themselves as such; whether they could recall any experiences in which this identification had gained relevance, as well as their overall impression of the EU; furthermore, for the IS groups, queries were made as to whether they felt that their stay abroad had had any effect on their European identity.

### *4.3.4. Results*

The results obtained are organised around two main themes, 1) the students' degree of Europeanness and 2) the linkage between their academic experiences abroad and the development, reinforcement or abatement of their European identities.

The first theme, that of Europeanness, is in turn arranged into seven topics:

1.1) Europe-wide (dis)similarities among citizens

Being nationals of a European country, in students' opinion, gives them certain traits, personal values and perspectives which are similar to those of people living in other

European countries. A communal past and origin, which has crystallised into national varieties of the same civilization, is perceived as relevant to base their in-group perception.

Current cultural ties and resemblances are expressly attributed to Southern countries in the Mediterranean region, making a similar *distinction in proximity* to that reported by Parker (2002) and Van Mol (2013) between *Nordic* or *Scandinavians* and other Europeans. Emotional attachment is thus strongly connected to the subgroup *Mediterraneans* and to geographically distant regions which are regarded as having cultural ties with Spain, particularly Latin America. Conversely, other European nationalities which are deemed as culturally divergent have no affective bearing on the students.

Financial and administrative links are viewed as the backbone of the European Union, which in turn is perceived as an inherently bureaucratic structure, as Healy and Richardson have recently remarked (2017), bereft of any affective dimension. That is at the root of their statement that, despite sharing the same continent, our cultures are so substantially different that when encountering someone from another European nation, their nationality stands out more than our belonging to the same supranational community.

### 1.2) Benefits of holding a European nationality

Utilitarian views on EU membership are foregrounded in students' responses. The paramount gain is that of freedom of movement across national borders, the feature of European identity par excellence. Mobility is also perceived as a gateway to fostering positive attitudes to other European countries. Similarly, intercultural exchanges supported by Community programmes and institutions are regarded as a source of societal progress.

Being European is considered as a privilege, both from a political perspective and in other social dimensions, such as security or health care. It also implies sharing cultural roots, common values and democratic achievements, and it appears to stimulate civic and environmental awareness. A further vital concern is the possibility of entering a wider labour market and the economic opportunities it affords. The responses clustered in this section are therefore concordant with the notion of *egocentric utilitarianism* (McLaren, 2004), in terms of the leverage that the prebends obtained as a result of living in a member state exert on determining levels of support for the EU.

### 1.3) Spanish membership of the European Union

The notions of Europe and the European Union are largely taken as being equivalent. Affiliation is credited purely to being born in Europe and in the EU, citizenship status being

perceived as a matter-of-course occurrence, directly entitling nationals to the benefits outlined in section 1.2 above.

EU expansion, multiculturalism and the blending of cultures are acknowledged as positive aspects, although the benefits of the latter have yet to be harvested in Spain. There is a divergence about the feeling of proximity and reciprocal support in the EU; some say that other European countries assist Spain when it so requires, whilst others argue that EU citizens do not often lean on each other.

The pronounced disparities among EU member states are noted, blaming this unevenness on a lack of cultural ties and therefore challenging the existence of a shared identity that has simply been assumed. Gaps between countries and a distinct sense of division between the north and south of Europe are starkly highlighted, with Spain having always fallen behind the group of leading EU countries. However, there is a marked sense of belonging to the EU, and of being at home as EU citizens.

### 1.4) Sense of detachment from European identity

An important question raised refers to the extent to which the perceived commonalities across Europe, the alleged benefits of being European and of belonging to the EU give rise to a sense of European identity.

The teaching syllabus of the schools is a first indicator of endorsement of a European identity. Students concede that, while their national or regional identity is nurtured in the school, Europeanness is almost absent from the express or implied curriculum. From an educational standpoint, students identify a wide divide in education systems across Europe, making it difficult to foster a unified sentiment of Europeanness. The need to deliberately work towards a European identity exists, albeit most of the participants never having experienced such identity and having admitted to only possessing a limited understanding of what it signifies.

This still not fully developed sense of Europeanness is also attributable to its vague definition and the lack of specific characteristics to define European citizens. As a result, embracing the vision of Europe is not devoid of difficulty, particularly owing to marked differences between countries. This raises serious concerns about the cohesion of Europe and undermines the concept of European identity.

Respondents relate their lack of personal connection to Europe, mainly as a result of it not being an emotion-laden concept. Students claim to have a robust local and national identity or to even experience a global identity but are not as adamant when it is a matter

of European identity. Indeed, several of them declare a clear absence of European identity. One of the most contested grounds behind this response is geographical separation.

Besides, a majority emphasize a distinct cultural and affective detachment. Surprisingly, another main divergence specified as a hindrance to the development of a European identity is that of multilingualism - claiming that a narrow linguistic repertoire combined with the existence of a broad range of languages does not encourage their Europeanness. Contextual identities or the nuances of identities experienced and brought to the fore in different situations can be paramount, bringing students to the conclusion that it is necessary to travel and have a first-hand exposure to alterity abroad in order to embrace Europeanness.

### 1.5) Unfamiliarity with European identity

A number of participants expressed unfamiliarity with their European identity, a level of identity which they claimed never having pondered before. It is hypothesized that this disregard for a supranational identity may be due to its absence from school curriculum, the marginal focus on European affairs in the classroom, or the disparity in education systems throughout Europe. The shortcoming in providing a definition of European identity stems from it being a novel concept for most students, who admit their ambivalent feelings as they wrestle with this unfamiliar concept, again underlining the necessity of a first-hand experience abroad, as their identities are likely to evolve according to the environment.

At any rate, while not being aware of their own European identity, students acknowledge and assume the notion of Europeanness as an area of debate both within and outside the continent, suggesting the potential for a non-European's perspective on European identity to cast light on the defining features of this construct.

### 1.6) Europeanness

Although amounting to a small proportion of those surveyed, a cohort of students confirm that they do in fact feel European, a sentiment that emerges in itself without any agency in the part of the individual. Contextual identity activation proves to be most salient for this identity layer, as students confirm that European identity is more fully endorsed when staying away from Europe or journeying to another continent, in the same vein as Patel's (2013) observation that such trips would modify sojourners' views of their own background and their feelings of belonging or identity.

### 1.7) Supranational outlook

The majority of students who have not attended international study programmes in higher education express an interest in undergoing such experiences. Several are inclined to visit Mediterranean countries, and whilst some display personal preferences in selecting a destination, others are just eager to experience studying and living abroad.

Many intend to apply for an international study programme the subsequent academic year, in contrast to those who regard it as a long-term endeavour; possibly once they have completed their education and are able to apply for employment abroad. In general, the primary purpose of the period abroad is to practise and improve their FL skills.

International mobility is also prompted by the desire to explore a new culture and the prospect of encountering culture shock, evidencing a level of cultural awareness. This is at the root of some students' intention to pursue a programme that will enable them to go to other continents, as they feel that they will not experience the hoped-for culture shock if they remain in Europe. In whichever case, there is an undeniable will to travel, study and/or work while living abroad and find otherness there.

Many students report that they have friends and/or family members from a foreign background. Similarly, most of them indicate their desire to live and/or work abroad in the foreseeable future. Thus, although 1 interviewee cannot say whether she would be willing to live abroad, 3 would rather live in Spain and 3 are opposed to living abroad. Therefore, the data highlight the international outlook of Andalusian students.

The second theme, that pertaining to the linkage between international study programmes in higher education and European identity, is explored in two sections:

### 2.1) Participation in ISP and European identity

A certain extent of European identity is acknowledged by some sojourners, although they are unable to pinpoint what factors stimulate this feeling. A transient sentiment of Europeanness has been reported to arise in very specific circumstances, such as when studying in very remote places. This would appear to corroborate a claim made by the interviewees that the European identity is accentuated by geographical distancing, a notion that resonates with the regionalist interpretation of Europe proposed by Robertson (2010).

In brief, roughly three per cent of the ISP returnees and slightly over ten per cent of the students who have not yet enrolled in these programmes claim to feel European and to hold a supranational orientation. Considering that all the students that reported such feelings have pre-university or university study experiences in other countries, it would seem that international study programmes foster a supranational orientation and a sense of belonging to Europe. Nonetheless, the remaining returnees and NIS indicate that they do not feel European or are hesitant about their Europeanness. Students agree, however, that rather than intensifying their European identity, their study abroad experience has mainly had an impact on their individual academic, social and relational skills.

## 2.2) Comparison between International (IS) and non-international students' (NIS) Europeanness

The data reveal that the identities of the interviewees are closely related to their international experiences, their self-definitions often revolving around these experiences outside Spain. Furthermore, these experiences often provide the basis for a deeper degree of self-awareness acquired through anecdotal events, lapses or errors in communicative encounters, which reinforce the need to overcome cultural gaps in the social milieu. On the other hand, the hetero-stereotypes about Spaniards shared by the nationals of the host country were another factor that contributed to trigger the constant process of revisiting the international students' own identities.

In contrast, non-mobile students made few allusions to the supranational and European context, or to how the perspective of the member of the foreign group affects one's self-description. These students focused more on the practicalities of belonging to the EU, and what it means to be a European citizen in terms of everyday life.

Interestingly, IS acknowledge having previously pondered their Europeanism, a layer of identity rarely contemplated by NIS before participating in the interviews. Despite these differences, IS and NIS agree on their supranational orientation and their desire to move and work abroad, as well as on the weak level of European identity perceived by both cohorts. Therefore, the results obtained allow us to rebut the hypotheses that predicted group distinctions. Thus, a widespread and sharp European identity was not discovered among students in either group, being the responses of those with study abroad experience comparable to those lacking it.

3) Supranational orientation vs. identification

The research questions are addressed hereafter on the basis of the results presented above.

- With regard to the first question of the research concerning how Andalusian students define their European identity, a multi-layered and intricate conception is revealed, with only a handful of students acknowledging a modest to relatively strong sense of European identity.

  Despite a certain *sense of belonging*, very few students define themselves as members of the *European* group and most feel a weak or almost non-existent connection with their peers. Europeanness, is therefore typically sensed primarily through a utilitarian prism as opposed to as being an emotional layer of identity.

- Results pertaining to the second research question, concerning the extent to which a study programme promotes the international orientation and European identity of individuals, suggest that such programmes may stimulate an international orientation but not necessarily lead to a similar increase in European identity.

  Whereas transnational interactions are regarded as the driving force for developing cosmopolitan mindsets, the transnational experience appears to trigger the transformation of identity strictly in terms individual self-growth and agency, and not to bolster feelings of European identity.

4) Discussion: European (non)identities

Subjective identity encompasses self-concept as well as the values to which relevance is attributed. In this sense, the allocation of social worth is consolidated as a key factor to be considered when addressing identity formation. Building a European identity, as one of the tiers of social selfhood within the multiple identities of individuals, is a challenging endeavour.

Significantly, the results obtained reiterate that, despite being a population of mobile and purportedly internationally oriented individuals, the majority of undergraduate students could not draw a clear-cut distinction between the EU and Europe. In this regard, the sample points out that the media have been its main source of knowledge about Europe, while recognising that the information received is likely to be both fragmented and partisan.

Educational authorities and institutions should take stock of this lack of knowledge or misconception if they are to pursue the development of a sustainable European identity. In this light, the school curriculum emerges as a valid predictor of support, hence while European issues remain unaddressed in an explicit and exhaustive manner in formal education and the school calendar lacks days to commemorate the Europeanism of students, European identity is hardly likely to flourish. This greater European dimension should not only pervade university courses, but also primary and secondary education, for that is where the foundations for secondary socialisation are set.

Over and above an emotional attachment, students value the benefits and advantages of being European and/or EU citizens. Sharing a common heritage and values is appreciated, but repeatedly placed in a subsidiary place to the pragmatic aspects that are secured by their membership. Consistently, utilitarian views are wielded by those students who report experiencing a sense of Europeanness.

The geographical location of southern Europe, and within it, Andalusia, separates them both physically and in their ability to make their voices heard in European decision-making arenas. It is precisely this felt division between the north and south that students refer to as one of the hurdles in strengthening their European identity, as previous studies conducted in the Spanish context had already pointed to (Ros et al., 2008).

The absence of shared specific features of Europeanness is the third element that blurs European identity, because it is a concept that must be broad enough to accommodate a very heterogeneous European population. This concurs with claims that Europeanness should rely on more specific traits that citizens can relate to in their immediate context.

Students' lack of awareness of their European identity can be accounted for in part by their detachment from Europe. Interestingly, this is one of the social identities that students claim to have reflected on to a lesser extent prior to the discussion generated by the focus group interview. Their faint sense of European identity or even their alleged non-European identities might also be attributed to this emotional detachment.

These findings augment scholarship indicating that mere international mobility experiences do not spontaneously lead to the assumption of a European identity, unlike the Erasmus+ programme guide and the conclusions presented by a portion of previous studies, which uphold the inspirational and transformative potential of the European identity developed by sojourners abroad.

Nevertheless, this research hints at some cases of *adhered* European identity, although only among the few students who participated in both the pre-university and

university ISP. In fact, while ISP in higher education clearly exerts an agentic effect on the individuals, it fails to generate a broad and accentuated identity.

Interestingly, for the student who participated in an ISP in Asia, the realisation of his own Europeanness brought a permanent and transformative experience. Therefore, the chance to consider what it means to be European and how it measures up to being a citizen of other regions of the world seems to be fuelled by greater physical and emotional *displacement*. This finding echoes previous studies and reinforces the idea that European identity is likely to acquire special meaning when individuals are placed in a context that allows them to compare it to other supranational identities.

#### *4.3.5. Preliminary conclusions*

On the basis of inductive, top-down perspectives, European authorities have traditionally assumed that ISP programmes had a wide-ranging Europeanising effect, in a quasi-homogeneous way for a majority of participants. Nonetheless, the methodology followed in this study expounds on the relevance of participants' biographical milestones experienced, relational skills held, or pre-existing cultural patterns entertained, inter alia, in the individual identification processes, all of which have been revealed as equally predictive for the effective support of post-ISP European identity.

Therefore, conclusions can be drawn from this study with regard to three essential aspects:

Firstly, in the affective and relational sphere, a latent correlation between students' emotional ties with the EU and their degree of identification as Europeans is noted. Thus, nurturing feelings of being part of the EU, applauding accomplishments made collectively, furthering perceptions of the EU as a community of shared values and fostering affective bonds between nationals of Member States could potentially play a significant role in building favourable attitudes towards their European identity.

Secondly, in the cognitive sphere, curricula and course programmes should ensure broad learning opportunities on European issues across all levels of education. Furthermore, and in order to ensure the sustainability of ISP outcomes, the ultimate goal of the education system should be to equip graduates with skills to capitalise on their study abroad experience for career progression, cross-border professional mobility and pan-European employment opportunities.

Finally, as regards the promotion of civic and political engagement of young Europeans, the development of well-defined policies which tap into the European dimension of democratic governance, both through the official party system and through civic dialogue, has the potential to generate awareness of the EU and of the values of democracy, social cohesion and solidarity for which it stands.

## 4.4. Study 3: A mediated language learning experience

### *4.4.1. Aim*

The aim of this study is to ascertain the effectiveness of a mediated approach to EFL, by implementing, over a four-week period, a Mediated Language Learning Experience (MeLLE) in the classroom which was devised to activate text-based and communication-based cooperation strategies. The pedagogical intervention designed also aimed to encourage the socio-emotional awareness of adult language learners, its ultimate goal thus being to strengthen the students' positive relationships with their peers in the classroom environment. To this end, the pedagogical intervention was conceived around mediated learning tasks, having music-themed contents as the guiding thread. The collaborative approach was present throughout the entire teaching sequence, requiring textual and communication-based mediation.

### *4.4.2. Design and participants*

The participants are adult trainees attending an intensive English language course during the 2018-2019 academic year at a language school. For the purposes of gauging the impact of the intervention, a pre- and post-approach was adopted for a sample of 44 plurilingual students of mixed nation backgrounds. Their degree of proficiency in English oscillates between A2 and C1 levels.

To achieve the objectives set, students were asked to cooperatively review popular music videos of their preference and were given a set of tasks covering the perception and understanding of emotions conveyed by music videos, exploring both the visual prompts and the lyrics of the songs, and deriving the symbolic meaning of the textual elements.

Throughout three in-class sessions, and by working in groups, students were able to investigate the lyrics and visual storytelling scripts of several music videos, with emphasis on linguistic elements associated with feelings and figurative language, as well as potential stereotypes contained in the songs examined. In terms of visual content, the importance of decoding the messages implicit in the videos was discussed, reflecting on the music media consumption choices of today's youth, the impact that this exposure to certain subjects may have on their development, and the feasibility of using this media format for the transmission of educational messages.

As a final task, students were requested to post a blog entry recommending songs that convey positive messages or songs that could help to enhance the language proficiency of foreign language learners, with particular regard to the register and appropriateness of the messages communicated, thus conducive to desirable social behaviour. Once the drafting and publishing of the texts was concluded, the students exchanged their entries on a blog managed by the instructor and were encouraged to comment on the entries contributed by their peers.

### *4.4.3. Instruments and data collection*

Two different scales were used to measure and compare the students' interpersonal competence and foreign language proficiency levels, so as to be able to analyse their mutual correlation and the extent to which pedagogical intervention might affect them both:

1. The Scale of Social-Emotional Skills proposed by McBrien et al. (2018), which gauges targeted cognitive skills that support general social-emotional performance. Skills such as timing and synchronicity of behaviours are, under this conceptual framework, essential for success in operating in social domains. The interpretation of the items that make up this scale is guided by the prevalence of two factors in the psychological and social profile of the surveyed student: (1) adaptability (i.e., the respondent's ability to accommodate a variety of social and emotional interpersonal experiences) and (2) expressiveness (which reveals the individual's capacity to communicate emotions to others).
2. Selected descriptors from the CEFR/CV Mediation Descriptor Scales (Council of Europe, 2018) for levels A2-B2, capturing the students' levels of competence in mediation skills and strategies prior to and following the classroom experience. While not envisaged in the source document, for the purposes of this research the descriptors were grouped into two categories: textual mediation and communication-based mediation. Hence, parallels could be drawn with the Scale of Social-Emotional Skills, since textual mediation brings together the elements referring to the participants' ability to make the information contained in oral or written texts accessible to others, whereas communication-based mediation encompasses the items for measuring skills whose purpose is to avoid

misunderstandings when communication occurs and interaction with others is sought.

Data analysis was performed using a mixed-method approach. The quantitative analysis was rounded out by a qualitative and thematic analysis of the feedback given during group interviews involving 12 selected students, resulting in more accurate insights into their appraisal of the learning experience.

#### *4.4.4. Results*

- Quantitative findings

The statistical analysis of the quantitative data yielded, as well as the collation, sorting and extraction of conclusions from the qualitative material generated in the group interview, is comprehensively documented on pages 5-7 of the published study (see Annex III for further elaboration).

The results confirmed the absence of significant differences in pre- and post-communication-based mediation as well as in pre-post socio-emotional variables (as illustrated in Table 1 of Annex III). As regards the influence of the participants' level of linguistic competence on the results obtained, significant differences were found in the aggregate scores of mediation and in the textual mediation prior to the intervention. However, no significant variation was observed attributable to the levels of linguistic competence after the intervention, or in the remaining variables studied at either the pre or post moment. The linguistic competence levels used to classify participants are those described by the CEFR (2001), which arranges language proficiency into three broad levels: A (basic user), B (independent user) and C (proficient user). The A-level competence cohort did differ from levels B and C in terms of their mediation scores; but no differences were observed between levels B and C themselves. As for the contrast between the pre-post moments categorised for each of the levels of linguistic competence, significant differences appeared only in level A for textual mediation.

After the intervention, the comparative study between the overall scores in mediation and the general and disaggregated variables of socio-emotional skills disclosed a significant relationship between the global scores of mediation and socio-emotional skills. In order to further explain this relationship, the general socio-emotional dimension

was split into its adaptability and expressiveness components. The resulting finding revealed a significant relationship solely between the overall mediation score and the expressivity score.

- Qualitative findings

In an effort to delve deeper into the participants' views, a focus group interview was held with twelve selected students, in a ratio which represented proportionally the various proficiency level groups contained in the sample. Throughout the interview, students were encouraged to reflect on what had been the most positive and least positive aspects of their experience following the collaborative approach adopted in this intervention. They were also asked if they supported a broader use of mediated experiences to infuse their language learning, and whether they had noticed any new developments in themselves.

Students' responses were condensed and thematically grouped into categories reflecting four key concepts: 1) plurilingual and pluricultural affordances granted by a music-themed, mediated methodological approach; 2) the activation of agency and positive emotions as a result of the deployment of music MeLLE; 3) collaborative work and relational mediation as methodological approaches which could be conducive to productive and engaging experiences; and 4) resilience and handling of uncertainty during student-centred group work.

While communicative mediation was the method selected to provide the *interactive scaffolding* for collaborative interpersonal tasks, the substantive content was delivered through the input of music cultural artifacts. Hence, a better understanding of certain features of the target culture was made possible through the analysis of the audiovisual narratives contained in the music videos proposed by the learners, while also fuelling group reflections that illustrated the awakening of the students' multicultural and plurilingual skills.

On the whole, the students defined collaborative learning as a gratifying and nourishing process and expressed their willingness to cooperate with their peers to achieve the desired end result. Therefore, they succeeded in combining their strengths to co-construct meaning, to grasp new notions and to tap into information; in other words, they took an active role as mediators.

Furthermore, the students also valued working alongside foreign counterparts as an enlightening opportunity that brought them real-life exposure to languages, which manifests the potential of domestic transnational experiences for the acquisition or reinforcement of cross-cultural awareness. By contrast, dissatisfaction was voiced in those teams where some of its members had not invested sufficiently in the shared effort, leading to the reluctance expressed by some individuals to work again as part of a team.

Another negative aspect pointed out by a substantial number of participants was that they had felt baffled or frustrated in the initial phases of the lesson plan's implementation owing to their unfamiliarity with the approach. Nevertheless, they displayed an appreciation of the value of coping with uncertainty when communicating with others and of the potential of the knowledge gained for everyday scenarios. For them, the struggle to agree on a collective target will be part of their routine in their future employment and personal lives. Because of this, the participants took pride in their ability to solve the problems they had experienced during the learning process.

However, the students expressed their concerns over the challenges confronted which had not been easily dispelled and acknowledged their need to pursue training in the handling of critical circumstances, similar to those suffered in teamwork. In relation to the latter, the students once reported to the teachers about the lack of cooperation of one of their team members. On being questioned on whether they had brought up the problem and debated it, they expressed the view that they did not intend to cause a dispute with the uncooperative person. They appeared to be hesitant in tackling the situation.

Lastly, music-MeLLE appear to encourage a two-way exchange and negotiation of the aims and outputs laid down by the teacher and targeted by the students, which is compatible with democratic classroom cultures in which decision-making is based on consensus, with account being taken of the opinions expressed by the different parties involved.

### *4.4.5. Preliminary conclusions*

The overall purpose of this study was to establish the potential for mediated interventions to raise students' consciousness of their social-emotional and relational skills while engaging in foreign language learning. Among the results obtained, the most remarkable outcome is that MeLLE had an impact on students' recognition of their mediation skills, specifically on the skill set grouped as textual mediation. A second issue clarified by the

study concerns establishing, and where appropriate, tracing, the interdependency of the level of language mastery and mediation skills.

Before the intervention, general and textual mediation competencies were poorly understood or disregarded by students with basic CEFR proficiency levels, compared to students with intermediate or advanced English proficiency, who identified their mediation skills and strategies much more accurately. Consequently, there appears to be a relationship between having an intermediate or higher level of foreign language proficiency and the students' ability to mediate texts. This phenomenon is possibly caused by a longer history of intercultural communication encounters, compared to that experienced by students in the initial stages of foreign language acquisition.

After the intervention outlined in the study, those differences visibly narrowed, because the educational experience led to a significant enhancement of both textual mediation overall mediation scoring of students with lower levels of language competence. Consequently, it follows that the valorisation of the cultural and linguistic resources that students already possess must be explicitly acknowledged in the classroom, and that interventions such as MeLLE designed for this study made these resources tangible to foster community relationships. With regard to the number of foreign languages which participants speak, the data indicate that those who can speak three languages surpassed the results of their two-language peers in textual mediation tasks.

As to the question of whether the languages spoken by the participants impacted on the results of the intervention, MeLLE appears to be more beneficial for participants who only speak one foreign language. Such an outcome may be explained because those who speak more foreign languages consider that their textual mediation skills can be improved no further. In this sense, textual mediation skills seem to be naturally developed by those who know at least two foreign languages. Those who support multilingual approaches to language teaching, focused on the development of personal skills, self-awareness, linguistic and critical awareness of students, and cross-culturalism would therefore be endorsed by these results.

According to these same results, comparable interventions based on mediated experiences could probably remedy the deficiencies of monolingual and bilingual education curricula. Therefore, where plurilingual teaching methodologies are not viable, MeLLE could potentially match students' perceptions of their mediation skills with those of more language-diversified and proficient students, thereby potentially bringing about

a breakthrough in language teaching methods used in predominantly monolingual contexts.

The most notable outcome stemming from the surveyed statistical data, however, is the high correlation found between general mediation competence and social-emotional expertise. The methodology implemented impacted on students' perception of their part as agents in managing interpersonal dialogue, and this perception is, in turn, intimately linked to their social-emotional profile and to the social practises in place within the group. As argued in preceding chapters, such social practises are tallied into the social capital of the learning community.

Taking a separate look at the two factors that configure students' socio-emotional profiles, that is, expressivity and adaptability, it was the first one that gave rise to the most salient correlation. Having expressivity been defined as the capacity to effectively relay emotion and thoughts to others, this result may signal even more clearly the advantages of embracing a MeLLE philosophy in the EFL classroom.

The qualitative results recorded at the focus group interviews pointed out additional advantages of mediation-based approaches, as students seem to endorse the applicability of music-themed MeLLE to inspire a tangible enhancement of their well-being, as well as a constructive language learning atmosphere. MeLLE are also perceived to sensitize group members to their function as social agents in the social act of communication. After the completion of the didactic sequence, the students demonstrated familiarity with the concept of mediation and with the etiquette of collaborative work. The teamwork aroused the enthusiasm of the students, who also gained flexibility in surmounting the challenges they had faced. From an introspective point of view, students revealed having come to the conclusion that this sort of activity rendered them more mindful of their own learning experience.

Cornerstones of communication, such as active listening, observance of all opinions, and the assumption of an agent's role in providing feedback to one's peers' work, were similarly brought to the fore. Another source of pride expressed was the joint effort to find a shared voice and to excel in the appointed tasks, and in general students indicated their willingness to participate in MeLLE in the future. Among the areas where room for improvement was identified, was their continuing need to build on the personal accountability of the tasks entrusted to the individual team members.

On the other hand, and even if its inclusion in the design of the MeLLE was merited solely by its notional contribution, the results confirm that music can conjure up

good spirits in the FL classroom. Students underscored the motivational power of working with songs of their choice and sifting through recognizable lyrics, while unlocking subtle messages and states of mind and heart embedded in them. An additional consequence of the musical input referred to by interviewees was a renovated sense of group awareness and membership, which is consistent with the aforementioned linkage effect reported by other authors, as explained in more detail in the annexed study. Ultimately, the study highlights the desirability of incorporating mediated experiences into the FL classroom as a means of expanding students' mediation skills and social-emotional abilities, along with their readiness to relate to other people's outlooks or aspirations.

As they gain greater empathy for their fellow human beings and build social cognition by explaining and predicting other people's behaviour, language learners tend to gravitate more towards the social-emotional sphere and are better equipped to reduce intercultural barriers and to bridge social distances. In this sense, the general hypothesis raised in the model of *Communicative Mediation of European Values and Intercultural Awareness*, as illustrated in figure 8, seems to be confirmed for the population under study.

## Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusions

Inspired by Knight's (2004) definition of internationalisation as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (p. 11), as well as on Kador's (2003) claim of the currency of cosmopolitan perspectives for education in multicultural, globalised societies, as they combine "a commitment to humanist principles and norms, an assumption of human equality, with a recognition of difference, and indeed a celebration of diversity" (p. 19), the aim of this thesis has been to identify a scientifically sound methodological approach to adult FL education that would make it possible to combine the linguistic content typically taught with shared European civic and democratic values.

In relation to the first research question posed, concerning previous contributions in the field of European identity formation of adult language learners enrolled in higher education, it can be inferred that a greater impetus is needed in the cross-cutting treatment to European identity and the EU public space in order to ensure that Community membership is perceived to be of use, and its institutions are accessible to citizens. Consequently, the adoption of Europe-oriented methods, which embrace responsible citizenship, the visibilisation and legitimisation of nested identities which foster democratic dialogue among citizens would be advisable, in particular in the realm of language teaching at the higher education level. This is a relevant result, as it endorses the desirability to incorporate civic contents within FL curricula aimed at adult learners (Fernández, 2005), providing them with the necessary democratic and communicative skillsets to engage with institutions at local, national and supranational levels and the strategies to mobilise social capital to their advantage, by acknowledging and appreciating the worth of their belongingness to a united learning community (Taylor et al., 2013).

The results obtained in relation to the second research question, pertaining to the effectiveness of sojourn-based educational programmes to bolster participants' Europeanness, indicate that, in general terms, participating in such mobility experiences does not necessarily prompt the spontaneous emergence of a broad and accentuated attachment to Europe, even though academic experiences abroad do exert a distinct agentic effect on individuals. In this sense, the evidence presented challenges EU authorities' official stance that participation in ISP has the greatest potential to generate feelings of belongingness towards Europe, and indicate the need to develop *domestic*

*transnational experiences* which can be utilised in the FL classroom across educational stages and levels. In this regard, various modes of intercultural literacy have been examined on a theoretical level, with specific methodological tools such as autobiographical narrative accounts and visual representations of the target culture standing out for the development of critical cultural awareness. As Lave and Wenger (1991) assert, shared cultural signifiers and governance systems intertwine and contribute to co-constituting learning in communities of practice. Similarly, as Byram (1989) notes, tertiary socialisation makes it possible to extend such learning communities across cultural boundaries, widening the scope of contextual affordances at the disposal of FL educators to stimulate debate and facilitate learners' reflection on current Community issues, such as the political rivalries among European countries.

Nevertheless, the abovementioned results substantiate the need to also appeal to the emotional sphere of Europeans to nourish their attachment to Europe. Specifically, the qualitative approach of study 2 has shed light on some singularities that had previously been overlooked, regarding the prominence of the emotional dimension and the emotional traits of ISP returnees, which emerged during the interviews. As Brande (2017) argues, the legitimacy of the Union which cannot be attained only on factual grounds and requires the emotional engagement of its people.

Thus, the ultimate goal of adopting a methodology based on Mediated Language Learning Experiences (MeLLE, Fonseca-Mora and González Davies, in press) is to positively influence students' openness to the adoption of the principles promoted by European educational policies, as well as to generate a general participatory and democratic social dynamic in the classroom. As such, the results obtained for the third research question regarding whether MeLLE could lead to an increase in the social-emotional capital of adult FL learners, are positive. Higher levels of socio-emotional capital and, by extension, of endorsement of democratic values, are gained as a result of the application of MeLLE. In this regard, the findings attained point to the suitability of a methodology relying on communicative mediation in the FL classroom as a means of augmenting students' socio-emotional awareness and receptiveness to other people's worldviews, while generating greater empathy towards their peers, which could also be harnessed to reduce intercultural and social barriers between their in-group and perceived otherness.

In the same vein as posited by Starkey (2003) when he asserts the salience of promoting commitment to democracy, which can be done in “developing language skills

and simultaneously developing the skills of citizenship" (p. 79), and as per the fourth research question, which seeks to elucidate whether intentional interventions in the FL classroom may contribute to the development of adult learners' awareness of European values, the results presented in this work have unearthed solid linkages between relational forms of intercultural capital and the willingness to accommodate shared European democratic principles and values, such as the appreciation for linguistic diversity and multilingualism.

Drawing on the results to the four research questions, the central contribution of this work lies in substantiating the importance of establishing communities of dialogical and reflective practice in the FL classroom environment, encompassing the integration of relevant thematic content (van Lier, 2004) and a mediated approach (North & Piccardo, 2019) as critical variables in the development of collaborative activities and joint co-construction of new meaning. To that end, on the conceptual level, context dependence of social identities has been explored, ascertaining that European, national or local identities are not mechanically linked to the Self in any given interaction that language users participate in, but rather that every individual may invoke different aspects of their identity depending on a particular communicative situation (Verkuyten, 2005).

In this sense, the positions held herein concur with the point eloquently expressed by Warleigh (2006) that it is imperative for citizens of member states to be frequently reminded of the usefulness of the EU, if they are to partake in the development of public policies to cope with economy-driven globalisation, which could in turn enhance constituents' capacity to have a say in Community decision-making. The rationale behind this conclusion is two-fold: firstly, in line with the scholarship reviewed in Study 1, and with tenets like *egocentric* and *sociotropic utilitarism* (McLaren, 2004; Tchistiakova & Waechter, 2016), the second study included in this work has pointed to utilitarian motivations as the primary driver of public support for the EU; secondly, as negotiated demands directly affect the political rights and obligations of members of society, so do they imply identity claims. Consequently, without a discrete *citizen* identity, democracy would not exist (Tilly 2003), but neither could it flourish without robust intercultural dialogue.

