"LEARN PROJECT: MOTHER TONGUE AND THE OTHER LANGUAGES".
MENTORING AND PEER TUTORING EXPERIENCES TO BUILT INTERCULTURAL AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

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The LEARN Project: contextualization

Postmodernity as a "planetary" place: the topic of multilingualism

- The **integral education** of the Person (Anolli, 2006);

- The **well-being** of the person through the recognition and practice of the "**mother tongue**" (Augé, 2017);

- Knowing and practicing multiple languages today: **plurilingualism** and **cultural plurality**;

- Others **implications** linked to the multicultural and educational dimension of our society (Aime, 2020);

- Plurilingualism could help us in the ability to perceive our own centrality only as a personal perspective (the **deconstruction of ethnocentrism**);

- The identification of the **8 European key competences.**
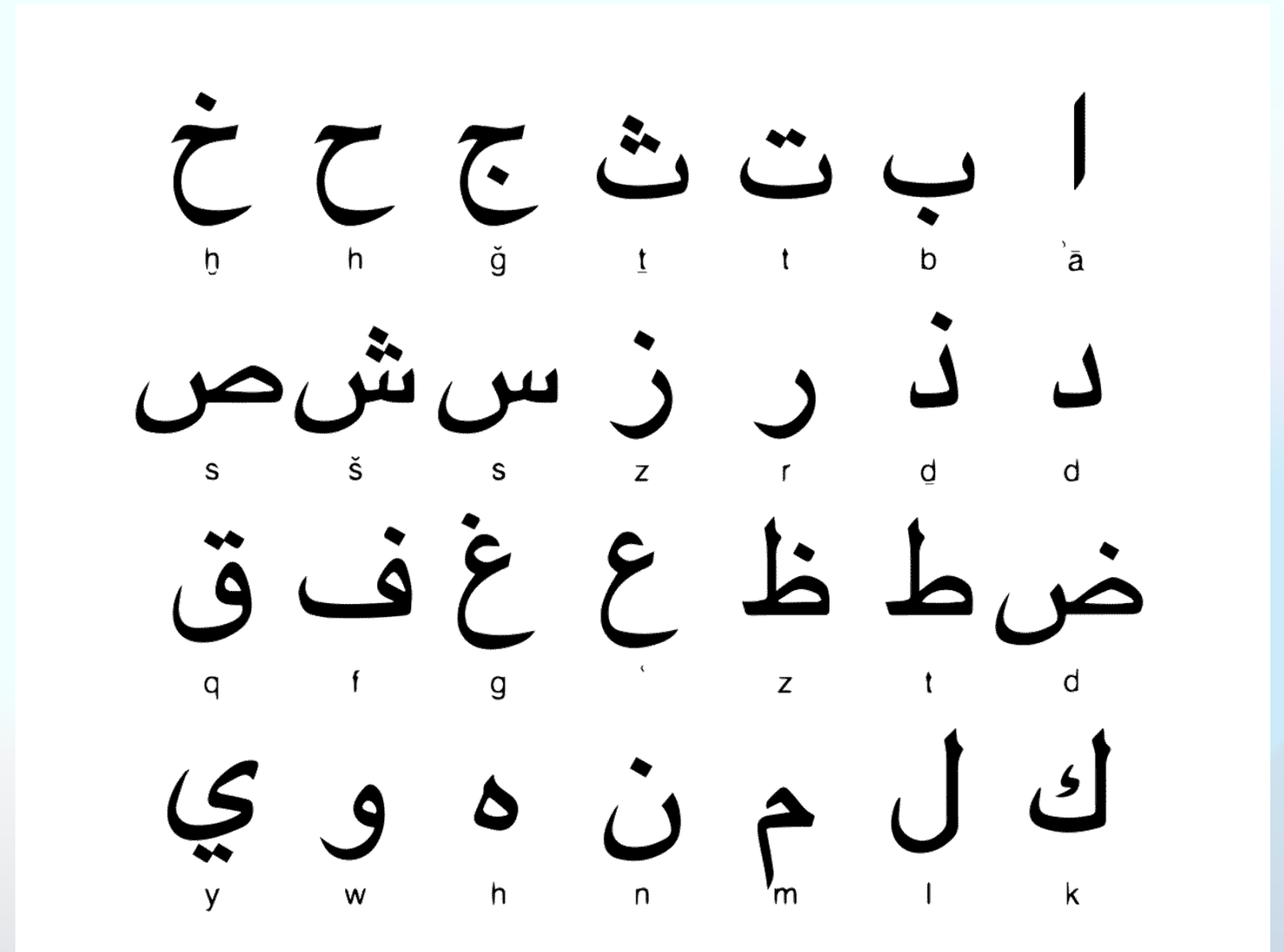
Recognizing cultural uniqueness