In sum, the empirical application of mediation as a linguistic activity (CEFR/CV, Council of Europe, 2018a), testing its effect on both the collaborative aspects of communication and the role of the language learner as a social agent, is the main advance of this work. In this regard, the suitability MeLLE has been gauged through the

implementation of an-hoc designed communicative mediation activities, opting for music as a thematic core for its delivery in the language classroom, owing to the intimate relationship between music and identity, both at the individual and group level, and even at the national level (Leijonhufvud, 2018). Tangentially, the findings yielded by the study thus seem to support the benefits of music-themed classroom activities for the delivery of mediated, collaborative groupwork and for the enhancement of socio-emotional skills that are desirable in undertaking and maintaining relational communication. Interestingly, these last results echo those obtained by Donato and MacCormick (1994) in a pioneering study of artifact-mediated language learning, which reported on the benefits of purposefully socialising students in the strategic co-construction of learning through a dialogical process with the self and the teacher, and the recording of evidence of their growing abilities, using a portfolio assessment procedure.

### *5.1. Limitations*

Each of the studies listed here points out its own limitations, referring either to the methodology applied or to the possibility of extrapolating the results obtained according to the population under study. Thus, the first of the articles, presented in section 4.2, solely analyses, in its literature review, studies of a qualitative and quasi-quantitative nature, and would therefore benefit from complementary conclusions drawn from quantitative works.

As for the second article, presented in section 4.3, its novelty lies in the qualitative methodology applied, rather than adopting a quantitative approach like previous studies exploring whether participation in the Erasmus programme brings about change in European identity. The method used here discloses the students' genuine perceptions and representations of European identity. However, its approach also entails that the study faces some limitations despite the considerable sample size of the target groups and the depth of qualitative information retrieved, as the results may not be applicable to other higher education settings.

Regarding the tentative results of the study reported in section 4.4, its authors suggest the need to carry out a broader longitudinal study over an extended period of time to empirically confirm the effects of this type of pedagogic intervention on foreign language adult learners.

### *5.2. Future research directions*

As mentioned above, the results obtained in Study 1 reveal conflicting academic positions regarding cross-border individual practices, both academic and spontaneous, whose positive impact is not consistently corroborated. Additional empirical evidence would fully substantiate the European Union's education policy agenda and justify mobility programme funding in the years to come, particularly if closer consideration were to be paid to the assumption of civic and democratic European values by the sojourners or to the increase of their intercultural capital.

Along the same lines, and notwithstanding its limitations, the conclusions submitted in Study 2 also deserve thorough attention by education policy-makers and experts, as they suggest that pan-European programmes, such as Erasmus+, might not be bearing the expected fruit in terms of improving European identity building. Therefore, future studies could stand to benefit from further examination of this issue, by monitoring the impact of intercontinental academic sojourns on European students' supranational self-identification.

As for Study 3, the tentative results suggest the need to carry out broader longitudinal studies over an extended period of time to empirically confirm the effects of mediated language learning pedagogic interventions on FL adult learners. On the other hand, the results of the mediated approach adopted could be contrasted with a MeLLE based on a range of thematic contents, in order to isolate the effect produced by this methodology and disassociate it from the imprint of the substantive topic of music.

Finally, despite most subjects of the empirical studies conducted being FL students, no significant mention was made to the role of English as a lingua franca in Europe, or to the place held by foreign languages in speakers' conceptualisations of the Self and of their social identities. Thus, future research on the subject under study might benefit from further addressing metalinguistic awareness and critical language and culture identity reflection in tandem.

### *5.3. Concluding remarks*

FL and culture education have been largely associated with learners' personal development and self-definition, the broadening of speakers' perception of reality and a greater awareness of how it is experienced and internalised by other language users who

have different subjectivities. It has also been credited with bringing about more refined intercultural skills, adding finesse to learners' relationships with culturally diverging interlocutors and opening their horizons to cultural conceptions other than their own.

Similarly, the beneficial influence of co-operative approaches to language learning and teaching has been linked to the improvement of learners' social skills, their willingness to relate to a community of speakers, to seek out new opportunities for interpersonal interaction, to accommodate diverse viewpoints, to relinquish absolute assumptions and to reorient their stances for the attainment of a communal goal.

Conjugating these positions together, the contribution here presented suggests some ways in which FL education can be deployed in order to bring about the transformation towards a more democratic social environment, and an appreciation and/or rapport between different cultural sensitivities through dialogical practices. Finally, potential pedagogical paths are mapped out between the adoption of democratic values and the emergence of a sense of identification with Europe and its institutions.

## References


*10 Trends Shaping Democracy in a Volatile World* (2019). European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC) - European Commission. https://doi.org/102872/506545

Abela, A. M. (2014). *Shaping a National Identity : Malta in the European Union Shaping a National Identity Malta in the European Union*. *March 2015*, 37–41. https://doi.org/10.2753/IJS0020-7659350401

Agirdag, O., Phalet, K., & Van Houtte, M. (2015). European identity as a unifying category: National vs. European identification among native and immigrant pupils. *European Union Politics*, *17*(2), 285–302. https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116515612216

Al-Zubi, M. A. (2017). The Degree of Practicing Democracy in the EFL Classroom According to Perceptions of Instructors. *English Language Teaching*, *11*(1), 136. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n1p136

Alcaraz Mármol, G. (2019). Actitudes frente a la mediación lingüística en un contexto de Educación Secundaria. *Revista Nebrija de Lingüística Aplicada a La Enseñanza de Las Lenguas*, *13*(27), 112–128. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26378/rnlael1327322

Alderson, J. C. (2007). The CEFR and the Need for More Research. *The Modern Language Journal*, *91*(4), 659–663. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4626093

Alred, G., & Byram, M. (2002). Becoming an intercultural mediator: a longitudinal study of residence abroad. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *23*(5), 339–352.

Amiot, C. E., Sablonnière, R. De, Terry, D. J., Smith, J. R., Amiot, C. E., Sablonnière, R. De, Terry, D. J., & Smith, J. R. (2007). Integration of Social Identities in the Self: Toward a Cognitive-Developmental Model. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *11*, 364–388. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868307304091

Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.

Anderson, P. (2002). Questions of democracy, territoriality and globalisation. In P. Anderson (Ed.), *Transnational Democracy. Political spaces and border crossing* (pp. 6–38). London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004

Anton, C. E., & Lawrence, C. (2016). The relationship between place attachment, the theory of planned behaviour and residents' response to place change. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2016.05.010

Antonsich, M. (2009). National identities in the age of globalisation: The case of Western Europe. *National Identities*, *11:3*, 281–299. https://doi.org/10.1080/14608940903081085

Archibald, J., & Garzone, G. (2014). Conceptualising Linguistic and Cultural Mediation. *Lingue Culture Mediazioni / Languages Cultures Mediation*, *1*(1–2), 7–16. https://doi.org/10.7358/lcm-2014-0102-arch

Aronin, L., & Singleton, D. (2010). Affordances and the diversity of multilingualism.

*International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *205*, 105–129.

Aronin, L., & Singleton, D. (2012). Affordances theory in multilingualism studies. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *2*(3), 311–331.

Backus, A., Gorter, D., Knapp, K., Schjerve-rindler, R., Swanenberg, J., Thije, J. D., & Vetter, E. (2013). Inclusive Multilingualism: Concept, Modes and Implications. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *1*(2), 179–215. https://doi.org/10.1515/eujal-2013-0010

Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. (E. Holquist & T. C. Emerson (Eds.)). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change. *Psychological Review*, *84*(2), 191–215.

Bandura, A. (2001). Social Cognitive Theory: An Agentic Perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1

Bang, H., Jensen, M. D., & Nedergaard, P. (2015). "We the People" versus "We the Heads of States": the debate on the democratic deficit of the European Union. *Policy Studies*, *36*(2), 196–216. https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2014.1000846

Banks, J. A., Banks, C. A. M., Cortés, C. E., Merryfield, M. M., Moodley, K. A., Murphy-Shigematsu, S., Osler, A., Park, C., & Parker, W. C. (2005). *Democracy and diversity: Principles and concepts for educating citizens in a global age*. Seattle: University of Washington, Center for Multicultural Education.

Banús, E. (2015). Education to Intercultural Dialogue. In L. Bekemans (Ed.), *Intercultural Dialogue and Multi-level Governance in Europe. A Human Rights Based Approach* (pp. 331–338). Brussels: Peter Lang. https://doi.org/10.3726/978-3-0352-6220-9

Barbieri, I., & Zani, B. (2015). Multiple Sense of Community, Identity, and Well-Being in a Context of Multi Culture: a Mediation Model. *Community Psychology in Global Perspective*, *1*(2), 40–60.

Barnett, R. (1997). *Higher Education: A Critical Business*. Buckingham: SRHE/Open University Press.

Barrett, M., Byram, M., De Bivar Black, L., Faltyn, J., Lenz, C., Mompoint-Gallard, P., Natriashvili, K., Popović, M., Rus, C., Sala, S., van't Land, H., Voskresenskaya, N., & Zgaga, P. (2016). *Competences for democratic culture. Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies.* Strasbourg-Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.

Barrett, M., Byram, M., Ipgrave, J., & Seurrat, A. (2013). *Images of Others: An Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media*. Strasbourg-Cedex: Council of Europe.

Bartkowski, J., & Jasińska-Kania, A. (2004). Voluntary Organizations and the Development of Civil Society. In W. Arts & L. Halman (Eds.), *European Values at the Turn of the Millennium* (Issue 7, pp. 109–138). Leiden: Brill.

Bassole, D. E. (2018). *Diplomatic Ambiguity in Interpreter-Mediated Communication* (Issue March) [University of Pretoria].

https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/65534/Bassole_Diplomatic_2018.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Bauer, B., DeBenedette, L., Furstenberg, G., Levet, S., & Waryn, S. (2006). Internet-mediated intercultural foreign language education: The Cultura project. *Internet-Mediated Intercultural Foreign Language Education*, 31–62.

Bauman, Z. (2005). Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies Education in Liquid Modernity. *Review of Education, Pedagogy and Cultural Studies*, *27*(4), 303–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714410500338873

Bautista Pérez, N. Y. (2017). Constructing Sociocultural Awareness from the EFL Classroom. *Gist Education and Learning Research Journal*, *15*, 149–172.

Beacco, J. C., Byram, M., Cavalli, M., Coste, D., Cuenat, M. E., Goullier, F., & Panthier, J. (2016). *Guide for the Development and Implementation of Curricula for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education*. Strasbourg-Cedex: Education Policy Division. Council of Europe Publishing.

Beck, U. (2006). *Cosmopolitan Vision*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beck, Ulrich, & Grande, E. (2007). Cosmopolitanism. Europe's Way Out of Crisis. *European Journal of Social Theory*, *10*(1), 67–85. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431006068758

Bee, C. (2008). The "Institutionally Constructed" European Identity : Citizenship and Public Sphere Narrated by the Commission. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, *9*(4), 431–450. https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850802416861

Bekemans, L. (2007). General Conclusion. In L. Bekemans, M. Karasinska-Fendler, M. Mascia, A. Papisca, C. A. Stephanou, & P. G. Xuereb (Eds.), *Intercultural Dialogue and Citizenship. Translating Values into Actions. A Common Project for Europeans and Their Partners* (pp. 651–665). Venice: Marsilio Editori.

Bekemans, L. (Ed.). (2012). Intercultural Dialogue and Multi-level Governance in Europe. A Human Rights Based Approach. In *Intercultural Dialogue and Multi-level Governance in Europe. A Human Rights Based Approach*. New York: P.I.E. Peter Lang.

Bennett, J. M., & Bennett, M. J. (2004). An integrative approach to global and domestic diversity. In D. Landis, J. M. Bennett, & M. J. Bennett (Eds.), *Handbook of intercultural training* (Third, pp. 147–165). Thousand Oaks: SAGE publications.

Bennett, M. J. (1993). How Not to Be a Fluent Fool: Understanding the Cultural Dimension of Language. *The Language Teacher*, *27*(9).

Bennett, R., Aston, A., & Colquhoun, T. (2000). Cross-cultural training: A critical step in ensuring the success of international assignments. *Human Resource Management*, *39*(2–3), 239–250. https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-050X(200022/23)39:2/3<239::AID-HRM12>3.0.CO;2-J

Bentley, T. (1994). Facilitation : Providing Opportunities for Learning. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 18 (5), 8–22.

Bergan, S. (2015). *About the project Competences for Democratic Culture and Intercultural Dialogue*. Council of Europe Education Portal.

https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/about-the-project-competences-for-democratic-culture-and-intercultural-dialogue

Berger, P., & Luckmann., T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality*. London: Penguin.

Berry, J., Kim, U., Power, S., Young, M., & Bujaki, M. (1989). Acculturation attitudes in plural societies. *Applied Psychology*, *38*(2), 185–206.

Bhatia, S. (2008). Rethinking culture and identity in psychology : Towards a transnational cultural psychology. *Journal of Theoretical and Philoshophical Psychology*, *28*(1). https://doi.org/10.1037/h0091298

Biedenkopf, K., Geremek, B., Michalski, K., & Rocard, M. (2005). What holds Europe together? Concluding remarks. In K. Michalski (Ed.), *What holds Europe together?* Budapest: Central European University Press. http://books.openedition.org/ceup/1784

Biesta, G. J. J. (2011). *Learning democracy in school and society: Education, lifelong learning and the politics of citizenship.* Rotterdam: SensePublishers.

Block, D. (2003). *The social turn in second language acquisition.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Block, D. (2007a). *Second Language Identities*. London: Continuum.

Block, D. (2007b). The Rise of Identity in SLA Research, Post Firth and Wagner (1997). *The Modern Language Journal*, *91*(1997), 863–876. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0026-7902.2007.00674.x

Blommaert, J., & Rampton, B. (2011). Language and Superdiversity. *Diversities*, *13*(2), 1–23. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000214772.nameddest=214781

Blummer, B. (2015). Some Visual Literacy Initiatives in Academic Institutions: A Literature Review from 1999 to the Present. *Journal of Visual Literacy*, *34*(1), 1–34. https://doi.org/10.1080/23796529.2015.11674721

Bocanegra-Valle, A. (2015). Intercultural learners, intercultural brokers and ESP classrooms: The case of a shipping business course. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *173*, 106–112. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.02.038

Boehnke, K., & Fuss, D. (2008). What part does Europe play in the identity building of young European adults? *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, *9*(4), 466–479. https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850802416887

Borghetti, C. (2011). How to teach it? Proposal for a methodological model of intercultural competence. In A. Witte & T. Harden (Eds.), *Intercultural Competence: Concepts, Challenges, Evaluations* (pp. 141–160). Oxford: Peter Lang.

Borghetti, C. (2013). Integrating intercultural and communicative objectives in the foreign language class : a proposal for the integration of two models. *The Language Learning Journal*, *41*(3), 254–267. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2013.836344

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241–258). New York: Greenwood Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power*. Oxford: Polity.

Brodsky, A. E., & Marx, C. M. (2001). Layers of identity: Multiple psychological senses of community within a community setting. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *29*(2), 161–178.

Brown, B., Perkins, D. D., & Brown, G. (2003). Place attachment in a revitalizing neighborhood : Individual and block levels of analysis. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *23*, 259–271. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(02)00117-2

Brown, D. N. (2002). Mediated learning and foreign language acquisition. *Asp*, 35–36.

Bruter, M. (2003). Winning hearts and minds for Europe: The Impact of News and Symbols on Civic and Cultural European Identity. *Comparative Political Studies*, *36*(10), 1148–1179. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414003257609

Byram, M. (1989). Intercultural education and foreign language teaching. *World Studies Journal*, *7*(2), 4–7.

Byram, M. (1992). Foreign language learning for European citizenship. *Language Learning Journal*, *6*(1), 10–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571739285200341

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (2000). Social identity and foreign language teaching. In M. Byram & M. Tost Planet (Eds.), *Social Identity and the European Dimension: Intercultural Competence Through Foreign Language Learning* (Council of, pp. 17–24).

Byram, M. (2008). *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship. Essays and reflections*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M., Barrett, M., Ipgrave, J., Jackson, R., & Méndez, C. (2009). *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters: Context, Concepts and Theories*. Strasbourg-Cedex: Language Policy Division, Council of Europe Publishing. http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/autobiography/source/aie_en/aie_context_concepts_and_theories_en.pdf

Byram, M., Nichols, A., & Stevens, D. (2001). *Developing Intercultural Competence in Practice* (M. Byram, A. Nichols, & D. Stevens (Eds.)). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M., & Parmenter, L. (Eds.). (2012). *The Common European Framework of Reference: The Globalisation of Language Policy.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M., & Zarate, G. (1994). *Definitions, Objectives and Assessment of Socio-Cultural Competence (Doc. CC-LANG (94) 1).* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Byram, M., & Zarate, G. (1996). Defining and assessing intercultural competence: Some principles and proposals for the European context. *Language Teaching*, *29*(4), 239–243. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444800008557

Calligaro, O. (2013). *Negotiating Europe: EU Promotion of Europeanness since the 1950s.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137369901

Cantero Serena, F. J., & De Arriba García, C. (2004). Actividades de mediación lingüística para la clase de ELE. *Revista Elecrónica de Didáctica Del Español Como*

*Lengua Extranjera RedELE*, *2*. http://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/dam/jcr:f229483a-1f50-4b1b-921c-cd323e788d61/2004-redele-2-05cantero-pdf.pdf

Castano, E., Yzerbyt, V., & Bourguignon, D. (2003). We are one and I like it: The impact of ingroup entitativity on ingroup identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *33*(6), 735–754. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.175

Catarci, M. (2016). Intercultural Mediation as a strategy to facilitate relations between the School and Immigrant Families. Mediación intercultural como estrategia para facilitar las relaciones entre la escuela y las familias inmigrantes. *Revista Electrónica Interuniversitaria de Formación Del Profesorado*, *19*(1), 127–140.

Catterall, P. (2011). Democracy , cosmopolitanism and national identity in a "globalising" world. *National Identities*, *13*(4), 329–347.

Ceka, B., & Sojka, A. (2016). Loving it but not feeling it yet? The state of European identity after the eastern enlargement. *European Union Politics*, *17*(3), 482–503. https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116516631142

Chen, G. M. (2014). Intercultural communication competence: Summary of 30-year research and directions for future study. In X. Dai & G. M. Chen (Eds.), *Intercultural communication competence: Conceptualization and its development in cultural contexts and interactions* (pp. 4–29). London: Cambridge Scholars.

Chryssochoou, D. (1998). *Democracy in the European Union*. London: Tauris.

Cirlanaru, K. (2016). A Europeanisation of identities? Quantitative analysis of space-based collective identities in Europe. In V. Kaina, I. P. Karolewski, & S. Kuhn (Eds.), *European Identity Revisited. New approaches and recent empirical evidence* (Issue May 2016, pp. 84–114). Oxon: Taylor & Francis, Routledge.

Citrin, J., & Sides, J. (2004). "More than Nationals: How Identity Choice Matters in the New Europe." In R. K. Herrmann, T. Risse, & M. B. Brewer (Eds.), *Transnational Identities. Becoming European in the EU* (pp. 161–185). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Clark, T. (2006). Language as social capital. *Applied Semiotics*, *8*(18), 29–41.

Cole, D., & Meadows, B. (2013). Reimagining Sociolinguistic Identification in Foreign Language Classroom Communities of Practice. In D. J. Rivers & S. A. Houghton (Eds.), *Social Identities and Multiple Selves in Foreign Language Education* (pp. 121–138). London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Coste, D., & Cavalli, M. (2015). Education, mobility, otherness: The mediation functions of schools. Strasbourg*: Council of Europe DGII-Directorate General of Democracy, Language Policy Unit*.

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Strasbourg: Cambridge University Press.

Council of Europe. (2008). "Living together asequals in dignity." *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue.*, *May*. https://doi.org/10.1080/002075997400629

Council of Europe. (2015). *CEFR Extended Set of Illustrative Descriptors: Focus on Mediation. Validation Phase 1*. (Issue Appendix 4).

Council of Europe. (2018a). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages:*

*Learning, teaching, assessment. Companion Volume with new descriptors*. https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989

Council of Europe. (2018b). *Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching ST/9010/2018/INIT* (Vol. 195, pp. 1–5). Official Journal of the European Union.

Council of Europe. (2018c). *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (Vol. 1). Strabourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Council of Europe. (2019). *Learning to live together. Council of Europe report on the state of citizenship and human rights education in Europe*.

Cram, L. (2012). Does the EU need a navel? Implicit and explicit identification with the European Union. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *50*(1), 71–86. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2011.02207.x

Cram, L., Patrikios, S., & Mitchell, J. (2011). *What Does the European Union Mean to its Citizens? Implicit Triggers, Identity(ies) and Attitudes to the European Union*. APSA 2011 Annual Meeting Paper. https://ssrn.com/abstract=1900063

Curtis, K. A. (2014). Inclusive versus exclusive: A cross-national comparison of the effects of subnational, national, and supranational identity. *European Union Politics*, *15*(4), 521–546. https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116514528058

Dalton, R. (2011). Citizens' attitudes and political behaviour. *Comparative Political Studies*, *3*(6–7), 912–940.

Dalton, R. J., & Welzel, C. (Eds.). (2014). *The Civic Culture Transformed. From Allegiant to Assertive Citizens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Danks, J. H. (1997). *Cognitive processing in translation and interpreting* (J. H. Danks, G. M. Shreve, S. B. Fountain, & M. . McBeath (Eds.)). London: Sage Publications.

Davidov, E., Schmidt, P., & Schwartz, S. H. (2008). Bringing values back in the adequacy of the European Social Survey to measure values in 20 countries. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *72*(3), 420–445. https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfn035

De Arriba García, C., & Cantero Serena, F. J. (2004). La mediación lingüística en la enseñanza de lenguas. *Didáctica (Lengua y Literatura)*, *16*, 9–21.

De Groof, J. (2015). Thoughts on Autonomy in Policy and Law within the European Higher Education Space. In L. Bekemans (Ed.), *Intercultural Dialogue and Multi-level Governance in Europe. A Human Rights Based Approach* (pp. 81–140). Brussels: Peter Lang.

de Moor, R. (1995). *Values in Western Societies*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.

De Winter, M. (2012). *Socialization and civil society*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

DeLeon, P. (1994). Democracy and the Policy Sciences: Aspirations and Operations. *Policy Studies Journal*, *22*(2), 200–212.

Dendrinos, B. (2006). Mediation in communication, language teaching and testing. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *22*, 9–36.

Dendrinos, B. (2013). Testing and teaching mediation. *Directions in Language Teaching*

*and Testing, 1*. http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/directions/issue1_1f.htm

Dervin, Fred. (2009). Transcending the Culturalist Impasse in Stays Abroad: Helping Mobile Students to Appreciate Diverse Diversities. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 119–141.

Deters, P. (2011). *Identity, Agency and the Acquisition of Professional Language and Culture*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Deutsch, K. (1966). *Nationalism and Social Communication.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Devoss, D., Jasken, J., & Hayden, D. (2002). Teaching intracultural and intercultural communication: A critique and suggested method. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *16*(1), 69–94. https://doi.org/10.1177/1050651902016001003

Deygers, B. (2019). The CEFR Companion Volume: Between Research-Based Policy and Policy-Based Research. *Applied Linguistics*, 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amz024

Díaz, A. R. (2013). *Developing Critical Languaculture Pedagogies in Higher Education: Theory and Practice*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Díez Medrano, J. (2017). Multilingualism and European Identification. *Sociological Inquiry*, *88*(3), 410–434. https://doi.org/10.1111/soin.12211

Díez Medrano, J., & Gutiérrez, P. (2001). Nested identities: National and European identity in Spain. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *24*(5), 753–778. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870120063963

Dimitrakopoulos, D. G., & Lalis, G. (2020). The European Union's reaction to the Covid-19 Pandemic - a preliminary assessment. *The London School of Economics and Political Science*. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2020/03/27/the-european-unions-reaction-to-the-covid-19-pandemic-a-preliminary-assessment/

Dogan, M. (2002). Dissatisfaction and mistrust in West European democracies. *European Review*, *10*(1), 91–114.

Donato, R., & MacCormick, D. (1994). A Sociocultural Perspective on Language Learning Strategies: The Role of Mediation. *The Modern Language Journal*, *78*(4), 453–464.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition*. Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dryzek, J. S. (2002). *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond Liberals, Critics, Contestations* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Duchesne, S. (2010). L'identité européenne, entre science politique et science fiction. *Politique Européenne*, *30*(1), 7. https://doi.org/10.3917/poeu.030.0007

Duchesne, S., & Frognier, A. (2008). National and European Identifications: A Dual Relationship. *Comparative European Politics*, *6*, 143–168. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.cep.6110128

Duff, P., & Uchida, Y. (1997). The negotiation of sociocultural identity in post-secondary

EFL classrooms. *TESOL Quarterly*, *31*(3), 451–486.

Dusi, P., Messetti, G., & Steinbach, M. (2014). Skills, Attitudes, Relational Abilities & Reflexivity: Competences for a Multicultural Society. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *112*, 538–547. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.1200

Dvir, Y., & Yemini, M. (2016). Mobility as a continuum : European commission mobility policies for schools and higher education Mobility as a continuum : European commission mobility policies. *Journal of Education Policy*, *0939*(October), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2016.1243259

Earley, P. C., & Ang, S. (2003). *Cultural intelligence: Individual interactions across cultures*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.

Eder, C., Mochmann, I. C., & Quandt, M. (Eds.). (2014). *Political trust and disenchantment with politics: international perspectives*. Leiden: Brill.

Elexpuru Albizuri, I., Villardón Gallego, L., & Yániz Álvarez de Eulate, C. (2013). Identificación y desarrollo de valores en estudiantes universitarios. *Revista de Educación*, 186–216. https://doi.org/10.4438/1988-592X-RE-2011-362-158

Erling, E. J. (2007). Local identities, global connections: affinities to English among students at the Freie Universität Berlin. *World Englishes*, *26*(2), 111–130.

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice. (2016). Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education: Overview of education policy developments in Europe following the Paris Declaration of 17 March 2015. *Publications Office of the European Union*, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.2797/396908

*European Parliament 13-16 January Strasbourg plenary session newsletter*. (2020). Press Service, Directorate General for Communication. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdfs/news/expert/2020/1/briefing/20200106BRI69601/20200106BRI69601_en.pdf

Falanga, R., De Caroli, M. E., & Sagone, E. (2010). Ingroup and sense of local, regional, national and European identity in adolescence. A research contribution in Sicilian context. *International Journal of Developmental and Educational Pshychology*, *4*(1), 571–580.

Fernández, J. J., Eigmüller, M., & Börner, S. (2016). Domestic transnationalism and the formation of pro-European sentiments. *European Union Politics*, *17*(3), 457–481. https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116516633536

Fernández, Ó. (2005). Towards European Citizenship through Higher Education? *European Journal of Education*, *40*(1), 59–68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaci.2009.11.036

Feuerstein, R., & Feuerstein, S. (1991). Mediated Learning Experience: A Theoretical Review. In R. Feuerstein, P. S. Klein, & A. J. Tannenbaum (Eds.), *Mediated Learning Experience (MLE): Theoretical, Psychological and Learning Implications* (pp. 3–53). London: Freund Publishing House Ltd.

Firth, A., & Wagner, J. (1997). On discourse, communication, and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA research. *Modern Language Journal*, *81*(3), 285–300.

Fishman, J. A. (1991). *Reversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Fligstein, N. (2009). Who Are the Europeans? In *Euroclash* (pp. 123–158). Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199580859.003.0005

Fonseca-Mora, M. C. (2020). Emotion in Language Learning and Pedagogy. In G. L. Schiewer, J. Altarriba, & B. C. Ng (Eds.), *Language and Emotion: An International Handbook*. Berlin: DeGruyter Mouton.

Fonseca-Mora, M. C., & González Davies, M. (in press). CEFR Mediation Strategies: Towards a Socio-emotionally Enhanced Plurilingual Language Education. In North, B., Piccardo, E., Goodier, T., Fasoglio, D., Margonis, R., & Rüschoff, B. (Eds.) (in press). *Enriching 21st century language education: The CEFR Companion Volume, examples from practice*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Fragnière, G. (2015). Multiculturalism vs. Interculturalism in Educational Practices. In L. Bekemans (Ed.), *Intercultural Dialogue and Multi-level Governance in Europe. A Human Rights Based Approach* (pp. 339–349). Brussels: Peter Lang. https://doi.org/10.3726/978-3-0352-6220-9

Freire, P. (1998). The adult literacy process as cultural action for freedom. *Harvard Educational Review*, *68*(4), 480–498.

Fuchs, D. (2011). Cultural diversity, European identity and the legitimacy of the EU: A theoretical framework. In Dieter Fuchs & H.-D. Klingemann (Eds.), *Cultural Diversity, European Identity and the Legitimacy of the EU* (pp. 27–60). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Fukada, Y., Murphey, T., Falout, J., & Fukuda, T. (2017). Essential Motivational Group Dynamics: A 3-Year Panel Study. In R. Breeze & C. Sancho Guinda (Eds.), *Essential Competencies for English-medium University Teaching* (pp. 249–266). Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-40956-6

Fukuyama, F. (2000). *Social Capital and Civil Society* (WP/00/74).

Gao, Y. (2007). Legitimacy of foreign language learning and identity research: Structuralist and Constructivist Perspectives. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, *16*(1), 100–112.

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. . (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning*. Rowley: Newbury House.

Garib, G. (2012). Identifying Variables Predictive of Endorsing a European Identity. *Identity*, *12*(3), 266–273. https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2012.691253

Gfeller, E. (2000). Language Education for a Pluralistic Society. In M. Leicester, C. Modgil, & S. Modgil (Eds.), *Classroom Issues: Practice, Pedagogy and Curriculum, Volume III* (pp. 252–270). London: Falmer Press.

Giles, H., & Byrne, J. (1982). An intergroup approach to second language acquisition. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *3*(1), 17–41.

Gnutzmann, C., Jakisch, J., & Rabe, F. (2014). English as a lingua franca: A source of

identity for young Europeans? *Multilingua*, *33*(3–4), 437–457. https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2014-0020

Göbel, K., & Helmke, A. (2010). Intercultural learning in English as foreign language instruction : The importance of teachers' intercultural experience and the usefulness of precise instructional directives. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *26*(8), 1571–1582. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.05.008

Gohard-Radenkovic, A., Lussier, D., Penz, H., & Zarate, G. (2004). Cultural mediation in language learning and teaching as a process. In G. Zarate, A. Gohard-Radenkovic, D. Lussier, & H. Penz (Eds.), *Cultural mediation in language learning and teaching* (pp. 215–225). European Centre for Modern Languages. Strasbourg-Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.

Gould, R. (2011). Managing Ambivalence and Identity: Immigration Discourses and (Trans) National Identities in the European Union. In J. De Bardelen & A. Hurrelmann (Eds.), *Transnational Europe: Promise, Paradox, Limits* (pp. 170–188). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Grundy, S., & Jamieson, L. (2005). Are we all Europeans now? Local, national and supranational identities of young adults. *Sociological Research Online*, *10*(3), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.1142

Gu, M. (2009). *The Discursive Construction of Second Language Learners' Motivation. A Multi-level Perspective*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Gubbins, P. (2002). Lost in Translation: EU Language Policy in an Expanded Europe. In M. Holt & P. Gubbins (Eds.), *Beyond Boundaries: Language and Identity in Contemporary Europe* (pp. 46–58). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Haas, E. (1997). *The Rise and Decline of Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Habermas, J. (1996). *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Hadfield, A., & Summerby-Murray, R. (2016). Vocation or vocational? Reviewing European Union education and mobility structures. *European Journal of Higher Education*, *6*(3), 237–255. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2015.1099453

Hadler, M., Tsutsui, K., & Chin, L. G. (2012). *Conflicting and Reinforcing Identities in Expanding Europe : Individual- and Country-Level Factors Shaping National and European Identities , 1995 – 2003 1*. *27*(2), 1995–2003. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1573-7861.2012.01323.x

Han, H. (2014). Transforming EFL classes from lecturing to cooperative learning. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *5*(4), 948–952. https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.5.4.948-952

Healy, M., & Richardson, M. (2017). Images and identity: Children constructing a sense of belonging to Europe. *European Educational Research Journal*, *16*(4), 440–454. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904116674015

Heinrich, P. (2019). *Flags and fridges: an experimental approach to the relationship between trust and implicit attachment to the European Union* [The University of Edinburgh]. http://hdl.handle.net/1842/35871

Helliwell, J. F., & Putnam, R. D. (2007). Education and social capital. *Eastern Economic Journal*, *33*(1), 1–19.

Henn, M., & Foard, N. (2014). Social differentiation in young people' s political participation: the impact of social and educational factors on youth political engagement in Britain. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *17*(3), 360–380. https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2013.830704

Hernández, B., Hidalgo, M. C., Salazar-Laplace, M. E., & Hess, S. (2007). Place attachment and place identity in natives and non-natives. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *27*, 310–319. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2007.06.003

Heyward, M. M. (2000). Intercultural literacy and the international school. *International Schools Journal*, *14*(2), 29–36.

Heyward, M. M. (2002). From international to intercultural. Redefining the international school for a globalized world. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *1*(1), 9–32. https://doi.org/10.1177/147524090211002

Hill, J., & Wilson, T. (2010). Identity Politics and the Politics of Identities. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, *10*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1080/10702890304336

Hirschhausen, U. v., & Patel, K. K. (2010). Europeanization and history: An introduction. In M. Conway & K. K. Patel (Eds.), *Europeanization in the twentieth century: Historical approaches* (pp. 1–18). New York: Palgrave.

Hockly, N., Dudeney, G., & Pegrum, M. (2014). *Digital Literacies*. Routedge.

Holt, M., & Gubbins, P. (2002). Indroduction. In Paul Gubbins & M. Holt (Eds.), *Beyond Boundaries: Language and Identity in Contemporary Europe* (pp. 1–10). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2009). A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus. *British Journal of Political Science*, *39*(01), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123408000409

Hornberger, N. H. (2007). Biliteracy, transnationalism, multimodality, and identity: Trajectories across time and space. *Linguistics and Education*, *18*(3–4), 325–334. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2007.10.001

Houghton, S. A. (2012). *Intercultural Dialogue in Practice: Managing Value Judgement in Foreign Language Education.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Houghton, S. A. (2013). Setting Standards for Intercultural Communication: Universalism and Identity Change. In D. J. Rivers & S. A. Houghton (Eds.), *Social Identities and Multiple Selves in Foreign Language Education* (pp. 195–214). London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Huang, H., & Wu, Y. (2012). Communicative acts: Intentionality, contextuality and reciprocity. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *44*(1), 116–122. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.10.008

Huang, J., van den Brink, H. M., & Groot, W. (2009). A meta-analysis of the effect of education on social capital. *Economics of Education Review*, *28*, 454–464. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2008.03.004

Hüller, T., & Kohler-Koch, B. (2008). Assessing the Democratic Value of Civil Society Engagement in the European Union. In B. Kohler-Koch, D. d. Bièvre, & W. Maloney (Eds.), *Eu-governance to civil society: gains and challenges* (pp. 145–181). Manheimm: SSOAR.

Inglehart, R. (1970). Cognitive Mobilization and European Identity. *Comparative Politics*, *3*(1), 45–70.

Irishkanova, K., Röcklinsberg, O. O., & Zaharia, I. A. (2004). Empathy as part of cultural mediation. In G. Zarate, A. Gohard-Radenkovic, D. Lussier, & H. Penz (Eds.), *Cultural mediation in language learning and teaching* (pp. 101–129). European Centre for Modern Languages. Strasbourg-Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.

Iusmen, I., & Boswell, J. (2016). The dilemmas of pursuing "troughput legitimacy" through participatory mechanisms. *Western European Politics*. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2016.1206380

Jacobone, V., & Moro, G. (2015). Evaluating the impact of the Erasmus programme: skills and European identity. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, *40*(2), 309–328. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2014.909005

Jørgensen, J. N., Karrebæk, M. S., Madsen, L. M., & Møller, J. S. (2011). Polylanguaging in Superdiversity. *Diversities*, *13*(2), 23–38. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000214772.nameddest=214781

Kadianaki, I., & Andreouli, E. (2015). Essentialism in Social Representations of Citizenship: An Analysis of Greeks ' and Migrants ' Discourse. *Political Psychology*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12271

Kaina, V. (2013). How to reduce disorder in european identity research. *European Political Science*, *12*(2), 184–196. https://doi.org/10.1057/eps.2012.39

Kaina, V., & Karolewski, I. P. (2013). EU governance and European identity. *Living Reviews in European Governance*, *8*(1), 1–59. https://doi.org/10.12942/lreg-2013-1

Kaina, V., Karolewski, I. P., & Kuhn, S. (Eds.). (2016). *European Identity Revisited. New approaches and recent empirical evidence*. Oxon: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Kaldor, M. (2003). American power: from "compellance" to cosmopolitanism? *International Affairs*, *79*(1), 1–22.

Kanno, Y., & Norton, B. (2009). *Journal of Language , Identity & Imagined Communities and Educational Possibilities : Introduction*. *October 2014*, 37–41. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327701JLIE0204

Kantner, C. (2006). Collective Identity as Shared Ethical Self-Understanding. *European Journal of Social Theory*, *9*(4), 501–523. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431006073016

Keating, A. (2016). Are cosmopolitan dispositions learned at home, at school, or through contact with others? Evidence from young people in Europe. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *19*(3), 338–357. https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2015.1072617

Kennedy, R. (2013). The role of supranational identity in promoting democratic values. *European Union Politics*, *14*(2), 228–249.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116512466604

Kindermann, W. (2007). Developing language education policy in Europe and searching for theory. In W. Kindermann (Ed.), *Trascending boundaries. Essays in honor of Gisella Hermann-Brennecke* (pp. 13–28). Berlin: Lit.

King, J. R., & Chetty, R. (2014). Codeswitching : Linguistic and literacy understanding of teaching dilemmas in multilingual classrooms. *Linguistics and Education*, *25*, 40–50. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2013.12.002

Klein, O., Licata, L., Azzi, A. E., & Durala, I. (2003). "How European am I?": Prejudice expression and the presentation of social identity. *Self and Identity*, *2*(3), 37–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860390209044

Klicperová-Baker, M., & Košťál, J. (2016). Toward Empirical Assessment of the European Demos and Public Sphere: Comparing Democratic Value Orientations of Citizens and Elites. In H. G. Sicakkan (Ed.), *Integration, Diversity and the Making of a European Public Sphere* (pp. 183–208). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization remodelled: Definition, approaches and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *8*(1), 5–31.

Kohli, M. (2010). The battlegrounds of European identity. *European Societies*, *2*(2), 113–137.

Kramsch, C. (2008). Ecological perspectives on foreign language education. *Language Teaching*, *41*(03), 389–408. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444808005065

Kratochvíl, P., & Sychra, Z. (2019). The end of democracy in the EU?The Eurozone crisis and the EU's democratic deficit. *Journal of European Integration*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2019.1569001

Krumm, H. (2004). Heterogeneity : multilingualism and democracy. *Utbildning & Demokrati*, *13*(3), 61–77.

Kunschak, C., & Girón, F. (2013). Language, Culture and Identity: Transcultural Practices and Theoretical Implications. In D. J. Rivers & S. A. Houghton (Eds.), *Social Identities and Multiple Selves in Foreign Language Education* (pp. 77–102). London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Kuşdil, M. E., & Şimşek, S. (2008). The importance of values in predicting Turkish youth's opinions about the European Union in light of the Copenhagen Political Criteria. *International Journal of Psychology*, *43*(6), 988–996. https://doi.org/10.1080/00207590701484827

La Barbera, F., Cariota Ferrara, P., & Boza, M. (2014). Where are we coming from versus who we will become: The effect of priming different contents of European identity on cooperation. *International Journal of Psychology*, *49*(6), 480–487. https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12073

Laffan, B. (2004). The European Union and its institutions as identity builders. In R. K. Herrmann, T. Risse, & M. B. Brewer (Eds.), *Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2007). Researching New Literacies: Web 2.0 practices and insider perspectives. *E-Learning*, *4*(3), 224–240.

https://doi.org/10.2304/elea.2007.4.3.224

Lantolf, J. P. (2007). Sociocultural theory: A unified approach to L2 learning and teaching. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 692–701). New York: Springer.

Lantolf, J. P. (2011). The sociocultural approach to second language acquisition: Sociocultural theory, second language acquisition, and artifcial L2 development. In D. Atkinson (Ed.), *Alternative approaches to second language acquisition* (pp. 24–47). New York: Routedge.

Lapresta, C. (2014). Identidad colectiva , ciudadanía e inmigración. Consecuencias para la lengua y la Escuela. *Cultura y Educación: Culture and Education*, *18*(2), 185–200. https://doi.org/10.1174/113564006777973842

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning. Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press.

Lawler, E. J. (1997). Affective attachments to nested groups: The role of rational choice processes. In J. Szmatka, J. Skvoretz, & J. Berger (Eds.), *Status, network, and structure: Theory development in group processes* (pp. 387–403). Stanford: Stanford University Press. https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/articles/1242%0AThis

Lewicka, M. (2008). Place attachment, place identity, and place memory : Restoring the forgotten city past. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *28*, 209–231. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2008.02.001

Liddicoat, A. J. (2015). Intercultural mediation, intercultural communication and translation. *Perspectives : Studies in Translatology Intercultural mediation , intercultural communication and translation*. *August*. https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2014.980279

Lin, Y., & Rancer, A. S. (2003). Ethnocentrism, intercultural communication apprehension, intercultural willingness-to-communicate, and intentions to participate in an intercultural dialogue program: Testing a proposed model. *Communication Research Reports*, *20*(1), 62–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/08824090309388800

Lindner, R., & Méndez Garcia, M. C. (2014). The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media: exploring images of others in telecollaboration. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, *27*(3), 226–243. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2014.977910

Little, D. (2019). The Council of Europe and language education - seventy years, three defining principles and nine milestones. In D. Newby & M. Cavalli (Eds.), *Changing contexts, evolving competences: 25 years of inspiring innovation in language education* (pp. 19–26). Strasbourg-Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.

Llurda, E., Gallego-Balsà, L., Barahona, C., & Martin-Rubió, X. (2016). Erasmus student mobility and the construction of European citizenship. *Language Learning Journal*, *44*(3), 323–346. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2016.1210911

Loughran, T. I. P. (2016). *"A values based electorate?" How do voters in West European Democracies convert their political values into vote choice preferences?* University of Manchester.

Lu, P., & Corbett, J. (2004). An intercultural approach to second language education and citizenship. In Aneta Pavlenko & A. Blackledge (Eds.), *Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Lucarelli, S. (2008). European political identity, foreign policy and the Others' image: An underexplored relationship. In F. Cerutti & S. Lucarelli (Eds.), *The Search for a European Identity. Values, policies and legitimacy of the European Union* (pp. 23–42). London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Luedtke, A. (2005). European integration, public opinion and immigration policy: Testing the impact of national identity. *European Union Politics*, *6*(1), 83–112. https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116505049609

Luhmann, S. (2017). The European identity survey- a bridge between political science and psychology. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, *13*(3), 1260–1282.

Lum, C. M. K. (2018). Developing Intercultural Competence in the Language Classroom. *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*, 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0282

Mau, S., & Mewes, J. (2012). Horizontal Europeanisation in contextual perspective. *European Societies*, *14*(1), 7–34. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2011.638083

Mazzoni, D., Albanesi, C., Ferreira, P. D., Opermann, S., Pavlopoulos, V., & Cicognani, E. (2018). Cross-border mobility, European identity and participation among European adolescents and young adults. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, *15*(3), 324–339. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2017.1378089

McConachy, T. (2017). *Developing Intercultural Perspectives on Language Use: Exploring Pragmatics and Culture in Foreign Language Learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21832/MCCONA9320

McConachy, T., & Liddicoat, A. J. (2016). Meta-pragmatic Awareness and Intercultural Competence: The Role of Reflection and Interpretation in Intercultural Mediation. In F. Dervin & Z. Gross (Eds.), *Intercultural Competence in Education. Alternative aproaches for different times* (pp. 13–30). London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-58733-6_2

McGroarty, M., & Galván, J. L. (1985). Culture as an issue in second language teaching. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Beyond basics: Issues and research in TESOL* (pp. 81–95). Rowley: Newbury House.

McLaren, L. M. (2004). Opposition to European integration and fear of loss of national identity: Debunking a basic assumption regarding hostility to the integration project. *European Journal of Political Research*, *43*(6), 895–912. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0304-4130.2004.00179.x

Meier, G. S. (2017). The multilingual turn as a critical movement in education: assumptions, challenges and a need for reflection. *Applied Linguistics Review*, *8*(1), 131–161. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2016-2010

Méndez García, M. C. (2017). Intercultural reflection through the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters : students' accounts of their images of alterity. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *17*(2), 90–117.

https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2016.1159693

Meyrowitz, J. (1998). Multiple media literacies. *Journal of Communication*, *48*(1), 96–108.

Mitchell, K. (2012). Student mobility and European identity: Erasmus study as a transformative experience. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, *8*(4), 490–518. http://www.imagining.eu/workshop/papers/MITCHELL - Student mobility and European identity.pdf

Mitchell, K. (2015). Rethinking the "Erasmus Effect" on European Identity. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *53*(2), 330–348. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12152

Mora, R. A. (2013). The Notion of Second Languages: Responding to Today' s Linguistic Ecologies. *The Journal for ESL Teachers and Learners*, *II*, 51–59.

Moravcsik, A. (2002). In Defence of the "Democratic Deficit": Reassessing Legitimacy in the European Union*. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *40*(4), 603–624.

Nahapiet, J., & Ghoshal, S. (1998). Social Capital, Intellectual Capital and the Organizational Advantage. *Academy Ol Management Review*, *23*(2), 242–266.

Nario-Redmond, M. R., Biernat, M., Eidelman, S., & Palenske, D. J. (2004). The Social and Personal Identities Scale: A Measure of the Differential Importance Ascribed to Social and Personal Self-Categorizations. *Self and Identity*, *3*(2), 143–175. https://doi.org/10.1080/13576500342000103

North, B. (2007). The CEFR Illustrative Descriptor Scales. *The Modern Language Journal*, *91*(4), 656–659. https://doi.org/1540-4781.2007.00627_3.x

North, B., & Piccardo, E. (2016). *Developing illustrative descriptors of aspects of mediation for the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)*. https://rm.coe.int/developing-illustrative-de- scriptors-of-aspects-of-mediation-for-the-co/1680713e2c

North, B., & Piccardo, E. (2017). Mediation and the social and linguistic integration of migrants: updating the CEFR descriptors. The Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants / L'intégration Linguistique Des Migrants Adultes. In Beacco, J. C., Krumm, H. J., Little, D., Thalgott, P. (Ed.), *Some lessons from research / Les enseignements de la recherche*. (pp. 83-89). Strasbourg: DeGruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110477498-011

North, B., & Piccardo, E. (2019). *Mediation and the CEFR : descriptors for an undervalued concept*. https://www.aks-sprachen.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Brian-North-Enrica-Piccardo-Mediation-and-the-CEFR-descriptors-for-an-undervalued-concept.pdf

Norton, B. (2001). Non-participation, imagined communities, and the language classroom. In M. Breen (Ed.), *Learner contributions to language learning: New directions in research.* (pp. 159–171). London: Pearson Education Limited.

Norton, B. (2010). Language and Identity. In N. H. Hornberger & S. McKay (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and Language Education* (pp. 349–369). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Norton, B. (2018). Identity and investment in multilingual classrooms. In A. Bonnet & P.

Siemund (Eds.), *Foreign Language Education in Multilingual Classrooms* (pp. 237–251). Hamburg: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Norton, B., & McKinney, C. (2011). An Identity Appproach to Second Language Acquisition. In Dwight Atkinson (Ed.), *Approaches to Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 73–94). Abingdon: Routledge.

Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2011). Identity, language learning, and social change. *Language Teaching*, *44*(4), 412–446. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444811000309

Nussbaum, M. C. (2006). Education and Democratic Citizenship : Capabilities and Quality Education. *Journal of Human Development*, 7 (3), 385-395. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880600815974

Olivares Garita, C., & Altamirano Alvarado, J. (2013). IV Congreso Internacional de Lingüística Aplicada UNA. *Building Empathy for the Target Culture in the EFL Classroom*, Heredia: Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica.

Owczarek, D. (2009). The philosophical foundations for developing Intercultural Communicative Competence: The role of dialogue. In M. Kusiak (Ed.), *Dialogue in foreign language education* (pp. 39–46). Krakow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellonskiego.

Oxford, R. L. (1997). Cooperative Learning , Collaborative Learning , and Interaction : Three Communicative Strands in the Language Classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, *81*(iv), 443–456.

Oxford, R. L. (2011). *Teaching and Researching Language Learning Strategies*. London: Routledge.

Paasi, A. (2009). The resurgence of the "Region" and "Regional Identity": theoretical perspectives and empirical observations on regional dynamics in Europe. *Review of International Studies*, *35*(Supplement S1), 121–146. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210509008456

Paige, R. M. (2003). Culture learning in language education: a review of the literature. In D. Lange & R. M. Paige (Eds.), *Culture as the core: perspectives on culture in second language learning* (pp. 173–236). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Painter, J. (2002). Multi-level citizenship, identity and regions in contemporary Europe. In J. Anderson (Ed.), *Transnational Democracy. Political spaces and border crossing*. London: Routledge.

Parker, N. (2002). Differentiating, collaborating, outdoing: Nordic identity and marginality in the contemporary world. *Identities*, *9*(3), 355–381. https://doi.org/10.1080/10702890213973

Pavlenko, A. (2000). Access to linguistic resources: Key variable in second language learning. *Estudios de Sociolingüística*, *1*(2), 85–105.

Pavlenko, A. (2003). (2003). I never knew I was a bilingual: Reimagining teacher identities in TESOL. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, *2*, 251–268.

Pavlenko, A., & Blackledge, A. (2004). Introduction: New Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts. In A. Pavlenko & A.

Blackledge (Eds.), *Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts* (pp. 1–33). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Pavlenko, A., & Norton, B. (2007). Imagined communities, identity, and English language learning. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (Springer I, Vol. 15, pp. 669–680). Boston: Springer. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-46301-8_43

Peng, J., Strijker, D., & Wu, Q. (2020). Place Identity: How Far Have We Come in Exploring Its Meanings? *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11*(March), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00294

Peters, B. (2005). Public discourse, identity and the problem of democratic legitimacy. In E. O. Eriksen (Ed.), *Making the European Reflexive integration in the EU* (pp. 84–124). London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Petersen, S. A., Divitini, M., & Chabert, G. (2008). Identity, sense of community and connectedness in a community of mobile language learners. *ReCALL*, *20*(3), 361–379. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344008000839

Phillips, T. (2002). Imagined communities and self-identity: An exploratory quantitative analysis. *Sociology*, *36*(3), 597–617. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038502036003006

Phipps, A., & Gonzales, M. (2004). *Modern Languages: Learning and Teaching in an Intercultural Field*. London: SAGE publications.

Piccardo, E. (2012). Médiation et apprentissage des langues : pourquoi est-il temps de réfléchir à cette notion ? *Éla. Études de Linguistique Appliquée*, *n°167*(3), 285. https://doi.org/10.3917/ela.167.0285

Piccardo, E. (2017). Plurilingualism as a catalyst for creativity in superdiverse societies: A systemic analysis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *8*(DEC), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.02169

Piccardo, E. (2019). *"*We are all (potential) plurilinguals": Plurilingualism as an overarching , holistic concept. *Cahiers De L'ILOB*, *10*, 183–204. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18192/olbiwp.v10i0.3825

Piccardo, E., Berchould, M., Cignatta, T., Mentz, O., & Malgorzata, P. (2011). *Pathways through assessing , learning and teaching in the CEFR*. European Centre for Modern Languages. Strasbourg-Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing. https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.4295.4247

Piccardo, E., & North, B. (2020). The Dynamic Nature of Plurilingualism: Creating and Validating CEFR Descriptors for Mediation, Plurilingualism and Pluricultural Competence. In S. M. C. Lau & S. Van Viegen (Eds.), *Plurilingual Pedagogies. Critical and Creative Endeavors for Equitable Language in Education*. Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36983-5

Piccardo, E., North, B., & Goodier, T. (2019). Broadening the scope of language education: Mediation, plurilingualism, and collaborative learning: The CEFR Companion Volume. *Journal of E-Learning and Knowledge Society*, *15*(1), 17–36. https://doi.org/10.20368/1971-8829/1612

Pöchhacker, F. (2008). Interpreting as mediation. In C. Valero-Garcés & A. Martin (Eds.),

*Crossing borders in community interpreting. Definitions and dilemmas* (pp. 9–26). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Pöllmann, A. (2013). Intercultural capital: Toward the conceptualization, operationalization, and empirical investigation of a rising marker of sociocultural distinction. *Sage Open*, *3*(2), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013486117

Polonska-Kimunguyi, E., & Kimunguyi, P. (2011). The making of the Europeans: Media in the construction of pan-national identity. *International Communication Gazette*, *73*(6), 507–523. https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048511412283

Porto, M. (2014). Intercultural citizenship education in an EFL online project in Argentina. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *14*(2), 245–261. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2014.890625

Porto, M., & Byram, M. (2015). A curriculum for action in the community and intercultural citizenship in higher education. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, *28*(3), 226–242. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2015.1087555

Pötzschke, S. (2012). *Measuring Transnational Behaviours and Identities* (No. 4; The Europeanisation of Everyday Life: Cross-Border Practices and Transnational Identities among EU and Third-Country Citizens (EUCROSS), Issue November). www.eucross.eu

Přibáň, J. (2007). *Legal Symbolism on Law, Time and European Identity*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Print, M. (2007). Citizenship education and youth participation in democracy. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, *55*(3), 325–345.

Print, M. (2013). Competencies for Democratic Citizenship in Europe. In M. Print & D. Lange (Eds.), *Civic Education and Competences for Engaging Citizens in Democracies* (pp. 37–50). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-172-6

Print, M., & Coleman, D. (2003). Towards Understanding of Social Capital and Citizenship Education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *33*(1), 123–149. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764032000047522

Putman, R. (2000). *Bowling Alone: the collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Quintelier, E., Verhaegen, S., & Hooghe, M. (2014). The intergenerational transmission of european identity: The role of gender and discussion within families. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *52*(5), 1103–1119. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12129

Ramos, I. L., Bernardo, F., Ribeiro, S. C., & Van Eetvelde, V. (2016). Landscape identity: Implications for policy making. *Land Use Policy*, *53*, 36–43. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2015.01.030

Rasmussen, A., & Reher, S. (2019). Civil Society Engagement and Policy Representation in Europe. *Comparative Political Studies*, *52*(11), 1648–1676. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414019830724

Recchi, E. (2014). Pathways to European identity formation: a tale of two models. *Innovation*, *27*(2), 119–133. https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2013.873709

Reijerse, A., Acker, K. Van, Vanbeselaere, N., Phalet, K., & Duriez, B. (2013). Beyond the Ethnic-Civic Dichotomy: Cultural Citizenship as a New Way of Excluding Immigrants. *Political Psychology*, *34*(4), 611–630. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2012.00920.x

Riestenberg, K. J. (2020). Meaningful interaction and affordances for language learning at a Zapotec revitalisation programme. *The Language Learning Journal*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2020.1722205

Risager, K. (2013). Linguaculture. In *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. Blackwell Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0709

Risse, T. (2010). *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Risse, Thomas. (2003). The Euro between national and European identity. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *10*(4), 487–505. https://doi.org/10.1080/1350176032000101235

Rivers, D. J. (2011). Evaluating the self and the other: Imagined intercultural contact within a "native-speaker" dependent foreign language context. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *35*, 842–852. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.08.003

Rivers, D. J., & Houghton, S. A. (2013). Introduction : Identities in Foreign Language Education. In D. J. Rivers & S. A. Houghton (Eds.), *Social Identities and Multiple Selves in Foreign Language Education* (pp. 1–12). London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472542045.0006

Robertson, S. L. (2010). The EU 'Regulatory State Regionalism' and New Modes of Higher Education Governance. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, *8*(1), 23–37.

Roccas, S., Sagiv, L., Schwartz, S., Halevy, N., & Eidelson, R. (2008). Toward a unifying model of identification with groups: Integrating theoretical perspectives. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *12*(3), 280–306. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868308319225

Rollero, C., & De Piccoli, N. (2010). Place attachment, identification and environment perception: An empirical study. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *30*(2), 198–205. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2009.12.003

Ros, M., Miryam, R., & Casado, C. (2008). Valores e identidades nacional y Europea: Un estudio transcultural. *Revista de Psicologia Social*, *23*(3), 367–376. https://doi.org/10.1174/021347408785843051

Rosamond, B. (1999). Discourses of globalization and the social construction of European identities. In *Journal of European Public Policy* (Vol. 6, Issue 4). https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343522

Rubenfeld, S., & Clément, R. (2012). Intercultural Conflict and Mediation: An Intergroup Perspective. *Language Learning*, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2012.00723.x

Sabucedo, J. M., Durán, M., & Alzate, M. (2010). Identidad colectiva movilizada. *Revista de Psicologia Social*, *25*(2), 189–201. https://doi.org/10.1174/021347410791063822

Salamońska, J., Grifone Baglioni, L., & Recchi, E. (2013). *Navigating the European Space: Physical and Virtual Forms of Cross-Border Mobility among EU Citizens* (No. 5; The Europeanisation of Everyday Life : Cross-Border Practices and Transnational Identifications among EU and Third-Country Citizens (EUCROSS)). www.eucross.eu

Sánchez, M. E. (2010). Globalisation and loss of identity. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, *19*(2), 71–77. https://doi.org/10.1080/08037060903435158

Sarracino, F., & Mikucka, M. (2016). Social Capital in Europe from 1990 to 2012: Trends and Convergence. *Social Indicators Research*, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-016-1255-z

Sawyer, R. (2011). *The Impact of New Social Media on Intercultural Adaptation*. Senior Honors Projects. http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog/242

Schmidt, V. A. (2004). The European Union : Democratic Legitimacy in a Regional State?*. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *42*(5), 975–997.

Schmidt, V. A. (2013). Democracy and Legitimacy in the European Union Revisited: Input, Output and "Throughput." *Political Studies*, *61*, 2–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2012.00962.x

Schrumpf, F., Crawford, D. K., & Bodine, R. J. (1997). *Peer mediation: Conflict resolution in schools: Program guide.* (Revised ed). Champaign, IL: Research Pres.

Schulmeister, P., Büttner, M., Chiesa, A., Said Hallaouy, Maggio, L., & Malakoudi Tsoulou, D. (2019). *Heeding the Call beyond the Vote. A stronger Parliament to listen to citizens' voices*. Brussels. https://doi.org/10.2861/407923

Schwieter, J. W., & Ferreira, A. (2014). Intersections of study abroad, social capital, and second language acquisition. In P. C. Miller (Ed.), *Reading in Language Studies* (Issue 4, pp. 107–127). International Society for Language Studies.

Seidlhofer, B. (2011). Conceptualizing "English" for a multilingual Europe. In A. De Houwer & A. Wilton (Eds.), *English in Europe Today. Sociocultural and educational perspectives* (pp. 133–146). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Sercu, L. (2005). Teaching Foreign Languages in an Intercultural World. In *Foreign Language Teachers and Intercultural Competence. An International Investigation* (pp. 1–18). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Sheils, J. (1996). The Council of Europe and Language Learning for European Citizenship. *Evaluation and Research in Education*, *10*(2), 88–103. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500799608666908

Shohamy, E. (2013). The discourse of language testing as a tool for shaping national, global, and transnational identities. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *13*(2), 225–236. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2013.770868

Shore, C. (2000). *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration*. London: Routledge.

Shore, C. (2006). "In uno plures" (?) EU Cultural Policy and the Governance of Europe. *Critical Analysis*, *5*, 7–26.

Sigalas, E. (2010). Cross-border mobility and european identity: The effectiveness of intergroup contact during the ERASMUS year abroad. *European Union Politics*, *11*(2), 241–265. https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116510363656

Smismans, S. (2006). Civil society and European governance: the interdisciplinary challenge of reflexive deliberative polyarchy. In S. Smismans (Ed.), *Civil Society and Legitimate European Governance* (pp. 299–317). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Soria, K. M., & Troisi, J. (2013). Internationalization at Home Alternatives to Study Abroad : Implications for Students' Development of Global, International, and Intercultural Competencies. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315313496572

Starkey, H. (2003). Intercultural competence and education for democratic citizenship: implications for language teaching methodology. In M. Byram (Ed.), *Intercultural Competence* (pp. 63–83). Language Policy Division DG IV – Directorate of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5446.1988.00275.x

Stathopoulou, M. (2015). *Cross-Language Mediation in Foreign Language Teaching and Testing*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Stathopoulou, M. (2016). From "languaging" to "translanguaging": Reconsidering foreign language teaching and testing through a multilingual lens. *21st International Symposium on Theoretical and Applied Linguistics (ISTAL 21)*, 759–774. http://ejournals.lib.auth.gr/thal/article/view/5267/5155

Stern, H. H. (1992). *The Cultural syllabus: Issues and Options in Language Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stevick, E. (1999). Affect in learning and Memory. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stöttinger, B., & Penz, E. (2018). Balancing territorial identities. How consumers manage their ethnic, regional, and national identities in daily life and consumption situations. *International Marketing Review*. https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-03-2018-0115

Swain, M. (2006). Languaging, agency and collaboration in advanced language proficiency. In H. Byrnes (Ed.), *Advanced Language Learning: The Contribution of Halliday and Vygotsky* (pp. 95–108). Continuum.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (2004). The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior. In J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Key readings in social psychology* (p. 276–293). Psychology Press. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203505984-16

Taulègne, B. (2015). The Regional Dimension of Educational and Intercultural Practices: a Forward-looking Multi-level Governance View of the CoR. In L. Bekemans (Ed.), *Intercultural Dialogue and Multi-level Governance in Europe. A Human Rights Based Approach* (pp. 363–368). Brussels: Peter Lang.

Taylor, F. (2014). Relational Views of the Self in SLA. In S. Mercer & M. Williams (Eds.), *Multiple Perspectives on the Self in SLA* (pp. 92–108). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Taylor, F., Busse, V., Gagova, L., Marsden, E., & Roosken, B. (2013). *Identity in foreign*

*language learning and teaching: why listening to our students' and teachers' voices really matters*. ELT Research Papers 13-02. London: British Council.

Taylor, P. (2002). Relocating the demos? In J. Anderson (Ed.), *Transnational Democracy. Political spaces and border crossings* (pp. 236–244). London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004

Tchistiakova, N., & Waechter, N. (2016). How national identification matters: the development of European identification among established ethnic minority groups. *Identities*, *23*(6), 725–744. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2015.1059341

Teichler, U. (2004). Temporary Study Abroad: the life of ERASMUS students. *European Journal of Education*, *39*(4), 395–408. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3435.2004.00193.x

Teichler, U. (2012). International student mobility and the Bologna process. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, *7*(1), 34–49. https://doi.org/10.2304/rcie.2012.7.1.34

Thorpe, C. (2008). The distinguishing function of European identity: Attitudes towards and visions of Europe and the European Union among young scottish adults. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, *9*(4), 499–513. https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850802416945

Tilly, C. (2003). Political Identities Changing Polities. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, *70*(2), 605–620.

Tost Planet, M. (2000). The European Dimension. In M. Byram & M. Tost Planet (Eds.), *Social Identity and the European Dimension: Intercultural Competence Through Foreign Language Learning* (pp. 25–34). Strasbourg-Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.

Triandafyllidou, A., & Wodak, R. (2003). Conceptual and methodological questions in the study of collective identities. *Journal of Language and Politics*, *2*(2), 205–223.

Trim, J. (1992). *Transparency and coherence in language learning in Europe. Objectives, evaluation, certification*. Rüschlikon: Council for Cultural Co-operation. https://rm.coe.int/0900001680707cde

Trim, J. (1997). *Language Learning for European Citizenship: Final Report of the Project Group (1989-96)* (Council for Cultural Co-operation. Education Committee (Ed.)). Strasbourg-Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Udrea. (2013). National and European Identity: An empirical research on how Romanian students experience identities during their long-term studies abroad. *Romanian Journal of Communication and Public Relations*, *15*(1(28)), 17–35.

Ünal, F., & Kaygın, H. (2020). Citizenship Education for Adults for Sustainable Democratic Societies. Sustainability, 12(56) 1–19. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12010056

Urry, J. (2007). *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Urry, J. (2008). Moving on the Mobility Turn. In W. Canzler, V. Kaufmann, & S. Kesselring (Eds.), *Tracing Mobilities: Towards a Cosmopolitan Perspective* (pp. 13–24). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Urry, John. (2000). Mobile sociology. *British Journal of Sociology*, *51*(1), 185–203. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2000.00185.x

Usherwood, S., & Startin, N. (2013). Euroscepticism as a Persistent Phenomenon*. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *51*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2012.02297.x

Ushioda, E. (2006). Language motivation in a reconfigured Europe: Access, identity, autonomy. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *27*(2), 148–161. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630608668545

Ushioda, E. (2011). Language learning motivation, self and identity: current theoretical perspectives. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *24*(3), 199–210. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2010.538701

Ushioda, E., & Dörnyei, Z. (2009). Motivation, Language Identities and the L2 Self: A Theoretical Overview. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self* (pp. 1–8). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Valero-Garcés, C. (2005). *Mediation as translation or translation as mediation? Widening the translator's role in a new multicultural society*. TranslationDirectory.com

Van den Brande, L. (2015). Intercultural Dialogue in Territorial Cooperation: an Education Perspective. In L. Bekemans (Ed.), *Intercultural Dialogue and Multi-level Governance in Europe. A Human Rights Based Approach* (pp. 351–359). Peter Lang. https://doi.org/10.3726/978-3-0352-6220-9

Van den Brande, L. (2017). *Reaching out to EU citizens: a new opportunity*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. https://doi.org/10.2775/319

van Lier, L. (2004). The semiotics and ecology of language learning. Perception, voice, identity and democracy. *Utbildning & Demokrati*, *13*(3), 79–103.

Van Mol, C. (2013). Intra-European Student Mobility and European Identity: A Successful Marriage?, *Population, Space and Place*, 19(2), 209–222. https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.1752

Van Mol, C. (2018). Becoming Europeans: the relationship between student exchanges in higher education, European citizenship and a sense of European identity. *Innovation*, *1610*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2018.1495064

Van Mol, C., de Valk, H. A. G., & van Wissen, L. (2015). Falling in love with(in) Europe: European bi-national love relationships, European identification and transnational solidarity. *European Union Politics*, *16*(4), 469–489. https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116515588621

Verhaegen, S., & Hooghe, M. (2015). Does more knowledge about the European Union lead to a stronger European identity? A comparative analysis among adolescents in 21 European member states. *Innovation*, *28*(2), 127–146. https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2014.1000836

Verkuyten, M. (2005). *The Social Psychology of Ethnic Identity*. Hove: Psychology Press.

Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *30*(6), 1024–1054. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701599465

Vertovec, S. (2010). *Transnationalism*. London: Routledge.

Veugelers, W., de Groot, I., & Stolk, V. (2017). *Research for CULT Committee - Teaching Common Values in Europe*. DG IPOL Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies. Brussels: European Union.