The necessity to practice and build inclusive actions (Habermas & Taylor, 2008).

To create an opportunity for all students in the class: to learn about and compare different cultures.

The desire to accompany students to experience multiculturalism in an inclusive school.

This perspective safeguards the uniqueness of each person and makes the school experience of each student significant, also considering their cultural background of which the mother tongue is part.

Intercultural education and immigration: the challenge to build a truly intercultural community.

The LEARN project: the structure

The University of Florence, the department of Science of Education – FORLILPSI – was responsible for training Arabic language teachers who worked in schools promoting the alphabet, writing, and spoken language.
UNIFI's scientific role was to monitor and supervise all activities, making real tutoring path.

The objectives of the project are:

- To become aware of one's own and other people's identities (personal and cultural) and recognize ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity;

- Open new horizons and arouse interest in other cultures, particularly the Arab one, and support understanding and respect for diversity;

- Offer students the opportunity to approach and learn about the Arabic language and culture and experience linguistic plurality;

- Aiming at the value of inclusion and solidarity through moments of sharing and exchanging experiences and raising awareness of the values of peaceful coexistence;

- The deconstruction of one's own ethnocentrism as a prevention of radical positions;

- Move away from monocentric view towards pluricentrism;

- Global educational approach (Global Education).

Who is it aimed at?

The project is carried out for primary school students, specifically the fourth and fifth grades, regardless of the presence of students of Arab origin.

Classroom teaching has been designed to have a real impact outside of school too. This is to create an important connection between all aspects of man's social life.

Project's schedule

- Weekly laboratory throughout the school year.
- Teaching activities: carried out by 6 native Arabic speaking teachers
- Pedagogical and didactic training from the University of Florence.

| Arabic alphabet | Writing | Pronunciation |

| Different spatial arrangement | The Arabic culture |

Actors of LEARN Project

LEARN Project was **organized** by:
- the University of Florence, FORLILPSI department;
- the Good World Citizen association of Florence.

The project was **supported** by:
- the USR Toscana of Florence (Regional School Office, detachment of the Ministry of Education);
- the QFI association based in New York and Washington.

The project **involved** three comprehensive schools of the Metropolitan City of Florence:
- ITC "Le Cure";
- ITC "Puccini", plexus "Villani";
- ITC 3° di Sesto Fiorentino, plexus Balducci.

There were 7 classes involved, with students aged 9 and 10.

Mentoring and Tutoring

Tutoring action involved above all the university staff and the Arabic language teachers. Tutoring methods and techniques are designed according to the principle of interactivity.

- Guidance and consultancy;
- Monitoring during the year of the phases of classroom teaching and the results obtained along the way;
- Observation of the dynamics between the class group and the Arab teachers.

The methodology was laboratory-based. This means that anyone involved in educating, training, and teaching should assume the **concept of EXPERIENCE** as the central element of every action to be carried out.