Vieten, U. M. (2006). "Out in the blue of Europe": Modernist cosmopolitan identity and the deterritorialization of belonging. *Patterns of Prejudice*, *40*(3), 259–279. https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220600769562

Vignoles, V., Smith, P. B., Becker, M., & Easterbrook, M. J. (2018). In Search of a Pan-European Culture: European Values , Beliefs, and Models of Selfhood in Global Perspective. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *49*(6), 868–887. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022117738751

Voinea, C. F. (2014). Eastern European Political Socialization Modeling Research: A Literature Review. *European Quarterly of Political Attitudes and Mentalities*, *3*(1), 43–55. https://sites.google.com/a/fspub.unibuc.ro/european-quarterly-of-political-attitudes-and-mentalities/Home

Warleigh, A. (2006). Civil society and legitimate governance in a flexible Europe: critical deliberativism as a way forward. In S. Smismans (Ed.), *Civil Society and Legitimate European Governance* (pp. 68–88). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. http://repositorio.unan.edu.ni/2986/1/5624.pdf

Weedon, C. (1997). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory (2nd ed.)* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Weiler, J. H. (1999). *The Constitution of Europe:'Do the new clothes have an Emperor?'and other essays on European integration*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. M. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Wenger, Etienne. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, Etienne. (2008). Communities of Practice: Learning as a Social System. *Systems Thinker*, *9*(5), 1–10.

Wenger, Etienne. (2009). *Social learning capability Four essays on innovation and learning in social systems. Social Innovation, Sociedade e Trabalho. Booklets 12 – separate supplement* (Issue April). MTSS/GEP & EQUAL.

Williams, A. (2010). *The Ethos of Europe: Values, Law and Justice in the EU*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilson, I. (2011). What should we expect of "Erasmus generations"? *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *49*(5), 1113–1140. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2010.02158.x

Wodak, R., & Boukala, S. (2015a). (Supra)national identity and language: Rethinking national and European migration policies and the linguistic integration of migrants. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *35*, 253–273. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000294

Wodak, R., & Boukala, S. (2015b). European identities and the revival of nationalism in the European Union: A discourse historical approach. *Journal of Language and Politics*, *14*(1), 87–109. https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.14.1.05wod

Yampolsky, M. A., Amiot, C. E., & Sablonnière, R. De. (2016). The Multicultural Identity Integration Scale (MULTIIS): Developing a Comprehensive Measure for Configuring One ' s Multiple Cultural Identities Within the Self. *American Psychological Association*, *22*(2), 166–184.

Young, R. F. (2017). World languages, world Englishes and local identities. *World Englishes*. https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12249

Yurtsever, Ş. (2012). In 7th ECPR General Conference Sciences Po. *The Role of Social Capital in the Formation of Collective Identities: The Case of European Identification*, 4–7.

Zacharias, N. T. (2010). Acknowledging Learner Multiple Identities in the EFL Classroom. *K@Ta*, *12*(1), 26–41. https://doi.org/10.9744/kata.12.1.26-41

Zhou, V. X., & Pilcher, N. (2019). Tapping the thirdness in the intercultural space of dialogue. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *19*(1), 23–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2018.1545025

Ziegler, G. (2013). Multilingualism and the language education landscape: challenges for teacher training in Europe. *Multilingual Education*, *3*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1186/2191-5059-3-1

Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Self-Efficacy: An Essential Motive to Learn. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *25*, 82–91. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1016

Zotzmann, K. (2016). Intercultural Competence: Value Disembedding and Hyper-flexibility. In F. Dervin & Z. Gross (Eds.), *Intercultural Competence in Education*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58733-6_12

## Annex 1: Original paper: University Students' Representations of Europe and Self-Identification as Europeans: A Synthesis of Qualitative Evidence for Future Policy Formulation

Cores-Bilbao, E., Méndez García, M.C., y M.C. Fonseca Mora. 2020. University students' representations of Europe and self-identification as Europeans: a synthesis of qualitative evidence for future policy formulation. European Journal of Futures Research, 8.2.

DOI: 10.1186/s40309-019-0159-y

QUALITY INDICATORS

- **Journal Citation Reports** 2018 Impact factor: 0.614. 5 Year impact factor: 1,129. Eigenfactor Score: 0.00022. SSCI: Social Sciences, Interdisciplinary: 82/104, Q4.

- **Scopus (Citescore)** 2018 (2019): 0.26. Social Sciences: Sociology and Political Sciences: 805/1108 (percentil 27), Q3. Social Science: Social Sciences (miscellaneous): 196/253 (percentil 22), Q4.

- **Scopus (SJR)** 2018 (2019): 0.130. Índice H 1. Social Sciences: Sociology and Political Science: 893/1137, Q4. Social Science: Social Sciences (miscellaneous): 396/528, Q4.

- **CIRC**: Ciencias Sociales: **B**.

- **MIAR**: ICDS 10.2 over 11 (2018).

Cores-Bilbao *et al. European Journal of Futures Research* (2020) 8:1
https://doi.org/10.1186/s40309-019-0159-y

European Journal of Futures Research

RESEARCH ARTICLE Open Access

# University students' representations of Europe and self-identification as Europeans: a synthesis of qualitative evidence for future policy formulation

Esther Cores-Bilbao[1*], María del Carmen Méndez-García[2] and M. Carmen Fonseca-Mora[3]

**Abstract**

The current European context is characterised by the emergence of socio-political tensions that threaten to derail the cohesion objectives traditionally promoted by the authorities of the European Union. With EU citizenship in the shadow of Brexit, the fear of dismemberment of the current Europe of the 28 looms over a renewed debate on concepts like European identity, European citizenship or EU legitimacy and the involvement of its constituents in European affairs, as well as the role of education for promoting democratic awareness among young Europeans. This work aims to collect, appraise and synthesise qualitative evidence obtained in primary research exploring the perceptions of European university students about their civic and cultural identity. This systematic analysis sets out to identify predictors of positive self-identification with the EU and its institutions, focusing on the impact that different educational interventions have had on the attitudes and perceptions expressed by university students, and the importance of foreign language learning in the results obtained. The authors report their assessment of quality of the findings in a Cochrane-style qualitative evidence synthesis (QES), based on the GRADE-CERQual (Confidence in Evidence from Reviews of Qualitative research) method. The 12 informed findings described in this study support decision-making in future education policy formulation.

**Keywords:** European identity, Higher education students, Erasmus, Nested identities, Qualitative evidence synthesis (QES), Confidence in Evidence from Reviews of Qualitative research (GRADE-CERQual), Education policy formulation

## Introduction

After decades of careful political, strategic and educational planning in pursuit of a European identity that citizens of all the member states could stand behind, the Union faces its biggest challenge to date: the rise of nationalist ideologies that propose to de-link from the supranational community agenda. The ensuing media and public attention shift to current and latent political participation of Europeans, as well as to the role of foreign language education for promoting the European dimension in citizenship education among the younger generations, sowed the seeds for the present research.

Most studies addressing the formation of a European identity have solely focused on adult participants and the relatively scarce number of studies that have tackled younger subjects have obtained contradictory results [13, 37]. However, it is in fact young people who are more likely than other age groups to see themselves as European, as they tend to manifest cosmopolitan ideals, identities and conducts (Woodward et al., 2008 in [14]).

Research dealing with European identity in higher education contexts has mainly focused on the quantitative evaluation of international study sojourns and their impact on the undergraduate students' competence development, personal growth and self-identification [18–20, 23, 31, 39]. This body of research generally affirms that, although in varying degrees, cross-cultural experience builds up the participants' repertoire to re-examine their cultural and contextual assumptions or worldviews.

* Correspondence: esther.cores.edu@juntadeandalucia.es
[1]Departamento de Pedagogía, Facultad de Educación, Psicología y Ciencias del Deporte, Universidad de Huelva, Avda. de las Fuerzas Armadas, s/n, 21071 Huelva, Spain
Full list of author information is available at the end of the article

Springer Open

© The Author(s). 2020 **Open Access** This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made.

Unsurprisingly, in the recent years, one of the EU's flagship education programmes has been Erasmus+ 2014–2020, an initiative aimed at promoting a sense of European identity and citizenship among higher education students via intra-European mobility experiences. In addition to pursuing the European Union's need to compete in the global sphere, forging 'global citizenry', the rationale behind this programme is the belief that by bringing young Europeans together, a sense of European identity can be fostered [37, 38].

For its foreseen continuation spanning the 2021–2027 period, which has been allocated sizable budgetary increases, the legislative proposal drafted by the European Parliament reasserts that learning mobility contributes to strengthening European identity, principles and values and to bolstering a more democratic Union.

In light of the above, an exhaustive summary of current empirical evidence relevant to university students' perceived European civic and cultural identity, with particular focus on the outcomes of educational programmes and on other factors that may facilitate or hinder its advancement, become highly relevant.

### The construction of the European collective identity

European identity has been defined by political theorists as 'a psycho-sociological or socio-political process of attachment to the European space or to the political community designed by integration' ([6], translated by [28]). From an anthropological perspective, European identity is a collective identity which is accepted by individuals who share fundamental ethnic and civic similarities, being bound by a common historical heritage and feeling reciprocal solidarity [2].

This triple civic, spatial and ethnocultural domain of identification with Europe has been addressed by EC/EU policies in efforts to foster a European identity among the citizenship. For the most part, however, the initiatives undertaken have been beset of ambiguities [27], and European officials have recurrently acknowledged that public opinion does not understand the EU, emphasising the need to improve, enable, engage and empower citizens to exercise their right to participate in the democratic life of the Union [36].

The main purpose of this review is to elucidate European identity contents (what Europe is in university students' minds) to verify the compatibility of subnational, national, and super-national identities within this population, to ascertain local enabling factors of identification with Europe and to infer the causal dynamics between European identity-taking and foreign country sojourns and language learning experiences (in the case of mobile students) or domestic cognitive transnationalization (in the case of non-mobile students). The main thread here is that formative years at university, pivotal to students' individual life course and life projects, are also decisive in supranational, collective identity-formation. It is at this stage in life that innovative policy development in the fields of education, training and youth, particularly those pursuing inclusive, democratic, cohesive and resilient societies can have substantial lifelong impacts.

The personal traits and contextual characteristics which predispose individuals to identify themselves with certain supranational entities is a topic still vigorously debated by psychology scholars. Even within the realm of pedagogy and education, studies pursuing this line of research are compartmentalised and sometimes cast conflicting findings. Therefore, conducting a qualitative evidence synthesis (QES) is a means of making sense of the existing information and dissipating areas of uncertainty regarding the efficacy of preceding educational initiatives. An account of the different policies launched to achieve political legitimacy and social cohesion among EU nationals over the years is beyond the scope of this review (for further insight, see [2, 30]), as what we pursue to establish is their reception by young Europeans.

This approach is original, as authors do not adhere to a descriptive narrative review on the subject, but rather apply the GRADE-CERQual (Confidence in Evidence from Reviews of Qualitative research) analytical method to evaluate the quality of the presented findings [15, 16], whose objective is to support the use of findings from qualitative evidence syntheses in decision-making, namely policy formulation.

A QES can be an aggregative or interpretive process which requires a transparent research protocol and the authors' finesse to accurately represent the findings extracted from the studies included in the review [22]. Hence, academics are progressively regarding qualitative evidence syntheses as complete studies, comparable to any meta-analysis on the effects of interventions.

## Objectives

The specific objectives of this review are to identify, appraise and synthesise qualitative studies exploring the following:

- Perceptions of European identity and ethos among European university students.
- Predictors of endorsement of the EU by European university students.
- Impact of foreign country experiences on the students' identification with Europe.
- Contribution of foreign language learning to the development of social cohesion, active citizenship and intercultural awareness.

## Method

### Selection of the corpus

The criteria for considering studies for this review referred to the types of studies, the types of participants and the types of phenomena of interest analysed. Due to the scope of the topic dealt with, our review focuses on findings of qualitative research, which "provide much more detailed in-depth information about meanings of interventions and of behaviours" ([25], 77).While surveys and other quantitative tools may include questions on identity, qualitative methods are better suited for assessing the placement or fluidity of perceived borders between these identities and the meaning attributed to certain identities. This review encompasses the results obtained from qualitative primary research studies, as well as qualitative findings extracted from mixed-method inquiries.

Eligible studies were identified in a 3-step process, conducted by two reviewers. First, an electronic database search was performed, supplemented by hand searching. The electronic search was conducted in Proquest, Scopus and WOs from database inception to 30 May 2018. No date or geographical restrictions were imposed, although the challenges associated with translating papers reporting qualitative research limited our selection to articles published in languages spoken by at least two members of the review team (i.e. French, English and Spanish).

The search strategy was guided by two main elements, European university students and their identification with Europe, following this syntax:

- TI,AB,IF("European identity" OR "European identification") AND TI,AB,IF("supranational identity" OR "global identity" OR "supranational identification" OR "global identification") AND TI,AB,IF("university students" OR "college students" OR "higher education" OR "tertiary education" OR "young adults").
- TI,AB,IF("European identity" OR "European identification") AND TI,AB,IF("university students" OR "college students" OR "higher education" OR "tertiary education" OR "young adults").

The electronic database search yielded 77 studies, and the hand search produced 6 additional papers, all of which were published between 1998 and 2016. Records identified from the different sources were collected and sorted into one database, removing 5 duplicates. The titles and abstracts of the identified records were independently assessed to gauge their potential eligibility. During this first screening, 16 studies that were clearly irrelevant to the topic of this review, based on the population age group described in article titles and abstracts, were discarded.

Second, the full text of all the papers that were likely to be relevant was retrieved and independently assessed based on the review's inclusion criteria. During this second screening, 19 articles lacking an empirical analysis of data or focusing on a population other than university students were excluded.

Third, the remaining 43 empirical studies which complied with the inclusion criteria in terms of defined study population were screened to set apart quantitative work. Only qualitative or mixed-method studies were retained at this stage. Disagreements were resolved through discussion or, if required, by seeking a third review author's view. This third screening yielded the final cohort of 8 qualitative, and 11 mixed-method studies have been included in this synthesis (Fig. 1).

### Study respondents

In all of the studies but one, authors sought the perspectives of undergraduate university students. The exception was an article which focused on the perceptions of researchers and postgraduate students. A significant percentage of respondents were enrolled in social sciences, teaching and foreign language programmes.

### Setting

The studies are characterised by a wide geographical dispersion, with respondents located in 32 different universities across Europe and a higher presence in the UK (9) and Germany (6) (Fig. 2).

### Quality of the included qualitative studies

All the included studies were published as papers in indexed research journals, which constitutes a sound quality threshold. Descriptions, even if very brief, about the participants, sampling, methods and analysis are always provided. Most of the studies used interview or focus group discussions with very few instances of other methods of data collection.

To verify the quality of included studies, the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklist for qualitative studies [3] was used, which contains 10 questions to systematically ascertain the validity, rigour and contribution that the studies make to pre-existing knowledge or understanding. However, this assessment of quality was merely conducted to validate the relative contribution of each study to the development of explanations to our research questions, not to exclude any of the pooled studies.

### Assessment of confidence in the review findings

Our review findings were assessed by applying the four key components recommended by the GRADE-Confidence in the Evidence from Reviews of Qualitative research (GRADE-CERQual) [15, 16]:

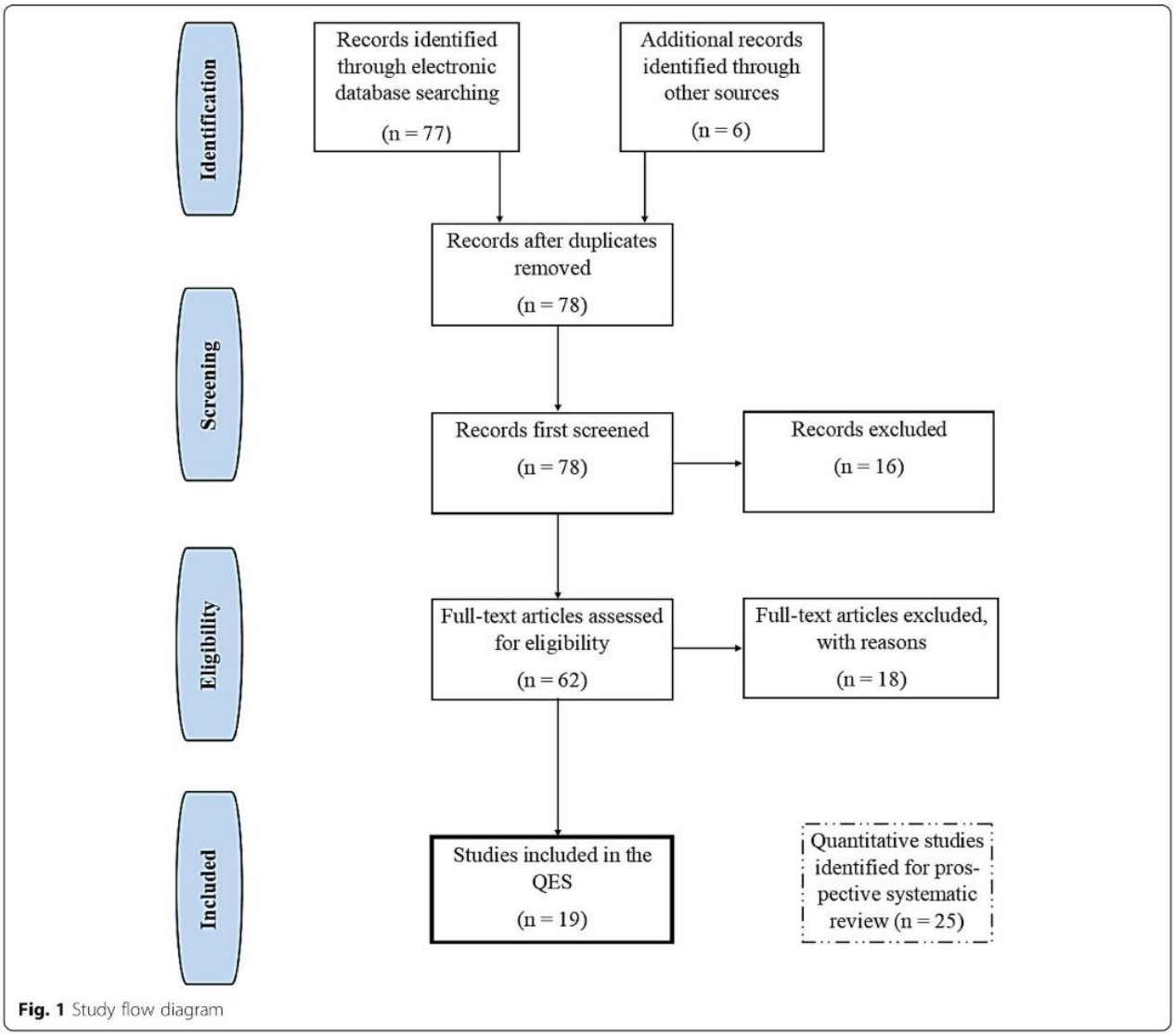



**Fig. 1** Study flow diagram

- Analysis of the possible methodological limitations of included studies.
- Evaluation of coherence of the review finding by analysing the primary studies on which the study was grounded and if a convincing explanation for patterns was found in the data.
- Rating of adequacy and overall determination of the degree of richness and quantity of data supported by the findings of the study.
- Judgement of the relevance of the included studies to the review question and its application to the context (population, phenomenon of interest, setting) specified in the review question.

After assessing each of the four components, qualified reviewers judged the overall confidence in each review finding to be high, moderate, low or very low [15, 16]. In order to allocate a confidence rating, reviewers proceeded on the basis that all the findings were 'high confidence' and marked them down only when concerns regarding any of the CERQual components [18] that would weaken this assumption were identified.

### Data synthesis

A thematic analysis using a constant comparison strategy was performed, applying a 5-step process to undertake the data synthesis. Firstly, the article judged to most closely answer the review objectives was chosen. Secondly, this article was coded using a thematic analysis approach. Thirdly, a data extraction sheet based on the codes that emerged from the previous step was created. Then, data from all of the sampled articles was extracted, altering the data extraction sheet if new themes emerged from the subsequent articles. Finally, the data

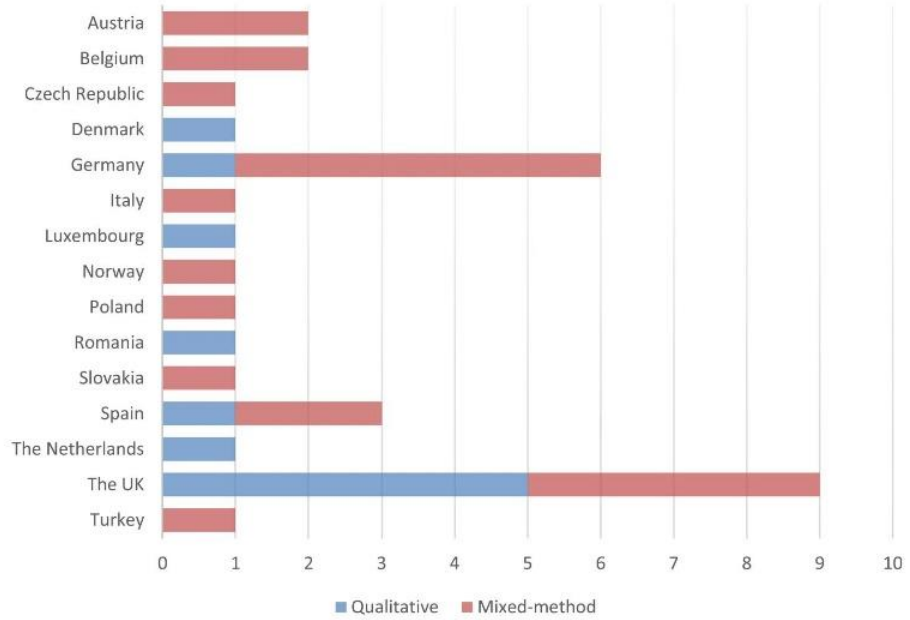



**Fig. 2** Geographic distribution of reviewed studies

were synthesised and the included studies were re-read to confirm that all data relevant to the findings had been extracted.

### Categories and findings identified in the data

From the constant comparison thematic synthesis, 4 overarching categories were identified: European ethos, self-identification, predictors of endorsement and opposition, and foreign country experiences. Table 1 'Summary of qualitative findings' (SoQF) contains an overview of the most salient information, to facilitate the understanding and use of our 12 review findings. The SoQF table is considered the entry point to the full review [15, 16], and as such, it provides an outline of the findings sorted by categories, the contributing papers per finding, our assessment of confidence in the evidence, as well as an explanation of the assessment based on the GRADE-CERQual approach.

When interpreting the CERQual assessment results, it is noteworthy that the relative weight of the issues detected may vary depending on the size of the supporting evidence for each of the review findings. For instance, a methodological limitation in one contributing study may be cause for minor concern when the finding relies on six additional contributing papers. However, the same methodological limitation may be cause for moderate concern if the total amount of contributing studies that endorse a given finding is lower.

### Synthesis findings

Table 2 presents a summary of the contextual information pertaining to the contributing studies of this qualitative evidence synthesis.

Individual CERQual evidence profile tables are provided below, supporting the assessment of confidence in every finding. Each profile table contains at-a-glance information, followed by detailed evidence-based results.

Finding 1 reports the values which are attributed to European societies by university students (Table 3).

As shown in Table 3 studies support finding 1: Multilingualism, cultural diversity and the promotion of human rights are consistently identified as 'European values'. These 9 studies examine values attributed to Europeanness, reporting somewhat different but complementary understandings of the construct. Predominantly, representations of Europe are associated with democratic principles, civic cooperation, peaceful co-existence, political stability, human rights and the protection of individual freedoms [5, 11, 18, 24, 33]. Shared traditions, ethnic diversity, similar cultural referents and civilizational meanings, alongside a common historical background among Western nations are identified as the source of affinities among European nationals [5, 18, 29, 33, 35]. From an economic perspective, wealth, liberalism and the Euro currency are emphasised [29] while the salience of spatial proximity for establishing affinities between nations is only mentioned in one study [32].

Finding 2 confirms that perceptions of what it means to be European are context-dependent (Table 4).

**Table 1** Summary of 12 qualitative findings (SoQF) with their categories and CERQual assessments

| # Review finding | Relevant papers | CERQual assessment | Explanation of CERQual assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Category: European ethos | | | |
| (a) Multilingualism, cultural diversity and the promotion of human rights are consistently identified as 'European values'. | Du Bois-Reymond [5], Osler [24], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Ros et al. [29], Thorpe [34], Spannring et al. [32], Sperling [33], Udrea [35], Llurda et al. [18] | High confidence | Nine studies with N/VMC about methodological limitations, coherence, relevance and adequacy. |
| (b) Perceptions of what it means to be European vary greatly depending on national geopolitical contexts. | Du Bois-Reymond [5], Osler [24], Wilkins et al. [40], Sperling [33], Van Mol [3] | High confidence | Five studies; minor concerns regarding adequacy due to restricted number of explicit allusions to the topic. |
| (c) EU institutions are perceived as distant, complex and over-bureaucratized entities. | Du Bois-Reymond [5], Fernández [8], Fuss and Grosser [9], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Ros et al. [29] | Moderate confidence | Five studies; minor concerns regarding coherence due to inconsistent findings in one study. Moderate concerns regarding methodological limitations due to poor reporting of evidence in one study. |
| (d) The support for further integration is scarce, especially if candidate countries are culturally divergent. | Du Bois-Reymond [5], Licata [17], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Pollmann [26], Spannring et al. [32], Thorpe [34], Llurda et al. [18] | Moderate confidence | Seven studies; moderate concerns regarding coherence due to conflicting findings in one of the studies and somewhat incoherent findings in another study. |
| 2. Category: Self-identification | | | |
| (e) Self-identification of students is compatible with the 'nested identities' theory. Students negotiate local, regional, national and supranational identities. | Osler [24], Licata [17], Fuss and Grosser [9], Erling [7], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Pollman [26], Thorpe [34], Udrea [35], Genova [10], Byram et al. [1] | High confidence | Eleven studies; minor concerns regarding coherence due to context-dependent contradictory findings in one of the studies. |
| (f) The prevalence of national identities in students' minds is closely linked to affective factors. | Osler [24], Erling [7], Fuss and Grosser [9], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Pollmann [26], Ros et al. [29], Spannring et al. [32], Udrea [35] | High confidence | Eight studies; minor concerns regarding coherence due contradictory findings in one of the studies but restricted to a specific subgroup of population. |
| 3. Category: Predictors of endorsement and opposition | | | |
| (g) Support for the EU is rooted on instrumental / utilitarian motivations. | Osler [24], Licata [17], Fernández [8], Fuss and Grosser [9], Thorpe [34], Sperling [33], Udrea [35], Byram et al. [1] | High confidence | Nine studies; minor concerns regarding methodological limitations due to poor reporting of evidence in one study. |
| (h) Speaking foreign languages favours identification with supranational identities and Europe. | Fuss and Grosser [9], Erling [7], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Spannring et al. [32], Thorpe [34], Byram et al. [1] | High confidence | Six studies; minor concerns regarding coherence due to contradictory findings in one study. |
| (i) National or cultural identity loss is the biggest perceived threat of endorsing a European identity. | Du Bois-Reymond [5], Licata [17], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Spannring et al. [32] | Moderate confidence | Four studies; minor concerns regarding coherence due to contradictory findings in one study and moderate concerns regarding adequacy due to limited number of contributing studies. |
| 4. Category: Foreign country experiences | | | |
| (j) Academic sojourns have a positive impact on students' support for the EU. | Osler [24], Udrea [35], Van Mol [3], Hadfield and Summerby-Murray [12], Genova [10], Llurda et al. [18] | Moderate confidence | Six studies; moderate concerns about coherence due to contradictory findings in three of the studies. |
| (k) Exposure through leisure or spontaneous travel to Europe facilitates students' European identification. | Fuss and Grosser [9], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Spannring et al. [32], Thorpe [34] | Moderate confidence | Four studies; minor concerns about coherence because of contradictory findings in one of the studies and moderate concerns regarding adequacy due to limited number of contributing studies. |
| (l) Intentional pedagogic interventions are desirable to raise European awareness. | Osler [24], Grundy and Jamieson [11], Spannring et al. [32], Thorpe [34], Wilkins et al. [40], Van Mol [3], Hadfield and Summerby-Murray [12] | High confidence | Seven studies; moderate concerns regarding methodological limitations due to poor reporting from one study on collected evidence. |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

**Table 2** Contextual information of the studies included in QES

| Contributing studies | Setting and population |
|---|---|
| Byram et al. (2017) | Luxembourg; student-researchers in Psychology, Law, Linguistics, History, Sociology, Sociolinguistics, and Education Sciences. |
| Du Bois-Reymond (1998) | Germany, The Netherlands and the UK; students enrolled in education and/or social work degrees. |
| Erling (2007) | Germany; German students and international students from Bulgaria, France, Hungary, Korea and Poland, studying English at a German university. The latter comprise both foreign students and students on official European or international exchanges. |
| Fernández (2005) | The UK; European undergraduate students on exchange programmes such as Erasmus and postgraduates on master's or PhD programmes. |
| Fuss and Grosser (2006) | Selected European regions: Spain (Madrid and Bilbao), Austria (Vienna and Bregenz), UK (Manchester and Edinburgh), Germany (Chemnitz and Bielefeld), Czech Republic (Prague) and Slovakia (Bratislava); representative samples of 18–24 years residents versus samples of resident peers engaged in Europe-oriented work or study. |
| Genova (2016) | The UK; Undergraduate and postgraduate Bulgarian students enrolled in universities in London, Wales, Scotland, Southwest England the Midlands and Northern England. |
| Grundy 2007 | Scotland and the UK; representative sample of 18–24 years residents versus a sample of resident peers engaged in Europe-oriented work or study. |
| Hadfield and Summerby-Murray (2015) | Institute for European Studies (Brussels, Belgium); graduate students (a dozen different EU citizenships) |
| Licata (2003) | Belgium; French-speaking Belgian Psychology students. |
| Osler (1998) | The UK and Denmark; student teachers from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Spain and Sweden. |
| Pollmann (2007) | Germany; prospective history and social studies teachers from two German teacher education colleges. |
| Ros et al. (2008) | Check and Slovak Republics, Germany and Spain; European youngsters; students of European and International Law or Philology; workers at multinational companies. |
| Spannring et al. (2008) | Selected European regions: Spain (Madrid and Bilbao), Austria (Vienna and Bregenz), UK (Manchester and Edinburgh), Germany (Chemnitz and Bielefeld), Czech Republic (Prague) and Slovakia (Bratislava); representative samples of 18–24 years residents versus samples of resident peers engaged in Europe-oriented work or study. |
| Sperling (2013) | Spain; Young adults of Latin American-immigrant descent (Dominican and Colombian), either arrived in the country of residence by or before age 12 or born in the country of residence. |
| Thorpe (2008) | Scotland; Scottish representative sample of 18–24 years residents versus a sample of resident peers engaged in Europe-oriented work or study. |
| Udrea (2013) | Romania; Romanian students who have recently completed or are about to complete their university studies in the UK |
| Van Mol (2013) | Nine universities in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Norway, and Poland; students of Social and Political Sciences, Language Studies, Economics and Business Studies, and Engineering. |
| Wilkins et al. (2010) | Turkey and the UK; student teachers enrolled in 3 Turkish universities and Leicester University in the UK. |

Most studies reviewed disaggregate data by nationality of the informants, showing different perceptions of what Europeanness represents to each national group [24, 40]. For instance, inhabitants of peripheral and central nations, or continental Europe and the UK, differ in their representations of Europe [5]. Certain identification patterns are common to those who are geographically or otherwise akin, like Scandinavian countries [3, 5]. However, diverse conceptualisations are also present within groups of the same nationality, which can be explained by the existence of different past political regimes. Differences are also explained by the time of the country's annexation to the EU [3]. British students' data are reported separately, due to their country's 'isolation' from the European political unification [5].

Finding 3 points to the fact that EU institutions are considered distant, complex and over-bureaucratized entities (Table 5).

Initiatives to have youngsters identify with Europe have been unsuccessful due to their frustration about European politics and politicians [5, 32], as well as the perceived complexity and abstractness of the European Union and its institutions [8, 9]. The lack of a clear understanding of European affairs—a significant portion of respondents had trouble distinguishing 'Europeans' from 'citizens of the EU' when identifying themselves—or of the impact that civic participation would entail, has led to the youngsters' disengagement from supranational decision-making and its media coverage [8, 29]. The perception that European politics has no significant transcendence in the everyday personal lives of higher education students is also identified as causal to this lack of interest [9, 29]. Nevertheless, one study [11] pointed out different claims made by a small percentage of its informants about their endorsement of European

**Table 3** CERQual evidence profile. F1: Multilingualism, cultural diversity and the promotion of human rights are consistently identified as 'European values'. Category: European Ethos

| Assessment for each CERQual component | *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | N/VMC |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **High confidence** |
| **Contributing studies** | Du Bois-Reymond 1998; Osler 1998; Grundy 2007; Ros 2008; Thorpe 2008; Spannring 2008; Sperling 2013; Udrea 2013; Llurda 2016 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

institutions. In this context, one subject considered European institutions as the nurturers of informal civil action and values.

Finding 4 reveals that university students are disinclined to support further integration and Eastward expansion of the EU (Table 6).

One of the studies reported overt disagreement with Turkey's prospective inclusion in the EU. Issues regarding inclusion of new member states were tackled without the interviewer mentioning a specific nationality, yet all interviewees chose the example of Turkey and Turkish immigrants to illustrate their notions of the EU, based on shared concerns about the human rights situation in that country, its remote geographical location and presumably different religious background [26]. Another study pointed out that the mounting anti-immigrant sentiment in many European nations may lead to exclusionary views of Europeanness [33]. Similarly, other studies cite in-group identification of 'distinctive European traits' to justify dissimilarities to other countries beyond European borders [18, 32] and to prevent certain culturally diverging candidate countries like Turkey from joining the EU [34]. Nonetheless, one study emphasised the respondents' wish for Europe not to become homogeneous and their view of cultural standardisation as a threat to cultural identity [11]. Along the same line, another study argued that in order to gather support, European integration should be presented as a process that will maintain national distinctiveness and sovereignty [17].

Finding 5 groups those studies endorsing the compatibility of multiple identity layers within the students' self-identification (Table 7).

In general, students acknowledge having multiple levels of identity—local, regional, national, and supranational—which emerge depending on the situation and

**Table 4** CERQual evidence profile. F2: Perceptions of what it means to be European are contingent upon the national geopolitical context. Category: European Ethos

| Assessment for each CERQual component | *N/VMC – *No or very minor concerns* |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | N/VMC |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | Minor concerns due to restricted number of contributing studies that *expressly* allude to the finding. The finding was elicited by the review authors, based on reporting of conclusions of the cited primary research |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **High confidence** |
| **Contributing studies** | Du Bois-Reymond 1998; Osler 1998; Wilkins 2010; Sperling 2013; Van Mol 2013 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

**Table 5** CERQual evidence profile. F3: EU institutions are seen as distant, complex and over-bureaucratized entities. Category: European Ethos

| **Assessment for each CERQual component** *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | Moderate concerns due to poor reporting from 1 study (Fernández) on collected evidence (does not include direct quotes from respondents) |
| ***Coherence*** | Minor concerns due to somewhat inconsistent findings in one of the studies (Grundy) |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **Moderate confidence** |
| **Contributing studies** | Fernández 2005; Fuss 2006; Ros 2008; Spannring 2008 |
| **Conflicting studies** | Grundy 2007 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

context ([1, 9, 10, 26]). One study argued that European identification relies on pre-existing national identifications on the social representations of the relations between the EU and the subordinate geopolitical entity [17]. Authors also propose that we should think of students as having identity layers, corresponding to their local, national, European and global affiliations (Erling, 2007). These layers of identity are often hierarchised in students' minds and though national identity feelings are commonly stronger, most participants revealed their European identity feelings were not entirely eclipsed by national identifications ([7, 10, 35]). Some studies point to European identity not being the students' primary place of identification, but an additional identity marker of social distinction ([7, 34]).

Byram [1] and Udrea [35] concluded that mobile students tend to assimilate European and 'international student' identities, considering them interchangeable. Encounters with international students usually triggered a self-reflection and increased awareness of their own

**Table 6** CERQual evidence profile. F4: The support for further integration is scarce. Category: European Ethos

| **Assessment for each CERQual component** *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | N/VMC |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **High confidence** |
| **Contributing studies** | Du Bois-Reymond 1998; Osler 1998; Grundy 2007; Ros 2008; Thorpe 2008; Spannring 2008; Sperling 2013; Udrea 2013; Llurda 2016 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

**Table 7** CERQual evidence profile. F5: Self-identification is compatible with the 'nested identities' theory. Category: Self-identification

| Assessment for each CERQual component<br>*N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | Minor concerns due to context-dependent contradictory findings in one of the studies (Grundy) |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **High confidence** |
| **Contributing studies:** | Osler 1998; Licata 2003; Fuss 2006; Erling 2007; Pollman 2007; Thorpe 2008; Udrea 2013; Genova 2016; Llurda 2016; Byram 2017 |
| **Conflicting studies:** | Grundy 2007 (very contextually-bound limitation of the general finding) |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

identity, as such situations require an explanation, description or justification of one's origin ([9, 35, [26]). In some cases, students actualized a European sense of self because of the fact that they were perceived as Europeans in a foreign environment or when in contact with non-Europeans in their own country, prompting a distinctive European identity to emerge [18, 35]. Under these circumstances, mobile students sometimes added another layer to their identity negotiation process: that of migrant [10]. Some students preferred to identify themselves as 'world citizens', as this idea overcame a more departmentalised conceptualisation of 'Europeans' versus 'outsiders' [24].

Nevertheless, Grundy and Jamieson [11] observed the Scottish students' lack of identification as European. The study concluded that most participants had strong Scottish national identities and some had strong feelings about their British nationalities, but had never considered themselves as European. For the majority, being European was absent from their routine and from the festive occasions which have self-defining properties.

Finding 6 relates the prevalence of national identities over supranational identities with affective factors (Table 8).

Youngsters favour their national identity when measured from an affective perspective or a personal value [29], and many construe their national citizenship in terms of a shared culture and a sense of belonging, rather than as a legal status [24]. Several studies reveal the perceived lack of a strong emotional response or attachment to Europe ([24, 26]). For most of the interviewees, the problem of describing their feelings about Europe stems from the lack of personal experiences in which they have perceived themselves as Europeans [9]. In fact, being European does not represent a deeply rooted mode of identification but it is seen as a matter of course due. In this sense, it entails the same type of personal values and goals as national identities. On an individual level, thus, the defining elements of their European identity are personal safety, economic growth and social recognition; on a collective level, European identification is concomitant to national security [9, 29].

One study concluded that some aspects of the EU elicit vehement emotional responses in the students, observable during the heated discussions that took place in the focus groups, when individuals were confronted with some facet of their Europe experience (generally acquired through travelling, direct exposure to other cultures or through public and political discourse) as well as when debating topics concerned with the future of the Union. These emotional responses were more cogently manifested by students who were politically engaged [32].

Finding 7 summarises the motivations leading to the students' individual support of the EU (Table 9).

The nine studies cited corroborate that individual support for the EU correlates with the benefits that

**Table 8** CERQual evidence profile. F6: The prevalence of national identities is closely linked to affective factors. Category: Self-identification

| **Assessment for each CERQual component** *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | Minor concerns due to contradictory findings in one of the studies (Spannring), for a subgroup of the population (politically engaged students) |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **High confidence** |
| **Contributing studies:** | Osler 1998; Fuss 2006; Grundy 2007; Pollmann 2007; Ros 2008; Udrea 2013 |
| **Conflicting studies:** | Spannring 2008 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

membership might afford on a personal level. Similarly, social groups are most likely to identify with Europe if they have something to gain by doing so [34]. A predominant theme tackled by studies is the perceived importance of freedom of movement and the elimination of custom controls when crossing internal frontiers in respondents' minds [1, 8, 24, 35]. Mobility is of such importance that it encouraged several students to re-define themselves as European citizens [24]. Other perceived benefits are academic, educational and funding opportunities [1, 33, 35], employment prospects [33, 35], the right to reside without restriction in any member country, the prerogative to take any amount of money when travelling to other EU countries and the ability to make payments seamlessly anywhere in Europe [8]. A hypothetical transfer of competencies to the EU (for instance,

**Table 9** CERQual evidence profile. F7: Support for the EU is rooted on instrumental / utilitarian motivations. Category: Predictors of endorsement and opposition

| **Assessment for each CERQual component** *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | Minor concerns due to poor reporting of evidence in one study (Fernández) |
| ***Coherence*** | N/VMC |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **High confidence** |
| **Contributing studies:** | Osler 1998; Licata 2003; Fernández 2005; Fuss 2006; Pollman 2007; Thorpe 2008; Sperling 2013; Udrea 2013; Byram 2017 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

regarding a European army which would undertake shared defence efforts) was sometimes also based on utilitarian considerations [26].

Finding 8 supports that speaking foreign languages favours identification with supranational identities and Europe (Table 10).

Three studies that examined this issue ascertained that students who expressed an above-average feeling of attachment to Europe generally also regarded language skills as a key factor for establishing transnational relations and developing a cosmopolitan sense of belonging to many different places ([7, 9, 32]). Similarly, one study concludes that individuals who are members of the 'cultural bourgeoisie', who hold a high degree of further education and are oriented to knowledge of foreign languages, society and cultures, are more likely to positively identify with Europe [34]. By contrast, one study [11] found that respondents who held a European identity rarely attributed their affiliation to studying European languages or to their higher education, and instead ascribed it to events that occurred much earlier in their biographies, such as friendships, shared experiences, emotions and meaningful communication with European nationals from other countries.

However, foreign language learning is generally considered as a facilitator of European identity, as people seek opportunities of exchange and communication with nationals of other countries or cultures through foreign languages [32]. The connection between multilingualism and European identity is also addressed by two studies. Thus, command of English is perceived as a marker of affinity with Europe and of holding a multilingual identity [7]. Multilingual competence, in turn, is used to distinguish between being a European researcher and an international researcher when in 'the rest of the world' [1].

Finding 9 attests university students' fear for their national cultural identity in the Pan-European cultural arena (Table 11).

Three studies reported the respondents' concerns regarding Europe becoming too homogeneous and their view of cultural standardisation, loss of national power and lack of respect for regional cultures as a threat to the desirable culturally distinct identity of each nation ([5, 11, 17]). In contrast, one study contributed evidence that exposure to other cultures may help to generate a consciousness of national or regional distinctiveness or even rejection of the other cultures to which one is exposed [32].

Finding 10 indicates that academic sojourns possibly have a positive impact on students' support for the EU (Table 12).

Some studies considered educational mobility pivotal in facilitating the students' assumption of a European sense of belonging, as some respondents argued that without the opportunity to study abroad and the experiences derived from it, their sense of Europeanness would have remained a lot less prominent ([3, 35]). Similarly, some studies suggest that education through mobility remains a highly viable means of (re)constructing identity

**Table 10** CERQual evidence profile. F8: Speaking foreign languages favours identification with supranational identities and Europe. Category: Predictors of endorsement and opposition

| **Assessment for each CERQual component** *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | Minor concerns due to contradictory findings in one of the studies |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **High confidence** |
| **Contributing studies:** | Fuss 2006; Erling 2007; Spannring 2008; Thorpe 2008; Byram 2017 |
| **Conflicting studies:** | Grundy 2007 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

**Table 11** CERQual evidence profile. F9: National or cultural identity loss is the biggest perceived threat of endorsing a European identity. Category: Predictors of endorsement and opposition

| **Assessment for each CERQual component** *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | Minor concerns regarding coherence due to contradictory findings in one study |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | Moderate concerns regarding adequacy due to limited number of contributing studies |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **Moderate confidence** |
| **Contributing studies:** | Du Bois-Reymond 1998; Licata 2003; Grundy 2007 |
| **Conflicting studies:** | Spannring 2008 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

and European integration, even in a time of economic crisis [12]. However, the results of individual studies greatly fluctuate on their appraisal of academic sojourns abroad. The development of a European identity through student mobility is not self-evident for all European countries and is subject to regional variation [3]. Additionally, some results seem to indicate that European mobile students are a priori already significantly oriented towards Europe, before they partake in the experience abroad [3]. One study concluded that the positive effect of

**Table 12** CERQual evidence profile. F10: Academic sojourns have a positive impact on students' support for the EU. Category: Predictors of endorsement and opposition

| **Assessment for each CERQual component** *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | Moderate concerns due to contradictory findings in three of the studies |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **Moderate confidence** |
| **Contributing studies:** | Udrea 2013; Van Mol 2013; Hadfield 2016 |
| **Conflicting studies:** | Osler 1998; Genova 2016; Llurda 2016 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

sojourns was limited to fostering positive feelings towards the culture of the host territory and towards the home country, but not towards Europe as a whole [18]. In Llurda's work (2016), the extent of the impact correlates to the level of Europeanness of the host country. Thus, students sojourning in the 'least European country' (the UK) feel they would probably experience a deeper feeling of Europeanness elsewhere, like in countries such as Belgium or Germany.

Two studies reported the detrimental effects of foreign country academic experiences caused by indifferent and occasionally hostile attitudes of students in the host country. In this sense, informants either expressed the difficulty to gain access to the people and cultures of their host countries [24] or negative rhetoric encountered abroad. 'The overarching negativity in the host society ultimately results in strengthening participants' sense of national belonging' (Genova [10], 8). Llurda also referred a heightened sense of national identity post experience abroad. The results suggest that the detrimental effects could be minimised by inducting exchange students into the social and academic life of the host community [24].

Finding 11 reveals that exposure through leisure or spontaneous travel to Europe facilitates students' European identification (Table 13)

The relevance of boundary-crossing experiences and international travelling is highlighted as a means to achieving open-mindedness, curiosity and identity changes or identities in flux (hybridity and non-exclusivity in national and regional identities), which may facilitate the adoption of a European identity [33]. Two studies report an explicit causality between personal experiences of stays abroad, as well as a more prominent inclusion of a European aspect in one's self-identity ([9] [32]). The increased levels of identification with Europe are explained by the exposure to other cultures which occurs by travelling abroad or having immediate family members residing in other countries. Sojourners' self-perceptions and identifications were often influenced by the way they were perceived or labelled by local, international and co-national people they interact with while in other countries. A further way to explore exposure is through personal migration experiences that the young person has had if they have lived elsewhere or when close members of their immediate family have had such an experience [32]. Nevertheless, one study conducted in a British setting concluded that travel to continental Europe along with exposure to European culture do not necessarily result in a sense of belonging to Europe [34].

Finding 12 indicates that intentional pedagogic interventions are suited to raise European awareness (Table 14).

The seven contributing studies address the importance of cognitive mobilisation [12, 32], citizenship education [40], cultural capital oriented to Europe [34], intercultural understanding and comparative education [8, 24] to support the development of a relational identification with Europe. Hence, the findings underpin empirically the need for actively incorporating 'Conscious Europeanism' citizenship contents into the existing curricula. Similarly, another study [11] corroborated that although

**Table 13** CERQual evidence profile. F11: Exposure through leisure or spontaneous travel to Europe facilitates students' European identification. Category: Foreign countries experiences

| **Assessment for each CERQual component** *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* | |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | N/VMC |
| ***Coherence*** | Minor concerns due to contradictory findings in one of the studies |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | Moderate concerns due to limited number of contributing studies |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **Moderate confidence** |
| **Contributing studies:** | Fuss 2006; Grundy 2007; Spannring 2008 |
| **Conflicting studies:** | Thorpe 2008 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

**Table 14** CERQual evidence profile. F12: Intentional pedagogic interventions are desirable to raise European awareness. Category: Foreign countries experiences

| Assessment for each CERQual component | *N/VMC = *No or very minor concerns* |
|---|---|
| ***Methodological limitations*** | Minor concerns due to poor reporting from 1 study (Fernández) on collected evidence (does not include direct quotes from respondents) |
| ***Coherence*** | N/VMC |
| ***Relevance*** | N/VMC |
| ***Adequacy*** | N/VMC |
| **Overall CERQual assessment:** | **High confidence** |
| **Contributing studies:** | Osler 1998; Fernández 2005; Spannring 2008; Thorpe 2008; Wilkins 2010; Van Mol 2013; Hadfield 2016 |

*N/VMC* no or very minor concerns

deliberate interventions to foster civic engagement among Europeans, such as town-twinning or school-exchange experiences, were infrequent, they raised the awareness of pupils.

## Discussion and conclusions

In the CERQual assessment of each finding, authors have determined that the research methods used in the primary studies may in some cases limit the applicability and completeness of the data reported. All the included studies made use of individual or group interviews and focus group discussions as their main method of data collection, and none used long-term ethnographic methods.

Taken together, the findings presented suggest a rather generic representation of community ethos, characterised by plurilingual and multicultural societies which ideally abide by 'European values' and uphold democracy and human rights. It can also be concluded that university students' identification as Europeans is subsidiary to, but also compatible with, their more salient and emotion laden national and regional identities. As it has been shown, European identity is contextually bound and surfaces more frequently during transnational experiences and encounters with international peers. However, the youngsters' endorsement of the EU is consistently associated to economic preoccupations and assumptions that membership can have practical benefits for the citizens' everyday life and future prospects. In this sense, the Commission's communication campaigns and educational initiatives tackling the utilitarian aspects of European citizenship seem to have permeated the students' collective worldview.

Nevertheless, civic duties, policies and supranational decision-making seem too far-removed to be of any consequence in young Europeans' daily activity. An implication of this is the need to instigate structural changes on a national and local level to ensure that youngsters receive better knowledge about the EU and their means of active participation in the EU decision-making process.

Endorsing curricula which address European public space in a transversal way, both at the higher education stage and at the preceding levels of the education system, would possibly contribute to a citizen-friendly EU and a greater popular ownership of European matters. Reinforcing the European Dimension in Education which transcends individualistic views and relies on value-based approaches would stimulate greater identification with Europe. Thus, an inclusive Europe-oriented education, covering responsible citizenship, multiple identities and citizens' dialogue should be central to the EU's lifelong learning agenda, reaching all stages of informal, non-formal and formal education, particularly that of the higher education realm. We concur with Diestro Fernández [4] in that future educational policies should envisage a broadly defined European studies curriculum which considers differentiated narratives and focuses on social endeavours, dialogue, solidarity and plurality in order to mobilise these young adults in support of the European process and to strengthen their European identity.

As much as a valuable tool for intercultural understanding, the command of foreign languages is recurrently identified as a predictor of endorsement of the EU. In fact, mobile students display more pro-European attitudes than their non-mobile fellows, but whether this results from the experience abroad or predates it is an unsettled issue. Foreign language learning is generally acknowledged for its contributing effect to inter-personal communication and socialisation during transnational experiences, leading to the development of cosmopolitan dispositions. In this sense, the EU's continuing commitment with plurilingual education seems to be particularly fitting for the promotion of European citizenship.

Both academic sojourns and leisure transnational experiences chiefly have a positive impact on the students' perceptions about the EU and broaden their own civic and cultural identities; however, either of them would benefit from intentional pedagogical interventions to fully address the current discussion on the future of Europe. By supplementing the students' European cultural capital and equipping them for the challenges of globalism, complexity and the unequal distribution of opportunities throughout European societies, education has the means to better prepare young citizens for intercultural dialogue and democratic participation.

Some implications for further research need also to be mentioned. From a heuristic perspective, the need for researcher reflexivity in future qualitative studies on the phenomena of interest examined in this review has been established. Regarding the thematic categories analysed, it is deemed that more detail concerning setting and participants is also needed to identify underlying cultural or social phenomena (shared values or beliefs) that mediate the influence of study programmes abroad.

High confidence has been placed in the evidence contributing to several review findings, especially those concerning the relationships between national and European identities. However, further research, especially dealing with cross-border individual practices, both academic and spontaneous, whose positive impact on European identification is not consistently corroborated, could strengthen evidence for the findings where moderate confidence was awarded. In turn, such additional empirical evidence would fully substantiate the European Union's education policy agenda and justify mobility programme funding in the years to come.

**Acknowledgements**
Not applicable

**Authors' contributions**
Conceptualization and investigation, ECB, MCMG, MCFM; methodology and formal analysis, ECB, MCMG; Writing – Original Draft, ECB, MCMG, MCFM; Writing – Review & Editing, ECB, MCMG, MCFM; funding acquisition, MCFM, MCMG. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

**Authors' information**
Esther Cores-Bilbao is a doctoral candidate at the University of Huelva with interests in identity and European cultural literacy, interculturality, language learning and motivation in adult education. She is the Head Teacher at the EOI Do Mundo Lume, a government funded Official School of Languages for adults. She is an external advisor to the Spanish National Agency for the Internationalisation of Education (SEPIE), having evaluated Erasmus+ proposals since 2014. She has coordinated several international projects in the Adult Education sector and cooperates with the Language Policy Division/ Unit of the Council of Europe by participating in the project "CEFR mediation strategies: towards a socio-emotional and plurilingual education". She is also the lead researcher of the Education Research Project "Identity and Cultural Literacy: the use of Music Videos in English Language Teaching to Adults" (PIV-002//17) supported by the Andalusian Department of Education.
María del Carmen Méndez-García is a senior lecturer at the Department of English Philology, University of Jaén. She has researched on the cultural component in EFL material, intercultural competence and intercultural communication. She has participated in international projects such as 'International Competence for Professional Mobility', funded by the European Commission. She has cooperated with the Language Policy Division/Unit of the Council of Europe in the development of the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters and the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media.
M. Carmen Fonseca-Mora is full professor at the Department of English Studies, University of Huelva, Spain. She has widely published on foreign language education policy and cooperates with the Language Policy Division/ Unit of the Council of Europe participating in the project "CEFR mediation strategies: towards a socio-emotional and plurilingual education". She is also the principal research investigator of the R+D project on "intercultural literacy of European university students" (FFI2016-75452-R) funded by the Spanish Research Ministry.

**Funding**
This study has been supported by the R+D project 'Musical aptitude, reading fluency and intercultural literacy of European university students' (FFI2016-75452-R), funded by the Spanish Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad, and by the Research Group HUM 679 of the Junta de Andalucía, Estudios de Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés.

**Availability of data and materials**
The datasets used and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

**Ethics approval and consent to participate**
Not applicable

**Consent for publication**
Not applicable

**Competing interests**
The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

**Author details**
[1]Departamento de Pedagogía, Facultad de Educación, Psicología y Ciencias del Deporte, Universidad de Huelva, Avda. de las Fuerzas Armadas, s/n, 21071 Huelva, Spain. [2]Departamento de Filología Inglesa, Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación, Universidad de Jaén, Paraje las Lagunillas s/n, 23071 Jaén, Spain. [3]Departamento de Filología Inglesa, Facultad de Humanidades, Universidad de Huelva, Avda.Tres de Marzo s/n, 21071 Huelva, Spain.

Received: 16 August 2019 Accepted: 22 October 2019
Published online: 06 January 2020

**References**

1. Byram M, Hu A, Rahman M (2017) Are researchers in Europe European researchers? A study of doctoral researchers at the University of Luxembourg*. Studies in Higher Education 0(0):1–13 https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2017.1378634

2. Capello R (2018) Cohesion Policies and the Creation of a European Identity: The Role of Territorial Identity. J Common Mark Stud 56(3):489–503 https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12611
3. Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2018). CASP (Qualitative) Checklist. [online] Available at: https://casp-uk.net/casp-tools-checklists/. Accessed: 28th January 2019.
4. Diestro Fernández A (2014) The future of European education: a political strategy & four action areas. Eur J Futures Res 2(1) https://doi.org/10.1007/s40309-014-0049-2
5. Du Bois-Reymond M (1998) European identity in the young and Dutch students' images of Germany and the Germans. Comparative Educ 34(1):27–40 https://doi.org/10.1080/03050069828324
6. Duchesne S (2010) L'identité européenne, entre science politique et science fiction. Politique Européenne 30(1):7 https://doi.org/10.3917/poeu.030.0007
7. Erling, E.J., (2007) Local identities, global connections: affinities to English among students at the Freie Universität Berlin. World Englishes 26 (2):111–130
8. Fernández Ó (2005) Towards European citizenship through hegher Education? Eur J Educ 40(1):59–68 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaci.2009.11.036
9. Fuss D, Grosser M (2006) What makes young Europeans feel European? Results from a cross-cultural research proyect. European Identity, Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Insights, pp 209–242
10. Genova E (2016) To have both roots and wings: nested identities in the case of Bulgarian students in the UK. Identities 23(4):392–406. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2015.1024125 .
11. Grundy S, Jamieson L (2007) European identities: from absent-minded citizens to passionate Europeans. Sociol 41(4):663–680 https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038507078919
12. Hadfield A, Summerby-Murray R (2016) Vocation or vocational? Reviewing European Union education and mobility structures. Eur J Higher Educ 6(3):237–255 https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2015.1099453
13. Healy M, Richardson M (2017) Images and identity: children constructing a sense of belonging to Europe. Eur Educ Res J 16(4):440–454 https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904116674015
14. Keating A (2016) Are cosmopolitan dispositions learned at home, at school, or through contact with others? Evidence from young people in Europe. J Youth Stud 19(3):338–357 https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2015.1072617
15. Lewin S, Bohren M, Rashidian A, Munthe-Kaas H, Glenton C, Colvin CJ et al (2018a) Applying GRADE-CERQual to qualitative evidence synthesis findings-paper 2: how to make an overall CERQual assessment of confidence and create a Summary of Qualitative Findings table. Implementation Science 13(Suppl 1) https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-017-0689-2
16. Lewin S, Booth A, Glenton C, Munthe-Kaas H, Rashidian A, Wainwright M et al (2018b) Applying GRADE-CERQual to qualitative evidence synthesis findings: introduction to the series. Implementation Science 13(Suppl 1):1–10 https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-017-0688-3
17. Licata, L. (2003). Representing the future of the European Union : Consequences on national and European identifications. Online, 12, 1–22.
18. Llurda E, Gallego-Balsà L, Barahona C, Martin-Rubió X (2016) Erasmus student mobility and the construction of European citizenship. *Language Learning Journal* 44(3):323–346 https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2016.1210911
19. Mitchell K (2012) Student mobility and European identity: Erasmus study as a transformative experience. J Contemp Eur Res 8(4):490–518 Retrieved from http://www.imagining.eu/workshop/papers/MITCHELL-Student mobility and European identity.pdf
20. Mitchell K (2015) Rethinking the "Erasmus Effect" on European Identity. J Common Mark Stud 53(2):330–348 https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12152
21. Munthe-Kaas H, Bohren MA, Glenton C, Lewin S, Noyes J, Tunçalp Ö et al (2018) Applying GRADE-CERQual to qualitative evidence synthesis findings-paper 3: how to assess methodological limitations. Implementation Sci 13(Suppl 1) https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-017-0690-9
22. Noyes, J. P., Popay, J., Pearson, A., & Hannes, K. (2008). Chapter 20 : Qualitative research and Cochrane reviews, (October 2017). https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470712184.ch20
23. Oborune K (2013) Becoming more European after ERASMUS ? The impact of the ERASMUS programme on political and cultural identity. Epiphany: Journal of Transdisciplinary Studies 6(1):182–202
24. Osler A (1998) European citizenship and study abroad: student teachers' experiences and identities. Camb J Educ 28(1):77–96 https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764980280107
25. Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2006). *Systematic Reviews in the Social Sciences: a practical guide*. Blackwell Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470754887
26. Pollmann A (2007) National and European identities: notions of reconcilability and inclusiveness in a case study of German trainee teachers. Compare 37(1):89–104 https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920601061844
27. Polonska-Kimunguyi E, Kimunguyi P (2011) The making of the Europeans: media in the construction of pan-national identity. International Communication Gazette 73(6):507–523 https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048511412283
28. Recchi E (2014) Pathways to European identity formation: a tale of two models. Innovation 27(2):119–133 https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2013.873709
29. Ros M, Miryam R, Casado C (2008) Valores e identidades nacional y Europea: Un estudio transcultural. Revista de Psicologia Social 23(3):367–376 https://doi.org/10.1174/021347408785843051.
30. Shore C (2006) "In uno plures" (?) EU cultural policy and the governance of Europe. Critical Analysis 5:7–26
31. Sigalas E (2010) Cross-border mobility and european identity: the effectiveness of intergroup contact during the ERASMUS year abroad. Eur Union Polit 11(2):241–265 https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116510363656
32. Spannring R, Wallace C, Datler G (2008) What leads young people to identify with Europe? An exploration of the impact of exposure to europe and political engagement on European identity among young Europeans. Perspect Eur Polit Soc 9(4):480–498 https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850802416929
33. Sperling J (2013) Belonging, beyond the nation: the significance and meaning of European identity for Latin American-origin youth in Spain. National Identities 15(1):67–84 https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2012.733155
34. Thorpe C (2008) The distinguishing function of European identity: attitudes towards and visions of Europe and the European Union among young scottish adults. Perspect Eur Polit Soc 9(4):499–513 https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850802416945
35. Udrea (2013) National and European identity: an empirical research on how Romanian students experience identities during their long-term studies abroad. Rom J Commu Public Relat 15(1(28)):17–35
36. Brande, L. Van Den. (2017). Reaching out to EU citizens: a new opportunity. https://doi.org/10.2775/319
37. Van Mol C (2018) Becoming Europeans: the relationship between student exchanges in higher education, European citizenship and a sense of European identity. Innovation 1610:1–15 https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2018.1495064
38. Van Mol, C. (2013) Intra-European Student Mobility and European Identity: A Successful Marriage?. Population, Space and Place 19 (2):209–222.
39. Wilson I (2011) What should we expect of "Erasmus generations"? J Comm Mark Stud 49(5):1113–1140 https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2010.02158.x
40. Wilkins, C., Busher, H., Lawson, T., Acun, I., Leman Göz, N. (2010) European Citizenship and European Union Expansion: Perspectives on Europeanness and. Citizenship Education from Britain and Turkey. European Educational Research Journal 9 (4):444–456.


## Publisher's Note

Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.


**Submit your manuscript to a SpringerOpen journal and benefit from:**

- ► Convenient online submission
- ► Rigorous peer review
- ► Open access: articles freely available online
- ► High visibility within the field
- ► Retaining the copyright to your article

**Submit your next manuscript at ► springeropen.com**

## Annex 2: Original paper: Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity: international orientation and experiences

Méndez García, M.C., Cores-Bilbao, E. y L. Moreno Gámez. 2019. Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity: international orientation and experiences. Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development.

DOI: 10.1080/01434632.2019.1682592

QUALITY INDICATORS

- **Journal Citation Reports** 2018 Impact factor: 1.639. 5 Year impact factor: 1.554. Eigenfactor Score: 0.00163. SSCI: Linguistics: 36/180, Q1.

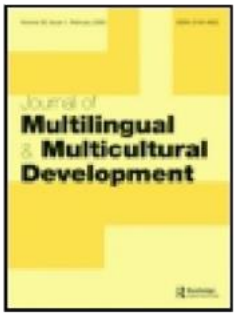
- **Scopus (Citescore)** 2018 (2019): 0.44. Social Sciences: Cultural Studies: 25/880 (97 percentil), Q1. Social Sciences: Linguistics and Language: 64/738 (91 percentil), Q1. Social Sciences: Educación: 317/1038 (percentil 79), Q1.

- **Scopus (SJR)** 2018 (2019): 1.124. Índice H 37. Social Sciences: Cultural Studies: 11/943, Q1. Social Sciences: Linguistics and Language: 44/806, Q1. Social Sciences: Educación: 118/122, Q1.

- **CIRC:** Ciencias Sociales: A+; Ciencias Humanas: **A**.

- **MIAR:** ICDS 11 over 11 (2018).

- **CARHUS+**: A.



Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development

ISSN: 0143-4632 (Print) 1747-7557 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rmmm20

# Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity: international orientation and experiences

María del Carmen Méndez García, Esther Cores-Bilbao & Laura Moreno Gámez

**To cite this article:** María del Carmen Méndez García, Esther Cores-Bilbao & Laura Moreno Gámez (2019): Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity: international orientation and experiences, Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, DOI: 10.1080/01434632.2019.1682592

**To link to this article:** https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2019.1682592

© 2019 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

View supplementary material

Published online: 03 Nov 2019.

Submit your article to this journal

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=rmmm20

JOURNAL OF MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2019.1682592

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

OPEN ACCESS Check for updates

# Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity: international orientation and experiences

María del Carmen Méndez García [a], Esther Cores-Bilbao [b] and Laura Moreno Gámez[a]

[a]Departamento de Filología Inglesa, Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación, Universidad de Jaén, Jaén, Spain; [b]Departamento de Pedagogía, Facultad de Educación, Psicología y Ciencias del Deporte, Universidad de Huelva, Huelva, Spain

**ABSTRACT**

Multicultural European societies increasingly demand internationally oriented citizens, who are willing to actively participate in civic life and able to successfully access the labour market. The European dimension in education supposedly endows youngsters with civic values, multiculturalist attitudes and plurilingual competences which ultimately lead to raising awareness of their Europeanness. Formative years at university, pivotal to students' individual life course and projects, are a decisive stage in the development of supranational, collective identity-formation. Similarly, pan-European study programmes are aimed at inspiring a sense of European citizenship and identity, the most renowned of which within the Higher Education context is Erasmus+. By conducting focus group interviews, this paper probes Andalusian university students' understanding of their European identity and verifies the causal dynamics between European identity-taking and foreign country sojourns, comparing the perceptions expressed by returnees to those by students who have not had the opportunity to participate in international study programmes (ISP) at higher education yet. Results evidence students' apparent supranational orientation, general awareness of commonalities across Europe and utilitarian outlooks on the EU, although not a clear discernment of its institutions or a marked European identity.

**ARTICLE HISTORY**
Received 26 June 2019
Accepted 14 October 2019

**KEYWORDS**
Europeanness; European identity; international study programmes; supranational orientation; supranational identity

## Introduction

One of the main obstacles that the EU polity has consistently confronted is citizen disengagement from its supranational institutions and the mistrust in its system of governance. Habermas (2012) suggests that the apathy and discontent manifested in the public sphere can be traced to and motivated by the EU's complex institutional architecture, a deficit in the citizens' sense of belonging to a multinational political union and the under-development of a European identity.

Understanding the citizens' affiliations, particularly those extending to political or cultural communities beyond the nation-state, has spurred a considerable body of research (Fernández, Eigmüller, and Börner 2016; Kaina and Karolewski 2013; Keating 2016; Verhaegen and Hooghe 2015). Similarly, expediting the acquisition of cosmopolitan dispositions at the individual level,

**CONTACT** Esther Cores-Bilbao esther.cores.edu@juntadeandalucia.es
Supplemental data for this article can be accessed https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2019.1682592
© 2019 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

encompassing openness to and appreciation of other cultures, values, and experiences has steered education policies in Europe since the mid-1990s.

The significance of European identification on participatory forms of European citizenship has also drawn increasing academic attention, as citizens who have a strong sense of European identity are bound to engage to a broader extent in EU issues (Mazzoni et al. 2018), as well as to manifest favourable attitudes towards EU integration and endorse solidarity within the EU community (Verhaegen 2018). Remarkably, however, studies conducted to ascertain Participatory Citizenship across Europe place youth amongst the demographic groups who participate to the most restricted extent in European civic life (Hoskins et al. 2012).

Recently, the European Commission's revision of the *Framework on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning* (2018), with updated areas such as multilingualism, cultural diversity and citizenship, describes the attitudes necessary for constructive civic participation as the citizens' readiness to engage in democratic decision-making from local and national to the European and international level, as well as the 'understanding of the multi-cultural and socioeconomic dimensions of European societies, and how national cultural identity contributes to the European identity' (European Comission 2018, C189/10).

## Conceptualising European identity

The construct of European identity is elusive and controverted, one for which multifarious definitions have been offered by authors from equally diverse fields of knowledge. Delanty and Rumford affirm that 'it is possible to conceive of European identity as a cosmopolitan identity […] a form of post-national self-understanding that expresses itself within, as much as beyond, national identities' (2005, 56). Thus, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology and Pedagogy are among the disciplines that inform the field and intersect within it, as multiperspectivalism is consubstantial with cosmopolitanism (Beck and Cronin 2014, 82) and identity studies.

For the purposes of this paper, we understand European identity as a supranational form of social identity (Garib 2012), and social identity as 'that part of the individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership' (Tajfel 1978, 63). Concurrently, political theorists have defined European identity as 'a psycho-sociological or socio-political process of citizens' attachment to the European space or to the political community designed by integration' (Duchesne 2010, 7).

Undoubtedly, an individual's self-concept is highly complex and exceeds this conceptualisation, but we endorse its underpinnings regarding the psychological components of identity formation. Most scholars nowadays assent that the European identity question should be approached by examining both its cognitive dimension (that is, seeing oneself as European) as well as its emotional or affective aspects (one's attachment to Europe). In this vein, Mitchell (2015) argues that European identity encompasses individuals' self-categorization as members of the group 'Europeans' and the extent to which they feel a connection with Europe and fellow members, which has also been referred to as 'a sense of belonging together' (Kaina 2013).

As such, European identity is a difficult construct to gauge, and traditional measures to do so have failed to grasp subjective nuances or the intensity of identification (Kaina 2013; Luhmann 2017a, 2017b) and to isolate the personal traits and contextual characteristics which predispose individuals to identify themselves with certain supranational entities. To remedy this, Strohmeier et al. (2017) argue that young people's identification with the European Union is measurable through its potential to trigger civic and political action, ranging from conventional (intended participation in future EU elections) and nonconventional political engagement (supporting petitions about EU-related issues, partaking in demonstrations and marches, holding sit-ins or symbolic occupations) to psychological engagement (debating EU-related topics in social settings, circulating or commenting on content about EU affairs on social media).

Similarly, concurring with Strohmeier et al. (2017) and seeking to define the measurable elements that compose the construct of shared sense of European community, Kaina and Karolewski (2013) operationalise individuals' orientations in terms of their cognition, feelings and evaluations, and behavioural intentions.

## European disengagement

Studies dealing with European identity have equally looked into the growing disillusionment of the higher education students with the EU and set out to establish the cause for their sceptical take on its feasibility beyond theory project and their lack of European attachment (Du Bois-Reymond 1998; Fernández 2005; Fuss and Grosser 2006; Udrea 2013; Wilkins et al. 2010).

The Eurosceptic stance or pessimistic view about the future of the EU and its economic predicament are associated with predictors of those who reported a wish that their country should leave the EU (Strohmeier et al. 2017). Similarly, future worries regarding unemployment, climate change, socio-political tensions, and the collapse of the EU are recurrently cited as causal to disengagement or disidentification (Becker and Tausch 2014).

## Predictors of endorsement

Recchi (2014) explores two opposed traditions that explain European identity formation: a logocentric culturalist model, in which affiliation is achieved through the mere exposure to Europeanising symbols and identity-laden discourses, and a democentric structuralist model, for which cross-national experiences are paramount.

The former model, supported mainly by Sociology theorists, relies on political socialisation or the assumption that influential verbal messages, such as positive depictions of the EU ('green' or 'social Europe') contained in political speeches, and symbolic markers associated to shared symbols of commonality such as the European flag, anthem or currency can contribute to forging people's identities (Bruter 2003; Risse 2003; Wodak and Weiss 2005). Policy-makers have traditionally relied on the effectiveness of the culturalist approach, investing great efforts in sponsoring EU's visuals to send implicit messages, and launching an image based strategy in the media (Polonska-Kimunguyi and Kimunguyi 2011; Stoeckel 2009), albeit with little success.

It is generally agreed that this top-down approach of the European political authorities, in which citizens are mere recipients of the collective identity formation efforts, has been misguided (Karolewski 2011). Implementing techniques used in past times has little meaning today, when citizens have higher levels of training and critical attitudes that prevent their indoctrination (Kantner 2006).

In contrast, it has been asserted that a higher level of knowledge about EU issues, and the individuals' perception that this knowledge may facilitate their actions as competent EU citizens, that is, their internal efficacy, are pivotal to gaining support for the EU (Garib 2012; Tenenbaum, Fife-Schaw, and Barrett 2019). External or collective political efficacy, on the other hand, refers to the belief that citizens' opinions are heard and can have an impact on political decisions at the European level, which is also positively associated with the endorsement of the EU project (Caprara et al. 2009).

Based on a similar conceptual basis, Political Science scholars have produced a large body of work regarding predictors for the support of European integration, based on Inglehart's (1970) theory of cognitive mobilisation. Succinctly, this theory asserts that as increases in education and access to information occur, citizens develop a more cosmopolitan outlook and that high levels of cognitive mobilisation ensue an individual's capacity to receive and process messages relating to remote political objects (Spannring, Wallace, and Datler 2008; Verhaegen and Hooghe 2015).

Strohmeier et al. (2017) equate conventional and nonconventional performance levels to the individual's commitment to the EU. Thus, seeing the EU as a political arena that has relevance to their own life is an enabling factor of identification with Europe, as the EU is then perceived as a meaningful presence (Cram 2012).

A further predictor of support for the EU is that of entitavity (Campbell, 1958, in Spannring, Wallace, and Datler 2008), which encompasses common interpretations of the past as well as shared visions for the future of the community to vindicate a European Identity. When the perceived entitativity is based on economic, social, and political goals to achieve in the future and organising collective actions to attain those goals, it is said to adhere to an agency-based common project perspective. In this sense, La Barbera, Cariota Ferrara, and Boza (2014) empirically demonstrated that EU representations based on agency achieved much greater support than those relying on common heritage outlooks alone. Similarly, a significant number of studies have corroborated that individual support for the EU correlates with the benefits that membership might afford on a personal level and social groups have been found to be more predisposed to identifying with Europe if they stand something to gain by doing so (Byram, Hu, and Rahman 2017; Fernández 2005; Kritzinger 2005; Osler 1998; Pollmann 2007; Sperling 2013; Thorpe 2008; Udrea 2013).

## Participation in international study abroad programmes and European identity

The structuralist theory of identification contends that active involvement in transnational interactions is imperative for acquiring cosmopolitan dispositions (Van Mol, de Valk, and van Wissen 2015). The main principle behind this model is the growing importance of a latent unintended and lived cosmopolitanism which occurs in the private domain of social actors across national borders (Sigalas 2010; Vertovec 2009).

Unsurprisingly, educational mobility programmes are generally considered as catalysts to identity transformation and as central to facilitating the students' assumption of a European sense of belonging. One of the EU's flagship education programmes is Erasmus+, an initiative aimed at promoting a sense of European identity and citizenship among higher education students via intra-European experiences by acquainting them with a new European country, introducing them to the different educational structures, ideas, approaches and skills (Mitchell 2012; Van Mol 2018).

There is a robust body of empirical research regarding international study sojourns and their impact on the intercultural competence developed by higher education students (Hadfield and Summerby-Murray 2016; Llurda et al. 2016; Wilson 2011) which affirms that cross-cultural experience broadens the learners' repertoire to re-examine their own cultural schemas. Against this backdrop a study was conducted to gain insight into university students' perception of their European identity.

## A study on Andalusian university students' perception of their European identity

### *Goals and research questions*

This paper looks into Andalusian university students' understanding of their European identity and aims to ascertain whether study abroad returnees display a different perception of their European identity from students who have not had the opportunity to participate in international study programmes (ISP) in higher education yet.

This study is guided by the following research questions:

(1) How do Andalusian students define their European identity?
(2) Is there evidence that, as the literature suggests, experiencing a study programme boosts individuals' international orientation and European identity?

### *Participants' profile*

A cohort of 29 Spanish students from an Andalusian Spanish public university participated in this study (see appendix A), 11 males and 18 females aged between 19–20 (8), 20–23 (15), 24–25 (3) and over 25 (2) (one of them did not indicate his/her age):

- 18 undergraduate students from different areas (English Studies, Spanish Philology, Computer Science, Geography, Primary Education), and from year 1–4, who had not (yet) experienced the study abroad at higher education. For data analysis and presentation of results, these students are coded as NIS (non-international students).
- 11 undergraduate students (year 4) and postgraduate study abroad returnees, all of them either undergraduates or postgraduates in English Studies. Their host countries were Germany (3), the UK (3), Poland (2), France (1), Italy (1) and New Zealand (1). The label IS (international students) has been assigned to these students.

As to foreign languages, 28 interviewees speak English; 16 speak French as well (2 of these 16 also speak Italian and 1 speaks German). All respondents have travelled abroad to different European countries; additionally, 3 have been to the USA and/or to Mexico, 1 to Israel and Palestine, and 1 to New Zealand, China and Thailand. As Figure 1 indicates, most NIS have travelled for leisure whereas most returnees' experiences abroad are both for leisure and study.

### Instrument

The study draws upon data obtained from 5 semi-structured, focus-group interviews. Three of these groups were comprised of students who lack university-level study abroad experience, while undergraduate and graduate level study abroad returnees were segregated and constituted the remaining two groups. Each group observed a ratio of 5–10 students per interview session. The working hypotheses which inspired the distinction between these three main groups were that: (a) in comparison with returnees, students without university study abroad experience would be less likely to acknowledge a marked European identity; (b) undergraduate returnees would probably express a stronger sense of European identity than postgraduate returnees as a by-product of their recently experienced stays abroad.

Focus-group interviews enable a unique insight into individuals' feelings, opinions or perceptions about a topic in an interactive environment, becoming key instruments in identity construction research (Gu 2011). They allow participants to generate ideas, articulate and expand on them

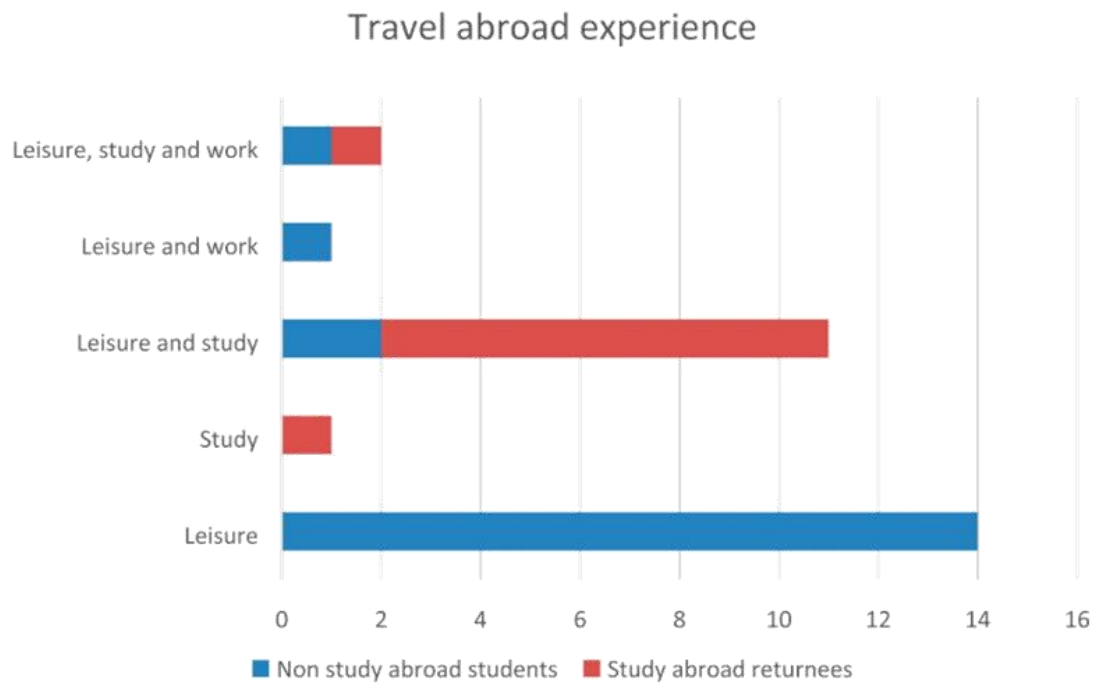



**Figure 1.** Students' travel abroad experience.

(Breen 2006), yielding rich data. The choice of semi-structured interviews as a research tool also rests on their versatility to allow interviewers to seek clarification and on the possible new light informants may shed on issues not previously contemplated by researchers.

Interviews were relatively long, all of them lasting between 80 and 120 min. They were guided by the following probing questions:

- Do you define yourself as a European citizen?
- What does being European mean to you?
- Are there any situations in which you have felt particularly European?
- How do you feel about the European Union?
- Has your stay abroad had any effect on your European identity?

### Procedure

The research was presented in different classes and in seminars or conversations with under and post-graduate students. Given that a large number of students expressed their interest in the research, 5 possible dates were set for the interviews.

Interviews were conducted in Spanish, allowing students to focus on the message, enunciate propositions conveniently and utter complex and precise texts.

Interviews were video and audio-recorded. They consisted of an introduction to the study, initial questions, content and verification questions and concluding prompts. Researchers validated the results by verifying relevant data provided by each group of interviewees with themselves through probing questions, and also by checking key aspects brought up by students in one group with other informants either to corroborate findings or to detect divergent patterns. Data were transcribed in full.

### Data analysis

Data comprised 125 pages (60,709 words) of transcribed text. Data were coded and analysed thematically by two of the authors through ATLAS.ti to address the research questions. To ensure inter-rater reliability, raters coded data individually and then compared their analyses until agreement was reached.

The inductive approach of grounded theory, analysing data without pre-determined classifications (Mackey and Gass 2005), was adopted.

ATLAS.ti favours qualitative data analysis, including frequency analysis. Proof of frequency was gained through students' mentions of subthemes.

## Results

The first part of this section looks into students' Europeanness. The section ends with an analysis of the relationship between ISP at higher education and European identity.

### Europeanness

Seven main themes (Figure 2) and 83 subthemes have been identified (Appendix B). Results are presented according to seven main themes: commonalities across Europe, advantages of being European, Spain's membership of the EU, absence of perceived European identity, unawareness of European identity, feelings of the European identity and supranational orientation.

#### Perceived commonalities across Europe

Living in Europe, students argue, entails sharing a spectrum of features and factors. Explicitly mentioned elements are physical characteristics, which make Europeans recognisable in other parts of the

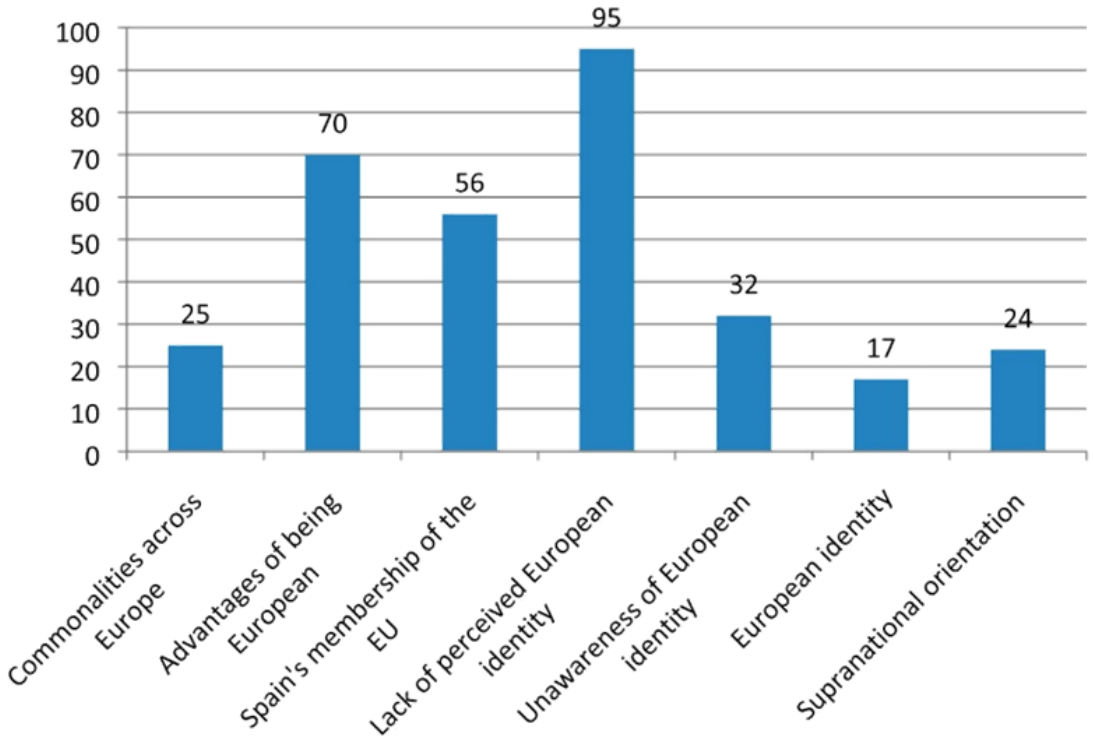



**Figure 2.** Students' mentions by theme.

world (NIS11); celebrations, like Christmas (IS2); certain values, such as the rights of women in Europe (IS7); and a similar mind-set (IS7). In addition, interviewees underscore a perceptible shared culture and history (NIS12, NIS14, NIS17):

> We share history, we share a general culture, although each country is different. But I think that that's what makes you more or less European. (NIS12)

Likewise, geographical and cultural similarities come to the fore, even though similarities apply almost exclusively to southern European countries, the sample establishing, a clear difference between the culture of Italy, Greece, Portugal or Spain, and other European cultures (IS1, IS7, NIS5, NIS7, NIS9, NIS11). Indeed, with the exception of Mediterranean countries, interviewees express their lack of attachment to other European countries in contrast to their feeling of attachment to Latin America (NIS14):

> We have more things in common with people from Latin America than with Irish people. (NIS14)

This is why they declare that, although we are positioned on the European continent, our cultures differ so substantially (NIS12) that when one meets someone from other parts of Europe, their nationality stands out rather than our belonging to the same supra-national community (IS4).

Economic, legal and political bonds are deemed to be the cornerstones of Europeanness (for instance, a shared currency endorses a fluid relationship among countries, NIS11), which discloses students' vision of Europe and the European Union as an essentially bureaucratic system, devoid of an affective and emotional dimension (IS4, NIS7, NIS10).

### *Advantages of being European*

There are manifest advantages of being European and belonging to the European Union. The first one being mobility across Europe, as it is through mobility that individuals learn to understand Europe (IS6) and develop feelings of closeness to other countries (NIS17). Besides, the sample

emphasises that, legally, Europeans are allowed to move freely within Europe with little or no bureaucracy, mainly if the process is compared with travelling beyond Europe, as NIS12 and IS4 indicate:

> If you want to go to the USA … there is plenty of paperwork, which is not needed in Europe. (NIS12)

> We are not aware of the amount of privileges we have as Europeans. […] When I wanted to go from Israel to Palestine, I had to pass controls, I had to pass double security barriers, the military got on the bus to control the visa and they were holding rifles. (IS4)

It is through European international institutions and programmes that not only mobility, but other ways of intercultural contact and communication are fostered (IS4, NIS10), leading to societal progress and growth (IS9). Indeed, being European is not only perceived as an *advantage* but also as a *privilege* both from a political perspective and in other social dimensions such as safety (IS4, NIS5) or healthcare (NIS17).

Moreover, being European implies sharing a culture (IS11, NIS12, NIS17), collective values and democratic accomplishments, and seems to spur civic awareness; students illustrate this point by referring to a perceived higher environmental and social awareness in other European countries that needs to permeate Spanish society (for example, other European cities seem to be cleaner than Spanish cities, one of the many aspects Spain needs to learn from 'Europe') (NIS2, NIS5, NIS6, NIS9).

Another crucial aspect is the possibility of accessing employment and economic opportunities in a wider labour market (IS11, NIS10, NIS12):

> As Europeans, it is easier for us to get a job. (NIS14)

From an economic perspective, the Euro as a single currency is credited with being a major pillar of (NIS1, NIS5, NIS6, NIS17) trade across Europe (NIS7). However, there are downsides to the single currency as the Euro seems to have widened inequalities between countries (NIS10, NIS12) and has impoverished Spain (NIS11).

### *Perception of Spain's membership of the European Union*

Data evinces an apparent confusion between the concepts of Europe and the European Union, mostly understood as synonyms. For the sample, the defining feature of the EU is its political, economic and trade alliance (NIS7, NIS10, NIS11, NIS12), dismissing any affective ties (NIS7, NIS10). Membership is exclusively attributed to being born in Europe and the EU (NIS2). As EU citizens, students wonder what it would be like to be elsewhere (NIS5), EU membership and citizenship constituting a taken for granted status which primarily entitles individuals to mobility and access to a broader labour market, factors already discussed above.

EU enlargement, heterogeneity and the merging of cultures are recognised as positive factors, although the benefits of the latter are still to be built on in Spain (NIS10, NIS12):

> Certain countries have improved since many people from many cultures went there. So, the culture of that country changes, there is more diversity … But not here in Spain. Maybe we are a little more behind in that aspect because not as many people came here (NIS10).

There is a difference of opinion about perceived proximity to and mutual support in the EU (NIS1), some claiming that other European countries help Spain when in need (NIS11), whereas others affirm that EU citizens do not frequently support each other (NIS10). Students notice marked differences between EU member states, attribute a lack of cultural or ethic bonds to this heterogeneity, and, therefore, question the existence of a shared identity that has simply been presupposed (NIS2). Inequalities among countries are unequivocally emphasised, including issues of inclusion and exclusion of countries in the EU, and a distinctive feeling of a north–south-central Europe divide. Students firmly believe that not all countries are equal (NIS10); in particular, for them Spain has always lagged behind the EU leading group of countries (NIS11, NIS12) and there has

never been a leading (political) figure who could bring the EU closer to Spanish citizens (NIS5). This implies that the development of a supranational identity is still a work in progress:

> They want the unification as if we were a single country, but organizations and government are in central Europe; they are not taking care of the rest of Europe, they are taking care of the centre of Europe (NIS12).

Conversely, there is a marked feeling of belonging to the EU, and *feeling at home* as EU citizens (IS11, NIS17).

### *Lack of perceived European identity*

A pertinent question is whether perceived commonalities across Europe, the reported advantages of being European and membership of the EU lead to the feeling of European identity. However, data reveal that the field with the highest number of mentions is absence of perceived European identity.

The school curriculum constitutes a first predictor of endorsement. Students acknowledge that, whereas their national or regional identity is promoted at school, Europeanness is almost absent from either the explicit or the implicit curriculum; for instance, there is no specific celebration in the calendar for the day of Europe nor Europe is given relevance in the curriculum (IS1, NIS10, NIS12). From the academic perspective, students observe a high divergence or heterogeneity in educational systems across Europe, which hinders the development of a sense of Europeanness (NIS10).

There is an awareness of the drive to forge European identity (NIS12), an identity most of them have never felt or experienced because they acknowledge possessing just a fractional knowledge of what it means (NIS11):

> We can say some characteristics, such as the European Union, currency, some features … But it is because we know it from hearsay, not because we have lived it. We know these things, but it's not that we have been in contact with other people to say 'so, we are equal, we have the same characteristics'. (NIS11)

This under-developed sense of Europeanness (NIS7) also stems from its blurred definition and the nonexistence of specific characteristics to define European citizens. Grasping the notion of Europe is not without complexity (NIS9), mostly owing to its heterogeneity (IS6) and the marked differences between countries (IS1). This leads to scepticism about the unity of Europe and challenges the concept of European identity. As NIS12 questions, '*Is there really a European feeling or is there a European history?*'

Interviewees report on their lack of personal attachment to Europe (NIS7, NIS11, NIS16) since they observe a focus on political and economic matters rather than on feelings (NIS10), Europe being a legislative rather than an emotional construct (IS4). Students confess to having a strong local (NIS9) and national identity (IS8, NIS4, NIS12) or even experiencing a global identity (NIS16) but are not so assertive when it comes to European identity. In fact, some of them state a distinctive absence of European identity (NIS11, NIS12, IS8, IS9): '*I don't think about myself as a European, even if I am*' (NIS13).

One of the most widely debated reasons behind this reaction is geographical distance between north-south-central Europe: '*Seeing us far away from the centre of Europe prevents us from having that feeling*' (NIS7), which is why the sample deems that the feeling of Europeanness is likely to originate at the heart of Europe (NIS12). Besides, most insist on a clear cultural and emotional distance: '*If you don't feel European, how do you make it transpire?*' (NIS12), contrasting once again the differences between Spanish and what they call 'European' culture (NIS1, NIS2, NIS9, NIS10, NIS11, NIS17, IS5, IS6, IS8).

They specify further divergences as obstacles to a development of a European identity: multilingualism (NIS5) —arguing that a limited language repertoire coupled with the existence of a wide array of languages does not arouse their Europeanness—, gastronomy (NIS9), climate (NIS7, NIS9, NIS12, NIS17), economy (NIS10) or politics (NIS2):

> Despite being together in Europe, any country is completely different from the others and we all have almost nothing in common in terms of culture, politics and thought. It's totally different. (NIS2)

Unsurprisingly some stereotypes arise and widen the gap between Spaniards and other European citizens (NIS9, NIS11, NIS12). Students state not feeling identified with *'the classical European personality, since it is less close … more cosmopolitan*' (NIS11) or underline the fact that Spanish personality is different, because other countries are '*colder and calmer*' (NIS9).

Contextual identities or the shades of identities perceived and foregrounded in different situations may be fundamental. Data confirm that students firmly believe in the necessity of travelling and having first-hand experience of otherness abroad (NIS9, NIS10) to be able to cope with their Europeanness. Furthermore, the feeling of European identity is likely to appear when individuals experience otherness away from Europe, gaining from a much-needed sense of detachment:

> We should have, first, knowledge of Europe, travelling, visiting places, or even working in Europe; and, then, go away from Europe, so we could know the difference between the EU and other countries. Then, we would probably be able to say 'ok, now I feel European'. (NIS10)

### *Unawareness of European identity*

Some interviewees express unawareness of their European identity, a layer of their identity they report not having reflected upon before. This unawareness may spring from the absence from school curriculum (IS4, NIS15), the superficial (NIS11) attention given to European matters in class, or the dissimilarity of education across Europe (NIS10). Students admit failing to comprehend what European identity means (IS5) since they exhibit a fragmented knowledge of Europe mainly gathered from the news (NIS12). In sum, some respondents do not feel European largely because they have never considered it before (NIS5, NIS6, NIS9, NIS16, NIS18). The inability to define the European identity (NIS7, NIS11, NIS15) is illustrated by NIS1:

> It is difficult to define what being European means. Is it that I'm in the European Union? There are so many cultures; feeling European is very difficult in that sense. (NIS1)

As it is a new construct to most students, they acknowledge their mixed feelings (NIS10, NIS11) when striving to grasp this unfamiliar and alien concept (NIS16), insisting on the need of first-hand experience abroad (IS1, IS5), since their identities are prone to change depending on the context (IS2, NIS16).

In any case, even if unaware of their own European identity, students recognise and assume the notion of Europeanness as an element debated both inside and outside the continent (NIS10, NIS12). They even hint at the possibility that an outsiders' perspective on European identity (for instance, somebody from Asia or America) would shed light on defining features of this construct (IS6, NIS2).

### *European identity*

Even though a minority of the sample, some students confirm feeling European and attest to having an *adhered supranational identity*, a feeling that emerges in itself without any kind of agency on the part of the individual (NIS12). Contextual identity turns out to be vital as students corroborate that European identity is endorsed when living away from Europe (IS7) and travelling to another continent (IS6, IS11, NIS15). IS11 leaves no room for doubt:

> You realise it when you are in other countries away from the European Union. In that sense, I came back feeling myself more European. (IS11)

However, out of students' multiple identities, European identity is reported to be the weakest one. Sometimes, European identity is noticeable in specific manifestations, such as culture and common traditions (IS2) or the arts; when talking about the difference between European and American films NIS16 says: '*in that case, I like distinguishing myself as a European, and I consider European my way of thinking and creating*' (NIS16). European identity is likewise felt in particular contexts: at airports

(NIS15), when travelling, and using the single currency (NIS1), or when experiencing the validity of a national ID in other European countries (IS10, NIS1):

> You feel like you leave here, but you don't have to do anything with the validation of your ID card. It's like a part of Spain without speaking Spanish. You go away but all your documents are still good. So, you don't have to worry about many things. (NIS17)

### *Supranational orientation*

Most students who have not participated in ISP at higher education (NIS) indicate their interest in this supranational experience. Some of them show an inclination to visit Mediterranean countries (NIS13); particular places they have heard about (NIS18); or just countries that draw their attention (NIS11). While some have personal preferences for choosing a destination, others are looking forward to enjoying the experience of studying and living abroad:

> I want to go to any country. I don't mind where, because I want to learn any language. I know that anywhere you have the opportunity to know a different culture, a different language … And it will be a unique opportunity. (NIS15)

Most intend to apply for an ISP the following academic year, in contrast to others who consider it as a long-term project (NIS16), perhaps once they finish their studies and are able to apply for a prospective job abroad (NIS10). In any case, the main purpose behind the stay abroad is the practice and improvement of English (NIS10, NIS11) or another language:

> The next place that I would like to go to is Canada. It attracts me. It's a place where I can continue improving my English and, furthermore, I can learn French. (NIS14)

International mobility is also motivated by the discovery of a new culture and the possibility of experiencing culture shock. This is the reason why some students intend to apply for a programme that allows them to go to other continents, since they argue that they will not achieve the desired culture shock if they stay in Europe (NIS12). In any case, there is an unquestionable intention of travelling, studying and/or working living abroad and meeting otherness elsewhere.

Most students, 24, acknowledge having friends and/or relatives from another country (versus 4 NIS and 1 returnee). Likewise, whereas 1 interviewee does not know whether s/he would like to live abroad, 3 (2 returnees) would prefer to live in Spain and 3 (1 returnee) are averse to living abroad, most of them (22) express their willingness to live and/or work abroad in the near future. As Appendix C reveals, 8 of the 11 interviewees who have experienced ISP and 14 of 18 students who have not participated in ISP at university state their wish to study and/or work abroad (including 4 of the 5 students who had previously enrolled in an international pre-university programme). Hence, data evince Andalusian students' international orientation.

## *ISP at higher education and European identity*

Some study abroad returnees admit some degree of European identity, but they are not able to specify which factors spur this feeling (IS7). A fleeting feeling of Europeanness seems to be experienced in very specific circumstances, as IS2 and NIS15 affirm:

> I felt European when I travelled during Christmas […] because we Europeans celebrate Christmas; and I could enjoy Christmas streetlights just like I can enjoy them in Spain. (IS2)

> When I travel around Europe, or America, I really feel European, even above all. I don't know how to explain it, it's very strange. European identity has not been fomented so much at home, nor at high school. It's like that: I feel maybe more related to an English person than to an American because we are part of Europe. (NIS15)

The most evident example of an enhanced and lasting sense of European identity is IS11, who studied in New Zealand. This seems to confirm a theory put forward by interviewees, that one

can truly experience Europeanness when removed from Europe, European identity being heightened by distance:

> You realize the advantages of being from Europe. Not only from the EU but also European culture. […] I feel more European since I went to New Zealand. I have been losing my national identity, but I've maintained the European identity instead. (IS11).

To sum up, Appendix C displays participation in ISP and supranational orientation in connection with European identity. Out of the 29 interviewees, only 3 of 11 returnees from ISP and 2 of 18 students who have not yet enrolled in these programmes (although both NIS14 and NIS15 have taken part in pre-university –most of them summer– courses abroad) declare feeling European and having a supranational orientation. Since these 5 students have pre-university or university study abroad experiences it would be possible to conclude that international study programmes boost supranational orientation and Europeanness (IS4, IS6, IS11). However, the remaining 8 of 11 returnees and 16 of 18 NIS (including 3 with pre-university ISP experience) assert either not feeling European or are inconclusive about their Europeanness. Students concur, however, that, rather than intensifying their European identity, their study experience abroad has mainly contributed to enhance their academic, cultural and intercultural skills: '*It's a development. You grow as a person: I sincerely think that the person who left and the person who came back are two different people*' (IS1).

## International (IS) and non-international students' (NIS) Europeanness compared

International experiences prove to be crucial in interviewees' concepts of identity, becoming points of reference in their self-definitions. International students' identities are frequently developed and defined against the backdrop of their European or supranational experiences, encompassing eye-opening slip-ups, blunders and anecdotes which typically lead to an increased awareness of the self. Another contributing factor which sparked the constant process of revisiting their own identities was the way that citizens of the host country perceived international students. This supranational and European frame of reference and this reflection on how the perspective of the member of the outgroup affects one's self-descriptions were mostly absent from NIS' reflections on their identities. Unsurprisingly, NIS tend to focus on more pragmatic aspects of Europeanness, such as Spain's membership of the European Union.

Furthermore, IS, irrespective of an acknowledged European or non-European identity, admit to having previously thought about their Europeanness, a layer of identity rarely considered by NIS prior to participating in the interviews.

Conversely, an element in which both NIS and IS concur is their supranational orientation and their willingness to live and work abroad. A second aspect of agreement is non-international and international students' low level of perceived European identity.

As to the hypotheses underlying the distinction of groups in the focus-group interviews, both are refuted in the light shed by data: (a) a generalised, marked European identity was not discovered either among students without university study abroad experience or among returnees as only 5 of the 29 interviewees reported having a European identity; (b) undergraduate returnees did not express a stronger sense of European identity than postgraduate returnees as a by-product of their recently experienced stays abroad. Appendix C shows that 4 out of 6 undergraduate returnees and 4 out of 6 postgraduate returnees either reject having a European identity or are inconclusive about their Europeanness.

## Supranational orientation vs. identification

Results presented above are here examined in the context of the research questions. Addressing the first research question – 'how do Andalusian students define their European identity?' – reveals a multifaceted and complex construct, with only a small group of students recognising a moderate

to relatively strong feeling of European identity. Following Mitchell (2015), very few students define themselves as members of the group 'Europeans', most feeling a weak or almost non-existent connection with their fellow members, although there is some 'sense of belonging together' (Kaina 2013). Europeanness, then, is generally perceived through a utilitarian lense, in economic or politic terms rather than as an affective layer of identity (Kritzinger 2005; Verhaegen and Hooghe 2015).

As to the second research question, whether there is evidence that a study programme boosts individuals' international orientation and European identity, results indicate that the study programme may boost international orientation but not necessarily European identity. Even though transnational interactions are thought to be at the core for acquiring cosmopolitan dispositions (Van Mol, de Valk, and van Wissen 2015), transnational experience seems to act as a catalyst to identity transformation in academic, personal, cultural and intercultural skills rather than spurring feelings of European identity, aspects which are further discussed below.

## Discussion: European (non)identities

The notion of identity encompasses an individual's own concept of him/herself and especially meaningful values for the self. This applies to multiple identifications (Nestian Sandu and Lyamouri-Bajja 2018) as part of their personal, cultural and social identities (Barrett et al. 2013). Forging a European identity, as one of individuals' social identities, constitutes an exceptionally laborious process.

Findings confirm the terminological and conceptual confusion between Europe and the EU, both being almost indistinguishable for most young university students, a generation of mobile and supposedly internationally oriented individuals. This unawareness or misperception needs to be addressed by authorities and educational institutions if they endeavour to facilitate the development of a supranational identity.

Students are aware of the advantages and privileges of being European and/or citizens of the EU. Even though sharing a culture, history and common values are foregrounded, they primarily view their membership in pragmatic, legal, economic or bureaucratic terms rather than feeling an affective or emotional attachment. This perceived distance is augmented by Andalusia's geographical location, a region situated in southern Europe and physically removed from central Europe, where decisions are made; indeed, students' perception of a north–south-central Europe divide seems to hinder their feelings of European identity. A third element concerns the blurred definition of European identity, somewhat attributed to the perceived absence of specific traits of Europeanness shared by a highly heterogeneous European population.

This sense of detachment from Europe may justify students' unawareness of their European identity, one of the social identities most affirmed not having pondered until the debate generated by the focus-group interview. Likewise, this lack of emotional attachment may account for their weak feelings of European identity or even their reported European non-identities (Grundy and Jamieson 2007). Individuals may not feel attached to a community they do not fully understand, and the sample insists that they have only gained a fragmented, and possibly biased knowledge of Europe, chiefly through the media. In this sense, the school curriculum becomes a relevant predictor of endorsement; European identity is not likely to surface unless European issues are explicitly and thoroughly addressed in the school curriculum and the calendar of school activities include celebrations of students' Europeanness (parallel to local celebrations or international commemorations such as the International Day of Peace or International Women's Day). Results indicate that a greater European dimension needs to be given not only to university modules (La Barbera, Cariota Ferrara, and Boza 2014) but also to primary and secondary education, where the basis of secondary socialisation is laid.

Contrary to the Erasmus+ programme guide, which regards academic mobility as a means to raise participants' awareness and understanding of other cultures and countries, capable of inspiring a sense of European citizenship and identity (European Commission 2019), and to findings reported by previous studies (Genova 2015; Jacobone and Moro 2015), which uphold the transformative and

influential role of European identity developed by international students abroad, in this research some instances of 'adhered' European identity are glimpsed at, although only by some students who have enrolled both in pre-university and university ISP. Thus, our data would support Kuhn's (2012) indication that mere international mobility experiences do not automatically prompt the embracement of European identity, as most students experiencing ISP only acknowledge an international orientation or willingness to further their studies or join the labour market abroad. Indeed, ISP at higher education has an evident 'can do' effect on individual personal, linguistic, academic or intercultural skills, but does not seem to spawn a widespread and heightened European identity.

European identity is exclusively reported to be a permanent and transformational experience by the student who has followed an ISP in Asia. This physical and emotional 'displacement' seems to be paramount for providing the opportunity to reflect on what being European means and how it compares with being a citizen from other parts of the world. This finding concurs with Llurda, Gallego Balsà, Barahona and Martin Rubió's study (2016), which stresses that a sense of European identity is likely to hold special significance when individuals are placed in a context that allows them to compare European and other supranational identities.

## Limitations and opportunities of application of research findings

While previous studies have empirically explored whether Erasmus participation promotes European identity change (Mazzoni et al. 2018; Mitchell, 2015), most have done so from a quantitative perspective. The originality of our study resides in its qualitative approach, which affords revealing insights into students' perceptions and representations of European identity.

Despite the substantial size of the focus-group target sample and the wealth of qualitative information extracted, there are limitations in how far the results can be generalised to other higher education contexts.

Nevertheless, the findings presented in this study need to be carefully analysed by authorities and experts in education, since they seem to indicate that pan-European programmes, such as Erasmus+, may not be yielding the desired outcome of enhancing European identity formation. Therefore, future studies could fruitfully explore this issue further by addressing intercontinental mobility study programmes.

## Conclusion

As it has been argued elsewhere, a top-down inductive approach has traditionally led to the assumption by the European authorities of a *broad-spectrum Europeanizing effect* of ISP. However, the complexity of individual identification processes, the uniqueness of biographical events experienced and interpersonal soft skills, or the pre-existing cultural schemas of participants, among other factors, seem to have at least an equally important role in the post-ISP effective endorsement of European identity.

The qualitative approach to this research has shed light on some singularities that had previously been disregarded. The salience of participants' affective sphere and emotional traits, surfaced during the interviews, became apparent as focus groups rendered a cathartic experience for ISP returnees.

The broad implication of the present research is threefold. From an affective standpoint, fostering feelings of belonging, celebrating joint achievements, promoting visions about the EU as a community of shared values and cultivating emotional links between nationals of member states might significantly contribute to forging positive attitudes toward the EU and bolstering students' identification as Europeans.

In terms of encouraging European youth civic and political engagement, developing clearly formulated initiatives which invoke the European dimension of participatory citizenship, through both

the formal political system and civil society actions, could help to stimulate positive attitudes towards the EU and the values of democracy, social cohesion and solidarity.

From an educational perspective, curricula and syllabi ought to provide ample learning opportunities regarding European issues alongside national or regional matters, both at initial and continuing education stages. Furthermore, equipping alumni with competences to leverage their study abroad experience for professional advancement, cross-border job mobility and pan-European career prospects seems the sound choice to ensure the sustainability of ISP results.

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the focus group interviewees, whose participation made this study possible.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

## Funding

This study has been supported by the R + D project 'Musical aptitude, reading fluency and intercultural literacy of European university students" Secretaría de Estado de Investigación, Desarrollo e Innovación ; (FFI2016-75452-R), funded by the Spanish MINISTERIO DE ECONOMÍA, INDUSTRIA Y COMPETITIVIDAD'.

## Notes on contributors

*María del Carmen Méndez García* is a senior lecturer at the Department of English Philology, University of Jaén (Spain), where she teaches pre and post-graduate courses. In 1997, she was awarded a Research and Development scholarship by the Spanish Ministry of Education (1997–2000), and since then has done research in the cultural component in English as a Foreign Language material, intercultural competence and communication in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). She is the author of books, book chapters and articles on intercultural competence in FLT, and on CLIL. She has participated in international projects such as 'International Competence for Professional Mobility', funded by the European Commission, and has cooperated with the Language Policy Division/Unit of the Council of Europe in the development of the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* and the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media*. She has also participated in CLIL projects such as the Junta de Andalucía-funded Proyecto de Excelencia: "Análisis y Garantía de Calidad de la Educación Superior Plurilingüe en la Educación Superior de Andalucía".

*Esther Cores-Bilbao* is a doctoral candidate at the University of Huelva with interests in identity and European cultural literacy, interculturality, language learning and motivation in adult education. She is the Head Teacher at the EOI Do Mundo Lume, a government-funded Official School of Languages for adults. She is an external advisor to the Spanish National Agency for the Internationalisation of Education (SEPIE), having evaluated Erasmus+ proposals since 2014. She has coordinated several international projects in the Adult Education sector and cooperates with the Language Policy Division/Unit of the Council of Europe participating in the project 'CEFR mediation strategies: towards a socio-emotional and plurilingual education'. She is also the lead researcher of the Education Research Project 'Identity and Cultural Literacy: the use of Music Videos in English Language Teaching to Adults' (PIV-002//17) supported by the Andalusian Department of Education.

*Laura Moreno Gámez* is research assistant at the Department of English Philology at the University of Jaén. Graduate with a double bachelor's degree: English Studies and Spanish Philology at University of Huelva. She is currently studying a double master of Spanish language and literature at University of Jaén.

## ORCID

María del Carmen Méndez García http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9414-2699
Esther Cores-Bilbao http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8239-8969

## References


Barrett, M., M. Byram, I. Lázár, P. Mompoint-Gaillard, and S. Philippou. 2013. *Developing Intercultural Competence Through Education*. Pestalozzi series no. 3. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Beck, U., and C. Cronin. 2014. *Cosmopolitan Vision*. Wiley. https://books.google.es/books?id=Ix0-BQAAQBAJ.

Becker, J. C., and N. Tausch. 2014. "When Group Memberships are Negative: The Concept, Measurement, and Behavioral Implications of Psychological Disidentification." *Self and Identity* 13 (3): 294–321. doi:10.1080/15298868.2013.819991.

Breen, R. L. 2006. "A Practical Guide to Focus-Group Research." *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 30 (3): 463–475. doi:10.1080/03098260600927575.

Bruter, M. 2003. "Winning Hearts and Minds for Europe: The Impact of News and Symbols on Civic and Cultural European Identity." *Comparative Political Studies* 36 (10): 1148–1179. doi:10.1177/0010414003257609.

Byram, M., A. Hu, and M. Rahman. 2017. "Are Researchers in Europe European Researchers? A Study of Doctoral Researchers at the University of Luxembourg*." *Studies in Higher Education* 0 (0): 1–13. doi:10.1080/03075079.2017.1378634.

Campbell, D. T. (1958). Common fate, similarity, and other indices of the status of aggregates of persons as social entities. *Behavioral science*, *3*(1), 14–25.

Caprara, G. V., M. Vecchione, C. Capanna, and M. Mebane. 2009. "Perceived Political Self-Efficacy: Theory, Assessment, and Applications." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 39 (6): 1002–1020. doi:10.1002/ejsp.604.

Cram, L. 2012. "Does the EU Need a Navel? Implicit and Explicit Identification with the European Union." *Journal of Common Market Studies* 50 (1): 71–86. doi:10.1111/j.1468-5965.2011.02207.x.

Delanty, G., and C. Rumford. 2005. *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the Implications of Europeanization*. (1st ed.). L: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9780203640050.

Du Bois-Reymond, M. 1998. "European Identity in the Young and Dutch Students' Images of Germany and the Germans." *Comparative Education* 34 (1): 27–40. doi:10.1080/03050069828324.

Duchesne, S. 2010. "L'identité européenne, entre science politique et science fiction." *Politique Européenne* 30 (1): 7. doi:10.3917/poeu.030.0007.

European Comission. 2018. "Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key Competences for Lifelong Learning." *Official Journal of the European Union* (C 189/1): 1–13. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604(01)&rid=7.

European Commission. 2019. Erasmus+Programme guide. doi:10.1109/cicem.2013.6820130.

Fernández, Ó. 2005. "Towards European Citizenship through Higher Education?" *European Journal of Education* 40 (1): 59–68. doi:10.1016/j.jaci.2009.11.036.

Fernández, J. J., M. Eigmüller, and S. Börner. 2016. "Domestic Transnationalism and the Formation of Pro-European Sentiments." *European Union Politics* 17 (3): 457–481. doi:10.1177/1465116516633536.

Fuss, D., and M. Grosser. 2006. "What Makes Young Europeans Feel European?. Results from a Cross-Cultural Research Proyect." *European Identity: Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Insights* 36: 209–242. LIT Verlag Münster.

Garib, G. 2012. "Identifying Variables Predictive of Endorsing a European Identity." *Identity* 12 (3): 266–273. doi:10.1080/15283488.2012.691253.

Genova, E. 2015. "To Have Both Roots and Wings: Nested Identities in the Case of Bulgarian Students in the UK." *Identities* 23 (4): 392–406. doi:10.1080/1070289X.2015.1024125.

Grundy, S., and L. Jamieson. 2007. "European Identities: From Absent-Minded Citizens to Passionate Europeans." *Sociology* 41 (4): 663–680. doi:10.1177/0038038507078919.

Gu, M. 2011. "Language Choice and Identity Construction in Peer Interactions: Insights from a Multilingual University in Hong Kong." *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 32 (1): 17–31. doi:10.1080/01434632.2010.532876.

Habermas, J. 2012. "The Crisis of the European Union in the Light of a Constitutionalization of International Law." *European Journal of International Law* 23 (2): 335–348. doi:10.1093/ejil/chs019.

Hadfield, A., and R. Summerby-Murray. 2016. "Vocation or Vocational? Reviewing European Union Education and Mobility Structures." *European Journal of Higher Education* 6 (3): 237–255. doi:10.1080/21568235.2015.1099453.

Hoskins, B., H. Abs, C. Han, D. Kerr, and W. Veugelers. 2012. *Contextual Report: Participatory Citizenship in the European Union, Institute of Education report for EU. Southampton: Southampton University*. https://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/studies/index_en.htm.

Inglehart, R. 1970. "Cognitive Mobilization and European Identity." *Comparative Politics* 3 (1): 45. doi:10.2307/421501.

Jacobone, V., and G. Moro. 2015. "Evaluating the Impact of the Erasmus Programme: Skills and European Identity." *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 40 (2): 309–328. doi:10.1080/02602938.2014.909005.

Kaina, V. 2013. "How to Reduce Disorder in European Identity Research." *European Political Science* 12 (2): 184–196. doi:10.1057/eps.2012.39.

Kaina, V., and I. P. Karolewski. 2013. "EU Governance and European Identity." *Living Reviews in European Governance* 8 (1): 1–59. doi:10.12942/lreg-2013-1.
Kantner, C. 2006. "Collective Identity as Shared Ethical Self-understanding." *European Journal of Social Theory* 9 (4): 501–523. doi:10.1177/1368431006073016.
Karolewski, I. P. 2011. "European Identity Making and Identity Transfer." *Europe-Asia Studies* 63 (6): 935–955.
Keating, A. 2016. "Are Cosmopolitan Dispositions Learned at Home, at School, or Through Contact with Others? Evidence from Young People in Europe." *Journal of Youth Studies* 19 (3): 338–357. doi:10.1080/13676261.2015.1072617.
Kritzinger, S. 2005. "European Identity Building from the Perspective of Efficiency." *Comparative European Politics* 3 (1): 50–75. doi;10.1057/palgrave.cep.6110048.
Kuhn, T. 2012. "Why Educational Exchange Programmes Miss their Mark: Cross-border Mobility, Education and European Identity." *Journal of Common Market Studies* 50 (6): 994–1010. doi:10.1111/j.1468-5965.2012.02286.x.
La Barbera, F., P. Cariota Ferrara, and M. Boza. 2014. "Where are we Coming From Versus who We will Become: The Effect of Priming Different Contents of European Identity on Cooperation." *International Journal of Psychology* 49 (6): 480–487. doi:10.1002/ijop.12073.
Llurda, E., L. Gallego-Balsà, C. Barahona, and X. Martin-Rubió. 2016. "Erasmus Student Mobility and the Construction of European Citizenship." *Language Learning Journal* 44 (3): 323–346. doi:10.1080/09571736.2016.1210911.
Luhmann, S. 2017a. "A Multi-level Approach to European Identity: Does Integration Foster Identity?" *Journal of Common Market Studies* 55 (6): 1360–1379. doi:10.1111/jcms.12554.
Luhmann, S. 2017b. "The European Identity Survey- a Bridge between Political Science and Psychology." *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 13 (3): 1260–1282.
Mackey, A., and S. M. Gass. 2005. *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. doi:10.1177/0033688217707630.
Mazzoni, D., C. Albanesi, P. D. Ferreira, S. Opermann, V. Pavlopoulos, and E. Cicognani. 2018. "Cross-border Mobility, European Identity and Participation among European Adolescents and Young Adults." *European Journal of Developmental Psychology* 15 (3): 324–339. doi:10.1080/17405629.2017.1378089.
Mitchell, K. 2012. "Student Mobility and European Identity: Erasmus Study as a Transformative Experience." *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 8 (4): 490–518. http://www.imagining.eu/workshop/papers/MITCHELL-Student mobility and European identity.pdf.
Mitchell, K. 2015. "Rethinking the 'Erasmus Effect' on European Identity." *Journal of Common Market Studies* 53 (2): 330–348. doi:10.1111/jcms.12152.
Nestian Sandu, O., and N. Lyamouri-Bajja. 2018. *T-KIT 4. Intercultural Learning. The Training Kits Series*. Council of Europe (Ed.). Strasbourg.
Osler, A. 1998. "European Citizenship and Study Abroad: Student Teachers' Experiences and Identities." *Cambridge Journal of Education* 28 (1): 77–96. doi:10.1080/0305764980280107.
Pollmann, A. 2007. "National and European Identities: Notions of Reconcilability and Inclusiveness in a Case Study of German Trainee Teachers." *Compare* 37 (1): 89–104. doi:10.1080/03057920601061844.
Polonska-Kimunguyi, E., and P. Kimunguyi. 2011. "The Making of the Europeans: Media in the Construction of Pan-national Identity." *International Communication Gazette* 73 (6): 507–523. doi:10.1177/1748048511412283.
Recchi, E. 2014. "Pathways to European Identity Formation: A Tale of Two Models." *Innovation* 27 (2): 119–133. doi:10.1080/13511610.2013.873709.
Risse, T. 2003. "The Euro between National and European Identity." *Journal of European Public Policy* 10 (4): 487–505. doi:10.1080/1350176032000101235.
Sigalas, E. 2010. "Cross-border Mobility and European Identity: The Effectiveness of Intergroup Contact During the ERASMUS Year Abroad." *European Union Politics* 11 (2): 241–265. doi:10.1177/1465116510363656.
Spannring, R., C. Wallace, and G. Datler. 2008. "What Leads Young People to Identify with Europe? An Exploration of the Impact of Exposure to Europe and Political Engagement on European Identity among Young Europeans." *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 9 (4): 480–498. doi:10.1080/15705850802416929.
Sperling, J. 2013. "Belonging, Beyond the Nation: The Significance and Meaning of European Identity for Latin American-Origin Youth in Spain." *National Identities* 15 (1): 67–84. doi:10.1080/14608944.2012.733155.
Stoeckel, F. 2009. "The European Public Sphere, the Media, and Support for European Integration." *SSRN Electronic Journal*. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2144694.
Strohmeier, Dagmar, Martyn Barrett, Carmen Bora, Simona C. S. Caravita, Elisa Donghi, Edmond Dragoti, Chris Fife-Schaw, et al. 2017. "Young People's Engagement with the European Union the Importance of Visions and Worries for the Future of Europe." *Zeitschrift Für Psychologie* 225 (4): 313–323. doi:10.1027/2151-2604/a000314.
Tajfel, H. E. 1978. *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Cambridge, MA: Academic Press.
Tenenbaum, H. R., C. Fife-Schaw, and M. Barrett. 2019. "What Predicts British Young People's Views of Europe? In *Young People's Visions and Worries for the Future of Europe: Findings from the Europe 2038 Project*.

Thorpe, C. 2008. "The Distinguishing Function of European Identity: Attitudes Towards and Visions of Europe and the European Union among Young Scottish Adults." *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 9 (4): 499–513. doi:10.1080/15705850802416945.

Udrea. 2013. "National and European Identity: An Empirical Research on how Romanian Students Experience Identities During their Long-Term Studies Abroad." *Romanian Journal of Communication and Public Relations* 15 (1(28)): 17–35.

Van Mol, C. 2018. "Becoming Europeans: the Relationship Between Student Exchanges in Higher Education, European Citizenship and a Sense of European Identity." *Innovation* 1610: 1–15. doi:10.1080/13511610.2018.1495064.

Van Mol, C., H. A. G. de Valk, and L. van Wissen. 2015. "Falling in Love with(in) Europe: European Bi-national Love Relationships, European Identification and Transnational Solidarity." *European Union Politics* 16 (4): 469–489. doi:10.1177/1465116515588621.

Verhaegen, S. 2018. "What to Expect from European Identity? Explaining Support for Solidarity in Times of Crisis." *Comparative European Politics* 16 (5): 871–904. doi:10.1057/s41295-017-0106-x.

Verhaegen, S., and M. Hooghe. 2015. "Does More Knowledge About the European Union Lead to a Stronger European Identity? A Comparative Analysis among Adolescents in 21 European Member States." *Innovation* 28 (2): 127–146. doi:10.1080/13511610.2014.1000836.

Vertovec, S. 2009. *Transnationalism*. Oxford: Routledge.

Wilkins, C., H. Busher, T. Lawson, I. Acun, and N. L. Göz. 2010. "European Citizenship and European Union Expansion: Perspectives on Europeanness and Citizenship Education from Britain and Turkey." *European Educational Research Journal* 9 (4): 444–456. doi:10.2304/eerj.2010.9.4.444.

Wilson, I. 2011. "What Should we Expect of 'Erasmus Generations'?" *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49 (5): 1113–1140. doi:10.1111/j.1468-5965.2010.02158.x.

Wodak, R., and G. Weiss. 2005. Analyzing European Union discourses (pp. 121–135). doi:10.1075/dapsac.13.10wod.

## Annex 3: Original paper: A music-mediated language learning experience: Student's Awareness of their Socio-Emotional Skills

Cores-Bilbao, E., Fernández-Corbacho, A., Machancoses, F. H., Fonseca-Mora, M. C. 2019. A Music-Mediated Language Learning Experience: Students' Awareness of their Socio-Emotional Skills. Frontiers in Psychology, Language Science Volume.

DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02238

QUALITY INDICATORS

- **Journal Citation Reports** 2019 Impact factor: 2.12. Position: 20/129, T1.
- **Scopus (SJR)** 2018 (2019): 1.34. H index 81. Position: 54/526.
- **CIRC:** Ciencias Sociales: A+; Ciencias Humanas: **A**.
- **MIAR:** ICDS 10.5 over 11 (2018).
- **DOAJ**, Psychinfo, Academic Search Premier.

frontiers in Psychology

ORIGINAL RESEARCH
published: 04 October 2019
doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02238

# A Music-Mediated Language Learning Experience: Students' Awareness of Their Socio-Emotional Skills

*Esther Cores-Bilbao[1]*, Anali Fernández-Corbacho[2], Francisco H. Machancoses[3] and M. C. Fonseca-Mora[2]*

[1] Education Department, Faculty of Education, Psychology and Sports Sciences, University of Huelva, Huelva, Spain, [2] English Studies Department, Faculty of Humanities, University of Huelva, Huelva, Spain, [3] Methodology and Data Analysis Department, Andalusia Beturia Foundation for Health Research (FABIS), Huelva, Spain

OPEN ACCESS

**Edited by:**
Xinjie Chen,
Stanford University, United States

**Reviewed by:**
Alberto Cabedo-Mas,
Universitat Jaume I, Spain
Mari Tervaniemi,
University of Helsinki, Finland
Enrica Piccardo,
OISE-University of Toronto, Canada

***Correspondence:**
Esther Cores-Bilbao
esther.cores.edu@juntadeandalucia.es

**Specialty section:**
This article was submitted to Language Sciences, a section of the journal Frontiers in Psychology

**Received:** 15 June 2019
**Accepted:** 18 September 2019
**Published:** 04 October 2019

**Citation:**
Cores-Bilbao E, Fernández-Corbacho A, Machancoses FH and Fonseca-Mora MC (2019) A Music-Mediated Language Learning Experience: Students' Awareness of Their Socio-Emotional Skills. Front. Psychol. 10:2238. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02238

In a society where mobility, globalization and contact with people from other cultures have become its distinctive traits, the enhancement of plurilingualism and intercultural understanding should be of the utmost concern. From a positive psychology perspective, agency is the human capacity to affect other people positively or negatively through one's actions. This agentic vision can be related to mediation, a concept rooted in socio-cultural learning theory, where social interaction is considered a fundamental cornerstone in the development of cognition. These social interactions in the language learning setting may be facilitated through musical activities due to their social bonding effect. This paper tries to offer insights into how a music-mediated experience in language learning may develop students' interpersonal and collaborative competences to become active members of a more inclusive society. Mediation, considered to be a paradigm shift in the foreign language classroom and for different out-of-class language learning possibilities, could also provide an environment where learners maximize their emotional intelligence. Our paper focuses on this paradigm shift spearheaded by the Common European Framework for Languages Companion Volume (CEFR/CV) and the considerable repercussions it is bound to have for foreign language didactics, as cooperative tasks become central to foreign language learning. We hypothesize that mediated language learning experiences (MeLLEs) imply a socio-emotional change in learners, focusing on the others, on their needs and interests, by trying to help them understand texts, concepts or facilitating communication with their peers. An intervention with a music-MeLLE was designed and implemented in an L2 classroom of adult learners with divergent backgrounds. A self-assessment scale with mediation descriptors and the socio-emotional expertise scale (SEE) were administered. Results show that students become more mindful of their strengths, and of their capacity for collaboration and teamwork. This leads to more awareness of their mediation

skills. Students' mediation skills correlate significantly with their socio-emotional skills – specifically with their expressivity. The implementation of a music-mediated experience also promoted tolerance and enhanced learners' intrinsic motivations for language learning at the same time as acknowledging their diversity.

**Keywords: socio-emotional skills, foreign language learning, music, expressivity, teamwork, mediation**

## INTRODUCTION: A SOCIO-EMOTIONALLY ENRICHED LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Language, as a powerful human cultural artifact, mediates our knowledge of the world, our connection to others, and our own thought and self-regulation. All these functions intervene when a person takes the role of mediator – a very much needed helper for those who have difficulties in understanding texts, concepts or in communicating in a foreign language or culture (Piccardo et al., 2019).

In recent years, signs of increasingly narrow-minded attitudes, rejection of those who are different, and even tension between member states (Coste and Cavalli, 2015, p. 6) have been commonplace in European societies. In this context, the notions of mediation and plurilingualism (Piccardo, 2017) have become highly relevant. This concept of mediation, based mainly on Vygotsky (1978), was already included in the *Common European Framework for Languages* (CEFR) published in 2002, but it has gained a more central position within the *CEFR Companion Volume* (CERF/CV) (Council of Europe, 2018), released recently. Piccardo (2017) states that this work on mediation implies a paradigm shift in the foreign language classroom, while Coste and Cavalli (2015) connect it to the urge for educational tools for processes that build up pluricultural and plurilingual competences for collaborative dialogue, leading, in turn, to the development of the acceptance of others and the removal of social inequalities.

North and Piccardo (2016) affirm that "Mediation involves the use of language in creating the space and conditions for communication and/or learning, in constructing and co-constructing new meaning, and/or in facilitating understanding by simplifying, elaborating, illustrating or otherwise adapting the original" (p. 87). Thus, the learning process transcends the individual sphere and enters the interactive space. As explained by Piccardo in the CEFR/CV launch conference (2018), mediation implies a dynamic process of meaning-making through "languaging" (Swain, 2006) and "plurilanguaging" (Lüdi, 2015; Piccardo, 2018), while creating a shared safe "third space" (Kramsch, 2002). In fact, the Council of Europe emphasizes the mediating function of schools, because educating citizens who competently act as mediators relies also on the responsibility of institutions. Mediation fosters a wide range of discourse competences relevant for language learners because they are required to rephrase, to alternate languages, and even to combine and switch genres or oral and written expressions. Thus, language resources are developed through interaction (Coste and Cavalli, 2015, pp. 62–63).

However, a configuration of action-oriented learning experiences that may foster learners' and that may support teachers' awareness and predisposition toward the benefits of mediation is still needed. This is the focus of this paper: to explore how a music-mediated language learning experience (MeLLE) may affect students' motivation, students' socio-emotional development, students' foreign language competence, and students' willingness to cooperate with others. We believe that mediation as a paradigm shift in foreign language learning reinforced through musical activities provides an environment where learners maximize their socio-emotional abilities and their communicative skills.

### Mediated-Foreign Language Learning Experiences

MacIntyre et al. (2016, p. 1) explain humans' capacity to affect other people positively or negatively through their actions. This capacity, called *agency*, is central in communication and relates to the concept of mediation. Agency means that all of those involved in the teaching and learning process – teachers, students, parents and school staff – can affect one another.

According to Underhill (1999), the good language teacher in his/her role of facilitator knows "subject, methods and internal processes" (p. 144) that "generate a psychological climate that is conducive to high quality learning" (p. 147). Feuerstein and Feuerstein (1991) explain this role of facilitator through their Theory of Mediation which states that adults, parents, or teachers mediate when they prepare the content and select those stimuli that help their learners to achieve success. The term "mediated learning experiences" was originally developed by the Israeli psychologist Feuerstein who worked with traumatized youths after the Holocaust. Oon Seng (2003) describes his work and affirms "When others were modifying materials for those with learning disabilities, Feuerstein chose to invest his energies in modifying those learners directly" (p. 54).

Similarly, the Council of Europe's preparatory study for the development of the CEFR/CV equates "pedagogic mediation" with successful teaching approaches, which encompass facilitating access to knowledge, collaboratively co-constructing meaning as a member of a group in a learning setting, and generating the necessary conditions by creating, organizing and controlling space for creativity (North and Piccardo, 2016; Piccardo, 2017). Thus, the following actions characterize pedagogic mediation: awakening students' awareness of the meaning and relevance of the task, ensuring that learners understand the purpose of the task, and monitoring to ensure that pedagogic intentions are shared in order to confirm that learners clearly know what the teacher is asking

for (Williams and Burden, 1997). In conclusion, teachers as facilitators and mediators foster students' desire to participate in the language classroom and promote student autonomy through the teaching of meaningful techniques and strategies that encourage reflection, creativity and agency (Jiménez Raya, 2017).

However, despite the fact that students may also act as mediators, the dynamic relationship among students of the same group is often forgotten, thus overlooking the potential that "any cognitive and affective learning can be substantially enhanced by adroit use of interpersonal and group dynamics" (Ehrman and Dornyei, 1998, p. 2).

Brown (2002) endorses Feuerstein's mediated learning experiences as an approach that may spur students' predispositions toward language learning. Socio-cultural theory defines the socialization effect of language (Lantolf et al., 2015), where learning a language goes beyond the acquisition of isolated words to name objects or actions. In our study, MeLLEs – which take an action-oriented approach – learners are regarded as social agents who co-construct meaning while mobilizing their general plurilingual and pluricultural competences. In the words of the CEFR/CV, engaging in mediation activities entails that "...one is less concerned with one's own needs, ideas or expression than with those of the party or parties for whom one is mediating. One needs to have a well-oriented emotional intelligence, [...] empathy for the viewpoints and emotional states of other participants in the communicative situation." Particularly with regard to cross-linguistic mediation, "[...] this inevitably also involves social and cultural competence as well as plurilingual competence" (Council of Europe, 2018).

Naturally, some individuals are more socially oriented than others (McBrien et al., 2018); thus, encouraging the full development of affective factors such as empathy, respect, tolerance, leadership and cooperation capacities is pivotal in order to achieve successful language learning through mediation, where the main focus is to use language in real-life situations to collaborate with others to co-construct meanings. McBrien et al. (2018) ascribe the learners' social aptitude to their emotional and social skills, along with their empathy and interpersonal sensitivity. During the validation phase of their socio-emotional expertise scale (SEE), which was performed through the analysis of high-quality socio-emotional interactions, they also identified adaptability and expressivity as two relevant factors to be considered. The interactive space where social interplay occurs is constantly being reassessed by participants in communicative acts and, thus, students' cognitive, social and affective abilities may be affected by a mental filter which hinders their performance in tasks that require interaction and teamwork. Social interactions in the language learning setting may be facilitated through musical activities due to the social bonding effect of music, because "language enables articulation of what is within us, whereas music strengthens what is shared between us" (Kraus and Slater, 2015, p. 208). In this sense, several authors maintain that the incorporation into the classroom of musical material can entail a series of benefits in terms of socio-emotional expression by creating a relaxed and safe classroom atmosphere (Fonseca-Mora et al., 2011). Tarr et al. (2014) confirm that a "self-other merging" occurs while music-making, but whether this phenomenon takes place while engaging in passive listening or when viewing music videos together is yet to be determined.

A growing body of research evidence explores the complementarity of musical activities in developing both first language and additional languages, based on the reciprocal relationship between music and language as the "two sides of the human communication coin" (Kraus and Slater, 2015, p. 216). Music has been found to be useful in reinforcing the learning of languages and the student's autonomy (Kerekes, 2015), while making it a more motivating and socializing learning process. Thus, while semantically precise communication is conducted through language, music has been linked to the enhancement of social cohesion within a group, the development of interpersonal skills and community building, because "the great strength of music lies in its facilitation of social bonding and shared emotion" (Kraus and Slater, 2015, p. 217). In fact, one of the major hurdles to succeeding in learning languages is the occurrence of negative emotions when engaging in collaborative activities and when adapting to the classroom environment. Fear, insecurity and shyness, among others, limit or prevent interaction with the group in the learning environment, lessening its pedagogical value. In this sense, emotional arousal induced by familiar musical stimuli (van den Bosch et al., 2013) could counterbalance the affective filters which constrain effective classroom communication. Fonseca-Mora and Herrero Machancoses (2016) assert that the use of music can be the tool that elicits fundamental positive emotions in the classroom: "Melodies and rhythm can create an attractive and enjoyable environment fostering learners' willingness to participate in the language classroom, similar to the effects on human well-being of music and songs in everyday life" (p. 362).

Despite the potential of music to boost cognitive, affective and social faculties, empirical evidence which fully defines the benefits that musical experiences furnish to adults' foreign language classroom dynamics is very scarce (Milovanov and Tervaniemi, 2011; Fonseca-Mora and González Davies, 2019). Because language learning is a multifarious activity which draws on the learner's cognitive, social and affective competences, we hypothesize that music could take on a role as mediator, enhancing motivation and positive emotions, which in turn stimulate the deepening and widening of language learning skills.

## Aims

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of a classroom-based educational intervention conducted over a 4-week period, designed to mobilize textual and communication-based mediation strategies as well as to further the development of socio-emotional finesse by adult language learners, thus expanding their affective skills and bolstering the relations with their peers within the classroom setting. In order to do so, a music-MeLLE designed to exploit adult language learners' mediation skills was conceived, placing students in plurilingual classes in the central role of mediators.

Although the role of the teacher as a facilitator of the MeLLE is pivotal and merits further consideration, the scope of the present study is restricted to exploring how this experience influences learners' mediation competences and socio-emotional expertise.

## Research Questions

1 Does a MeLLE affect learners' perceptions of their socio-emotional and mediation abilities?
2 Do learners' perceptions of their socio-emotional expertise and mediation competences differ according to their proficiency level?
3 Are there differences in the outcome of the intervention based on the number of foreign languages spoken by learners?
4 Does the student's socio-emotional profile relate to their mediation competences after intervention?
5 How do learners value the music-MeLLE?

# MATERIALS AND METHODS

## Participants

The participants were adult students who were enrolled in an intensive English language course during the 2018–2019 academic year at a language school.

In order to measure the effects of the intervention, a pre–post approach was adopted for a sample of 44 students (65.9% female, 34.1% male) of different nationalities: 36 Spaniards (81.8%) and 18.2% ($n$ = 8) from other countries (3 Latvian, 2 Turkish, 1 French, 1 Mexican, and 1 Slovak). Their level of competence in English fluctuated from A2 to C1 levels. Most of them had an A2 level (40.9%, $n$ = 18); 14 students belonged to the B1–B2 level group (31.8%), while the remaining 27.3% ($n$ = 12) had a C1 level. Research participants were multilingual: 43.2% ($n$ = 19) spoke two languages, 31.8% ($n$ = 14) three, and 25% ($n$ = 11) more than three.

## Instruments and Data Collection

### Socio-Emotional Expertise Scale (McBrien et al., 2018)

The concept of SEE encapsulates an array of specific cognitive abilities which are relevant to successfully navigating social environments, among which the timing and synchrony of behaviors that support overall social-emotional ability are paramount. The descriptors which comprise the SEE are designed to determine the prevalence of two factors – adaptability and expressivity – in the respondents' psychological and societal repertoires. The descriptors contributing to each factor construe the students' ability to adequately engage in social interactions and their ability to competently convey affect and ideas to their peers, respectively. Following McBrien et al. (2018), the items pertaining to "adaptability" appraise the respondent's ability to adjust to a variety of social and emotional interpersonal situations; the construct of "expressivity," on the other hand, reflects the individual's ability to convey emotion to others.

### CEFR/CV Mediation Descriptor Scales (Council of Europe, 2018)

A2–B2 level-differentiated self-assessment scales with mediation descriptors were developed for collecting data regarding the students' mediation skills and strategies before and after the classroom experience. Relevant descriptors from the CEFR/CV Mediation Descriptor Scales (MDS) were selected and customized to conform to the research aims of the intervention and to the linguistic competence of the participants. In the analysis, the descriptors were divided into two categories: textual mediation and communication-based mediation. For the purposes of this study, textual mediation focuses on learners' ability to make the information contained in oral or written texts accessible to others, while communication-based descriptors measure skills mobilized in order to avoid misunderstandings when communication exchanges take place and interaction with others is required.

## Procedure

First, a music-MeLLE with action-oriented tasks entitled "Plurilingual Songs for Language Learners" was designed. The tasks included require textual and communication-based mediation. Second, the SEE test and the MDS were administered (**Figure 1**). Permission from principals to carry out the project was requested, and the teachers and students were informed beforehand of the project so that they could express their willingness to participate.

The initial data collection took place in the middle of the second trimester and it was completed again approximately 4 weeks later, once the participants had completed the allotted activities. In order to achieve the set aims, a batch of tasks encompassing music preference and perception and understanding of emotions were proposed. After being informed about the purpose of the study and the tasks they had to complete, the students were asked to cooperatively conduct an analysis of popular music videos of their choice, examining both the visual cues and the lyrics of the songs, and to infer the figurative meaning of the textual elements.

In session one, a modern music video was selected for its visual narrative script and its potential to trigger discussion with the purpose of modeling the activity. A description of its audio-visual and textual elements was elicited from the session. Subsequently, the students were organized into working groups to which different songs were assigned. They were asked to replicate the analysis, focusing on words or expressions connected to

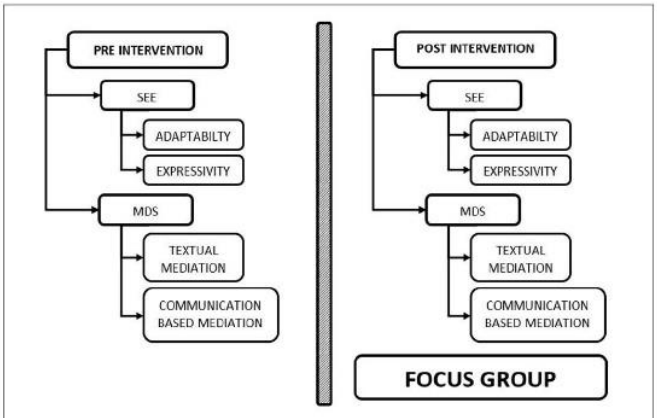



**FIGURE 1** | Flowchart of the research design.

feelings and figurative language. As an independent study task, the students looked for examples of songs whose lyrics depict different emotional states; they subsequently brought their lyrics to the next session.

In session two, using the lyrics contributed by the team members, the groups collected examples of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and metaphors used to articulate feelings. In a whole-class discussion, each group shared and compared their findings with their classmates. Recurrent themes and stereotypes across the examined songs were identified. Back in their working groups, the students were asked to list the features that quality songs should have.

In session three, the students reflected on the importance of deciphering the messages which are implicitly conveyed in popular music videos. Subsequently, they considered the music media consumption choices of youngsters nowadays and the impact that the exposure to certain topics might have on young people's development, as well as what alternative messages they would like to direct toward adolescents today. The groups were encouraged to discuss how they could use the typical features of songs and music videos to get educational messages across.

As a culminating task, the students were requested to post a blog entry recommending songs which carry positive messages or songs which can help to develop the linguistic competence of foreign language learners. Messages that students produced nominating the best songs for learning foreign languages were required to identify the elements which made those songs stand out for such a purpose. A model for a blog post was provided and comments were included which identified parts, style and features; time was allotted for the students to work on a draft of the text they intended to post online.

Once their texts were complete, they went through a peer editing process and received feedback based on a peer-assessment checklist provided by the teacher. Special emphasis was placed on the register and appropriateness of the reported observation messages, thus honing the affect-related processes that underlie desirable social behavior. When the production of the texts was complete, the students shared their posts on a blog administered by the teacher and were encouraged to post comments about their fellow classmates' entries.

Students were also asked to fill in the SEE and MDS in view of their music-MeLLE. Finally, a sample of twelve students was re-contacted to partake in a focus group interview, in order to value the mediated experience and supplement the information obtained during the previous quantitative research phase.

## Data Analysis

A mixed method was used to analyze all data obtained.

The statistical analysis includes a univariate descriptive analysis of target study variables to inform the description of the variables in the sample. Non-parametric tests were used, given the non-normality of the variables under study determined by the Shapiro–Wilk and Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests. To ascertain the possible effect of the linguistic proficiency level of the subjects on the test results, the Kruskal–Wallis $H$ test for pre- and post-test variables was carried out. The Mann–Whitney $U$ test was used to identify the proficiency level groups among which such a difference existed. For the contrast between pre- and post-test moments, and given the non-normality mentioned above, the non-parametric Wilcoxon test was carried out. Finally, a correlation analysis based on Spearman's Rho was performed.

This quantitative analysis was completed using a qualitative, thematic analysis which revealed students' evaluation of the learning experience.

# RESULTS

Between the pre- and post-test periods, the response rate remained invariant. In the post-test, fully completed questionnaires were received from 44 students. Descriptive variables were calculated, disaggregated both globally and by gender, and a pre–post comparison was carried out using the Wilcoxon signed rank test, which rendered significant differences in the pre- and post-scores of overall mediation ($W = -2.197$, $p = 0.028$) and the pre- and post-scores of textual mediation ($W = -3.341$, $p = 0.001$). No significant differences were observed in the pre–post socio-emotional variables or in the pre–post communication-based mediation variables (**Table 1**).

With respect to the comparison of results according to CEFR proficiency levels, there were also significant differences in overall mediation scores (KW = 15.411, $p < 0.01$) and textual mediation (KW = 29.827, $p < 0.01$) in its pre-moment, but there were no significant differences observed which were attributable to proficiency levels in the post-intervention nor in the rest of variables in both moments. For both variables, differences were found between the level of competence A and levels B and C; there were no differences between levels B and C. Regarding the pre–post contrast differentiated for each of the CEFR levels, significant differences were only observed in Level A for textual mediation ($W = -3.245$, $p < 0.01$) (**Table 2**).

When conducting pre–post intervention contrasts according to the number of languages spoken by the subjects under study, there were significant differences in textual mediation in learners who speak two languages (Zw = −2.788, $p < 0.01$) and in those speaking three languages (Zw = −2.040, $p = 0.041$), with no differences observed in students who speak more than three languages or for the rest of the variables under study (**Table 3**).

Finally, the relational study between the general scores in mediation, and the general and differentiated variables of socio-emotional skills after the intervention revealed a significant relationship between the general mediation and socio-emotional scores ($\rho = 0.409$, $p < 0.01$). When the general socio-emotional variable was disaggregated into its components of adaptability and expressivity, we only found a significant relationship between the overall mediation score and the expressivity score ($\rho = 0.465$, $p < 0.01$) (**Table 4**).

# QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

In order to better understand the perceptions of the participants, a focus group interview was conducted. Twelve students were selected so that language proficiency levels would be equally represented; the Spanish and foreign ratio was balanced. They

**TABLE 1 |** Target study variables mean scores (SD) and pre–post differences.

| | Total sample | Male | Female | Wilcoxon test | *p* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-socio-emotional expertise | 90.34 (13.03) | 90.40 (11.02) | 90.31 (14.15) | −0.393 | 0.695 |
| Post-socio-emotional expertise | 92.09 (1.25) | 90.93 (10.73) | 92.69 (10.14) | | |
| Pre-adaptability score | 57.52 (8.98) | 57.73 (7.90) | 57.41 (9.63) | −0.091 | 0.928 |
| Post-adaptability score | 58.41 (6.26) | 57.80 (7.17) | 58.72 (5.85) | | |
| Pre-expressivity score | 32.82 (4.97) | 32.67 (3.98) | 32.90 (5.48) | −0.802 | 0.423 |
| Post-expressivity score | 33.68 (4.93) | 33.13 (4.56) | 33.97 (5.16) | | |
| Overall mediation pre | 78.11 (15.30) | 74.11 (15.48) | 80.25 (15.04) | −2.197[a] | 0.028* |
| Overall mediation post | 81.70 (16.45) | 79.57 (16.05) | 82.88 (16.84) | | |
| Pre-textual mediation | 72.67 (19.34) | 68.16 (19.04) | 75.08 (19.41) | −3.341[a] | 0.001** |
| Post-textual mediation | 83.17 (15.74) | 86.20 (13.33) | 81.49 (16.93) | | |
| Pre-communication-based mediation | 80.60 (15.64) | 76.31 (17.08) | 82.98 (14.57) | −0.235 | 0.814 |
| Post-communication-based mediation | 79.63 (18.50) | 76.15 (20.86) | 81.64 (17.11) | | |

[a]*Based on negative ranks ($H_0$: POST < PRE). *Differences were significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Differences were significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**TABLE 2 |** Contrasts according to CEFR proficiency levels.

| | | | CEFR A[c] | | CEFR B[c] | | CEFR C[c] | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *p* | *Z* | *p* | *Z* | *p* | *Z* | *p* |
| Pre-adaptability score | 0.632[a] | 0.729 | −0.683 | 0.495 | −1.508 | 0.132 | −1.061 | 0.288 |
| Post-adaptability score | 2.368[a] | 0.306 | | | | | | |
| Pre-expressivity score | 3.542[a] | 0.170 | −1.092 | 0.275 | −0.566 | 0.571 | −0.903 | 0.366 |
| Post-expressivity score | 3.421[a] | 0.181 | | | | | | |
| Pre-socio-emotional expertise | 1.487[a] | 0.475 | −1.090 | 0.276 | −1.365 | 0.172 | −1.020 | 0.308 |
| Post-socio-emotional expertise | 2.682[a] | 0.262 | | | | | | |
| Pre-textual mediation | 29.827[a] | 0.000** | −3.245 | 0.001** | −0.665 | 0.506 | −1.011 | 0.312 |
| A–B | 0.500[b] | 0.000** | | | | | | |
| A–C | 4.000[b] | 0.000** | | | | | | |
| B–C | 59.000[b] | 0.321 | | | | | | |
| Post-textual mediation | 4.988[a] | 0.083 | | | | | | |
| Pre-communication-based mediation | 2.617[a] | 0.270 | −1.336 | 0.181 | −1.379 | 0.168 | −0.059 | 0.953 |
| Post-communication-based mediation | 5.086[a] | 0.079 | | | | | | |
| Overall mediation pre | 15.411[a] | 0.000** | −1.327 | 0.185 | −1.119 | 0.263 | −0.222 | 0.824 |
| A–B | 47.500[b] | 0.003** | | | | | | |
| A–C | 21.000[b] | 0.000** | | | | | | |
| B–C | 63.500[b] | 0.459 | | | | | | |
| Overall mediation post | 5.367[a] | 0.068 | | | | | | |

[a]*Kruskal–Wallis test.* [b]*Mann–Whitney U, not corrected for ties.* [c]*Wilcoxon signed ranks test. **Differences were significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**TABLE 3 |** Wilcoxon signed ranks test pre–post based on number of languages spoken.

| | 2 Langs | | 3 Langs | | +3 Langs | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Z* | *p* | *Z* | *p* | *Z* | *p* |
| Pre–post adaptability score | −1.265 | 0.206 | −0.910 | 0.363 | −1.070 | 0.285 |
| Pre–post expressivity score | −0.262 | 0.793 | −0.315 | 0.752 | −1.607 | 0.108 |
| Pre–post socio-emotional expertise | −1.148 | 0.251 | −0.816 | 0.414 | −1.376 | 0.169 |
| Pre–post textual mediation | −2.788 | 0.005** | −2.040 | 0.041* | −0.153 | 0.878 |
| Pre–post communication-based mediation | −0.840 | 0.401 | −0.051 | 0.959 | −0.771 | 0.441 |
| Pre–post overall mediation | −1.155 | 0.248 | −1.570 | 0.116 | −0.890 | 0.374 |

*Based on negative ranks ($H_0$: POST < PRE). *Differences were significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Differences were significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**TABLE 4 |** Spearman's rho correlations between target variables.

| | | Overall mediation post |
|---|---|---|
| Post-socio-emotional expertise | ρ | 0.409** |
| | *p* | 0.007 |
| | *N* | 42 |
| Post-adaptability score | ρ | 0.246 |
| | *p* | 0.116 |
| | *N* | 42 |
| Post-expressivity score | ρ | 0.465** |
| | *p* | 0.002 |
| | *N* | 42 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

were invited to talk about their classroom experiences: what they had liked the most and what they least minded about the collaborative approach taken in this intervention, whether they favored further use of musical media to inspire their language learning, and whether they had become aware of anything new about themselves.

A thematic analysis of the students' responses was made by applying a four-step process to synthesize the data. Two of the authors independently reviewed the focus group transcript and identified recurring themes mentioned by participants. Then, the script was coded and the informative extracts were transferred to an *ad hoc* designed data extraction sheet. Finally, themes were grouped into two categories (**Tables 5**, **6**), subdivided into four key concepts: (1) music as a plurilingual and pluricultural mediator; (2) musical activation of agency and positive emotions; (3) teamwork as a valuable and enjoyable experience; and (4) flexibility and coping with uncertainty.

Analyzing the audio-visual narratives of music videos produced in different countries led to a better understanding of some traits of the target culture, and some reflections also made evident the awakening of the students' pluricultural and plurilingual competences. Several students highlighted the opportunity to showcase their work, as well as to access their classmates' contributions and provide feedback:

> "I think the most interesting thing was networking with other communities in other countries. That was the most powerful part. Because, after all, posting something on the Internet is easy, but it doesn't always allow you to connect with someone who is studying English out there." (Luis B.)

> "Posting our blog entry, seeing our final product online and getting to read what the rest of my classmates have produced, reading everyone's posts and seeing how our own blog was taking shape was really cool." (José Ignacio C.)

In general terms, students valued collaborative work as a rewarding and enriching experience. Some of them even openly expressed what they considered to be successful teamwork practices. Conversely, they were displeased when one team member failed to contribute equally to the collective effort; this was the main reason for their reluctance to work with others. On the whole, their reflections show that they were willing to collaborate with others in order to attain the final result. This implies that they managed to join forces to co-construct meaning, to understand new concepts and to access information. That is, they actively assumed the role of mediators. Related to this, students also considered that working with students from other nationalities was an enriching experience which could help them improve their language skills.

A significant number of interviewees reported having felt confused or overwhelmed during the initial stages of implementation of the lesson plan due to a lack of familiarity with the approach. However, they showed awareness of the importance of overcoming uncertainty when interacting with others and of the transferability of the skills acquired to everyday life situations. In their view, striving to come to an agreement in order to achieve a shared goal will be commonplace in the different contexts that they will encounter in their professional careers and personal lives. Consequently, students also felt proud of their ability to overcome the difficulties they had encountered during the learning experience. On the other hand, learners showed concern about difficulties met which had not been easily solved. They also expressed their need to further learn how to handle critical situations, similar to those experienced in teamwork.

Regarding this last issue, on one occasion the students complained to the teachers about the uncooperative attitude of one of their team members. When asked whether they had raised the issue and discussed it, they reported that they did not want to stir up a conflict with that person. It seemed that they were unsure about how to address the problem.

Finally, according to the learners' self-reported perceptions, music-MeLLEs seem to give prominence to reciprocity and negotiation of goals and outcomes, as set out by the teacher and pursued by the learners. They acknowledged the sense of practicality of this musical MeLLE because it is rooted in reality, in the immediate context of the students. In the adult education context, learners are often notably goal-oriented. The students also acknowledged the integration of diversified activities in its design, which they considered to be adaptable to different levels of complexity and well sequenced, with increasing difficulty to challenge and engage them.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

All the different research questions have been addressed by our study. The main aim of our study was to explore whether a music-MeLLE could potentially affect students' awareness of their socio-emotional and mediation skills while learning foreign languages. The most obvious finding to emerge from the analysis is that the MeLLE had an impact on students' awareness of their mediation skills, more significantly of their textual mediation skills.

The next question in this study sought to determine the co-dependency of language proficiency level and mediation skills. Prior to the intervention, overall and textual mediation competences were underdeveloped or overlooked by students with lower levels of CEFR proficiency, whereas students with an intermediate or advanced command of English displayed a

**TABLE 5 |** Students' views on the music-mediated experience.

| **Music as a plurilingual and pluricultural mediator** |
|---|
| "... trends in current music videos, fashions, everything we have discussed in class, gender equality, social critique, anti-sexist movements, those topics are present in music now more than ever before." |
| "The chance of finding out how people from other cultures process information is great." |
| "The forms of society and lifestyle are changing; in some countries they develop and change before they do in others and it is through music that young people are coming to learn about those changes." |
| "Music inoculates people with these messages (of cultural change)" |
| "I am now also wiser in terms of dealing and understanding Spanish culture's mindset." |
| **Musical activation of agency and positive emotions** |
| "We have been able to describe the different songs that each of us contributed and to examine what they conveyed." |
| "Choosing the song, talking about feelings and so on, and writing the text interpreting the author's intention was interesting." |
| "We like to find the emotions, what the lyrics want to express. As it is another language, they are expressed differently, the translations cannot be done literally, the language is figurative." |
| "(In class) We worked to recognize the emotions and what they meant to us." |

**TABLE 6 |** Students' views on the progress of their interpersonal dimension.

| **Teamwork as a valuable and enjoyable experience** |
|---|
| "We learn more together because we exchange knowledge." |
| "When one of us had difficulties in understanding something or was not sure on what to do, we would take the time to explain and help them in order for everyone to be on the same page." |
| "Because we had to speak and explain the matter as clear as possible in a language that was not our mother tongue – this way all my partners and I experienced the importance of speech in language learning and its impact on the different reactions of my classmates." |
| "It was nice to get to work with people that I had never met and with an Erasmus student, as I do not get that opportunity very often." |
| "Working as a team was very enjoyable, mainly because we were very organized and distributed the tasks evenly, everyone in the group knew what they had to do and did it to the best of their abilities." |
| "Working in a team has always been challenging for me, as I love doing things independently. You never know if you can fully count on people, especially on the ones you do not know." |
| **Flexibility and coping with uncertainty** |
| "I was dazed, for we had never had classes like this before." |
| "Initially I felt slightly uncomfortable, and also baffled because I didn't know which song to select." |
| We sometimes have had some different thoughts about how to carry out the project, but at the end we always reached a common agreement." |
| "The problem with English was a barrier as well. Our levels ranged from B1 to C1 and that level gap was a huge problem when explaining our ideas, so we helped each other." |
| "It has been a challenge because we are not used to doing teamwork activities, and I still have a lot to learn." |
| "I enjoyed the discussions because everyone had their own opinion that only meant that we care about the result and it only made the ideas more thought through." |
| "Each group leader should give directions to the members of the group [...] Otherwise, the other members of the group would be distracted even by a single person who did not perform what was asked of them. Unfortunately, this is what we experienced." |

sound knowledge of their mediation skills and strategies. This seems to indicate that once an intermediate level of proficiency is reached in the foreign language, trainees feel more capable of mediating a text. A possible explanation for these results may be the lack of cross-cultural communication encounters undertaken by students at the initial stages of foreign language acquisition, as compared with a greater exposure to speakers of other languages that learners experience during subsequent years of language learning. However, after the intervention presented in this study, those differences between language proficiency groups were no longer observable, because the learning experience triggered a noteworthy increase in textual mediation scores as well as in overall mediation measures of the least proficient students. This might imply that the MeLLE assisted in making visible the usefulness of pre-existing cultural and language resources and gave the learners a sense of confidence to manage intercommunity relations (Coste and Cavalli, 2015).

As far as the number of foreign languages spoken is concerned, the data obtained shows that students who speak three languages outperformed, in textual mediation activities, their peers who spoke two languages. However, on the question of whether the number of languages spoken by the learners influenced the outcome of the intervention, it seems that the MeLLE benefits most those students who speak only one foreign language. This result may be explained by the fact that those who speak more foreign languages feel that their textual mediation competences have reached their full potential. The knowledge of at least two foreign languages seems to favor the natural development of text mediation skills. Hence, the adoption of a plurilingual take on language education, which focuses on

pursuing the learners' personal development, self-awareness, linguistic and critical awareness, and interculturality (Piccardo et al., 2019) is supported. The results obtained also suggest that similar interventions could probably offset the shortcomings of monolingual and bilingual education programs. Thus, in contexts in which implementing plurilingual teaching approaches is not feasible, interventions based on MeLLE would possibly parallel the students' perceptions of their mediation skills with those of more linguistically diversified, accomplished students.

However, the most remarkable result derived from the statistical data analyzed is the highly significant correlation between overall mediation competence and socio-emotional expertise. Therefore, our MeLLE affected students' awareness of their role as agents in interpersonal communication and this awareness linked to learners' socio-emotional portraits. When examining separately the two contributing factors of learners' socio-emotional profiles, expressivity and adaptability, it was the former that resulted in a more significant correlation. Because expressivity has been defined as "the ability to successfully convey affect and ideas to other people" (McBrien et al., 2018, p. 1), this could further indicate the benefits of adopting MeLLE in the language classroom.

Additional advantages of MeLLE are highlighted by the qualitative results collected during the focus group interview. The students' documented perceptions when exposed to the music-MeLLE seem to endorse the suitability of this approach to induce a measurable improvement of their wellbeing and a positive language learning setting, as well as to raise learners' awareness of their role as social agents within the communicative act. By the end of the intervention program, the students were familiar with the concept of mediation and had got used to working collaboratively. Students showed enthusiasm during teamwork tasks and they were able to show flexibility by overcoming the difficulties encountered. Besides, the students reported that these types of activities made them conscious of their own learning process. They recognized the importance of active listening, respecting everyone's opinions, and taking on an agentic role by providing feedback to the work of their peers. Moreover, they were satisfied with the common effort to find a shared language and to succeed in the tasks. However, they also demonstrated their need to learn more about how to manage personal accountability for the tasks assigned to each team member. Driven by the above-mentioned benefits, they were willing to engage in MeLLE in the future.

As for the role of music, the qualitative findings obtained in our focus group interviews appear to be consistent with the idea that songs can evoke positive emotions in the foreign language classroom (Fonseca-Mora and Herrero Machancoses, 2016). In this sense, learners highlighted the motivating potential of working with music of their choosing and sieving through familiar lyrics, discovering messages and emotional states expressed therein. These findings seem to correlate favorably with the studies conducted by van den Bosch et al. (2013) and further support the idea that familiarity with self-selected music may amplify the benefits of music-based classroom activities. Similarly, the interviewees reported a renewed feeling of group conscience and sense of belonging brought about by the musical input, which is coherent with the bonding effect mentioned by Tarr et al. (2014) and Kraus and Slater (2015).

The results recorded so far highlight the appropriateness of introducing these types of music-mediated experiences to the language classroom in order to improve students' development of mediation skills, awareness of their socio-emotional skills and of other people's perspectives or intentions (Steinbeis and Koelsch, 2009). By developing empathy toward others and social cognition, explaining and predicting other people's behavior, language learners become more socio-emotionally oriented and prepared to narrow intercultural gaps and social inequalities.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The tentative results of this study suggest the need to carry out a broader longitudinal study over an extended period of time to empirically confirm the effects of this type of pedagogic intervention on foreign language adult learners.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated for this study are available on request to the corresponding author.

## ETHICS STATEMENT

Ethical review and approval was not required for the study on human participants in accordance with the local legislation and institutional requirements. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

MF-M: conceptualization, investigation, and funding acquisition. FM: methodology and formal analysis. EC-B, AF-C, FM, and MF-M: writing – original draft. EC-B, AF-C, and MF-M: writing – review and editing.

## FUNDING

This study was supported by the R + D project "Musical aptitude, reading fluency and intercultural literacy of European university students" (FFI2016-75452-R), funded by the Spanish Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad.

## REFERENCES


Brown, D. N. (2002). Mediated learning and foreign language acquisition. *ASP* 35–36, 167–182. doi: 10.4000/asp.1651

Coste, D., and Cavalli, M. (2015). *Education, Mobility, Otherness. The Mediation Functions of Schools*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Council of Europe, (2018). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Companion Volume with New Descriptors*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Ehrman, M. E., and Dornyei, Z. (1998). *Interpersonal Dynamics in the Second Language Classroom: the Visible and Invisible Classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Feuerstein, R., and Feuerstein, S. (1991). "Mediated learning experience: a theoretical review," in *Mediated Learning Experience (MLE): Theoretical, Psychosocial and Learning Implications*, eds R. Feuerstein, P. S. Klein, and A. J. Tannenbaum, (London: Freund Publishing House).

Fonseca-Mora, M. C., and González Davies, M. (2019). CEFR Mediation Strategies: Towards a Socio-Emotionally Enhanced Plurilingual Language Education. "Case Study Programme" for the Implementation of the CEFR Companion Volume 2017-2018. Strasbourg: Education Policy Division, Council of Europe. Forthcoming .

Fonseca-Mora, M. C., and Herrero Machancoses, F. (2016). "Music and language learning: emotions and engaging memory pathways," in *Positive Psychology in SLA*, eds P. Macintyre, T. Gregersen, and S. Mercer, (Bristol: Multilingual Matters).

Fonseca-Mora, M. C., Toscano-Fuentes, C., and Wermke, K. (2011). Melodies that help: the relation between language aptitude and musical intelligence. *Anglistik Int. J. Eng. Stud.* 22, 101–118.

Jiménez Raya, M. (2017). "Teacher autonomy and agency: the space of possibility in overcoming external obstacles and internal resistances", in *Learner and Teacher Autonomy in Higher Education: Perspectives From Modern Language Teaching*, eds M. Jiménez Raya, J. J. Martos Ramos, and M. G. Tassinari (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang), 15–35.

Kerekes, E. (2015). "Using songs and lyrics in out-of-class learning," in *Language Learning Beyond the Classroom*, eds D. Nunan, and J. C. Richards, (London: Routledge), 33–42.

Kramsch, C. (2002). In search of the intercultural. *J. Sociolinguist.* 6, 275–285. doi: 10.1111/1467-9481.00188

Kraus, N., and Slater, J. (2015). Music and language: relations and disconnections. *Handbook Clin. Neurol.* 129, 207–222. doi: 10.1016/B978-0-444-62630-1.00012-3

Lantolf, J. P., Thorne, S. L., and Poehner, M. E. (2015). "Sociocultural theory and second language development," in *Theories in Second Language Acquisition*, eds B. van Patten, and J. Williams, (New York, NY: Routledge), 207–226.

Lüdi, G. (2015). "Monolingualism and multilingualism in the construction and dissemination of scientific knowledge," in *The Multilingual Challenge: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*, eds U. Jessner-Schmid, and C. Kramsch, (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter), 213–238.

MacIntyre, P. D., Gregersen, T., and Mercer, S. (2016). *Positive Psychology In SLA. Bristol (UK)*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

McBrien, A., Wild, M., and Bachorowski, J.-A. (2018). Social–emotional expertise (SEE) scale: development and initial validation. *Assessment* doi: 10.1177/1073191118794866 [Epub ahead of print].

Milovanov, R., and Tervaniemi, M. (2011). The interplay between musical and linguistic aptitudes: a review. *Front. Psychol.* 2:321. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00321

North, B., and Piccardo, E. (2016). Developing illustrative descriptors of aspects of mediation for the common european framework of reference (CEFR). *Lang. Teach.* 49, 455–459. doi: 10.1017/s0261444816000100

Oon Seng, T. (2003). Mediated learning and pedagogy: applications of feuerstein's theory in twenty-first century education mediated learning and pedagogy: applications of feuerstein's theory in twenty-first century education. *REACT* 22, 53–63.

Piccardo, E. (2017). Plurilingualism as a catalyst for creativity in superdiverse societies: a systemic analysis. *Front. Psychol.* 8:2169. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.02169

Piccardo, E. (2018). "Plurilingualism: vision, conceptualization, and practices," in *Handbook of Research and Practice in Heritage Language Education*, eds P. P. Trifonas and T. Aravossitas (Cham: Springer International Handbooks of Education), 207–225. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-44694-3_47

Piccardo, E., North, B., and Goodier, T. (2019). Broadening the scope of language education: mediation, plurilingualism, and collaborative learning: the cefr companion volume. *J. E Learn. Knowl. Soc.* 15, 17–36. doi: 10.20368/1971-8829/1612

Steinbeis, N., and Koelsch, S. (2009). Understanding the intentions behind man-made products elicits neural activity in areas dedicated to mental state attribution. *Cereb. Cortex* 19, 619–623. doi: 10.1093/cercor/bhn110

Swain, M. (2006). "Languaging, agency and collaboration in advanced second language proficiency," in *Advanced Language Learning: The Contribution of Halliday and Vygotsky*, ed. H. Byrnes, (New York, NY: Continuum), 95–108.

Tarr, B., Launay, J., and Dunbar, R. I. M. (2014). Music and social bonding?: " self-other " merging and neurohormonal mechanisms. *Front. Psychol.* 5:1096. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01096

Underhill, A. (1999). "Facilitation in language teaching," in *Affect in Language Learning*, ed. J. Arnold, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 125–141.

van den Bosch, I., Salimpoor, V. N., and Zatorre, R. J. (2013). Familiarity mediates the relationship between emotional arousal and pleasure during music listening. *Front. Hum. Neurosci.* 7:534. doi: 10.3389/fnhum.2013.00534

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Williams, M., and Burden, R. (1997). *Psychology for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

*Copyright © 2019 Cores-Bilbao, Fernández-Corbacho, Machancoses and Fonseca-Mora. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.*