Highlights: observe educational change

1) **Tutoring as "responsibility"**: the Arabic language teachers felt a strong "responsibility" for what their work in the classroom would be. The pedagogical team responded to the questions and problematic issues proposed by the teachers.
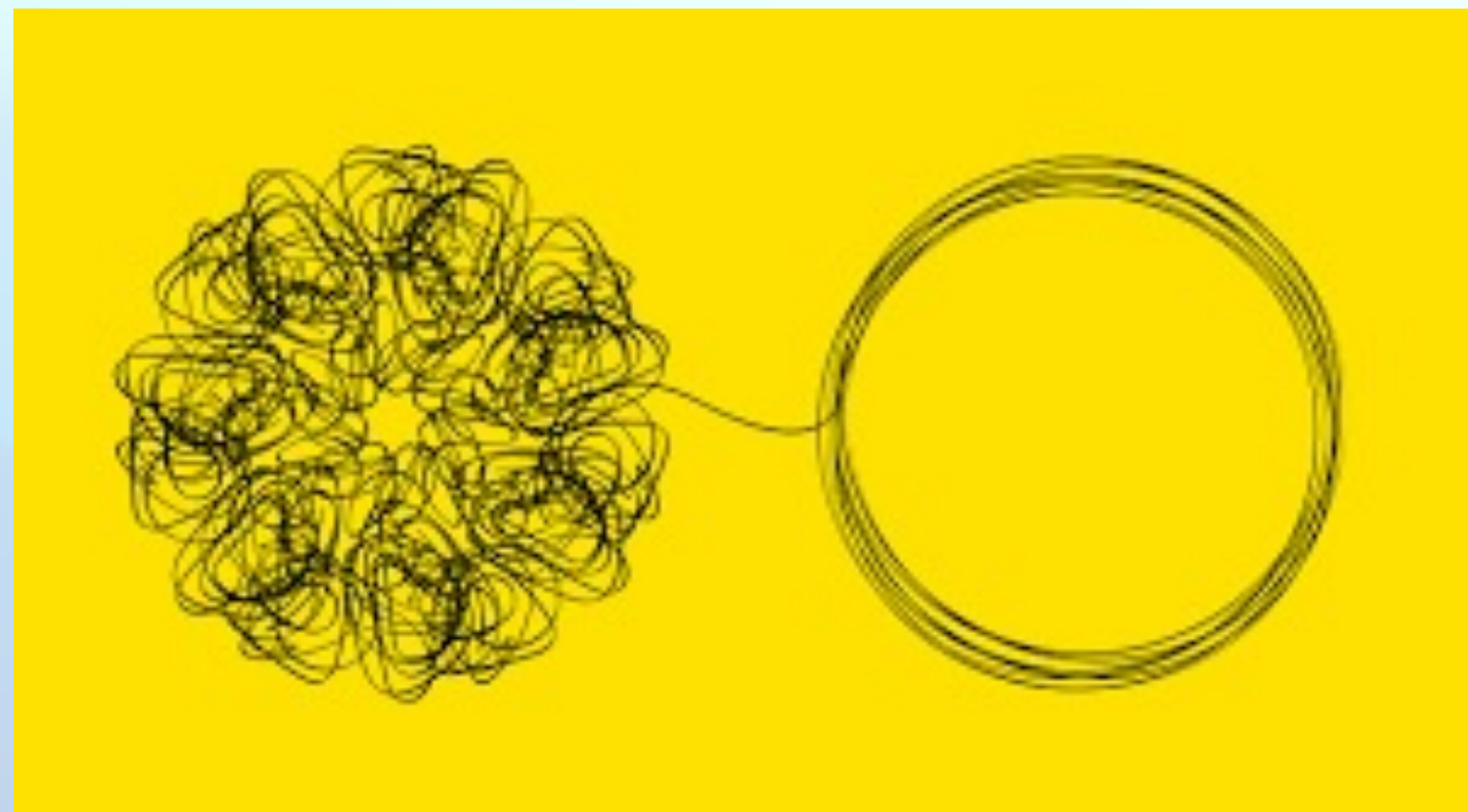
2) **Peer Tutoring activities.**
The relationship between professors and teachers was on an equal footing, with greater attention on the part of the university tutors to the educational and pedagogical principles to be shared.

3) **Tutoring as "cooperation"**: teachers observed that through collaborative activities, sharing, and working in small groups, students were more active and gained greater confidence.
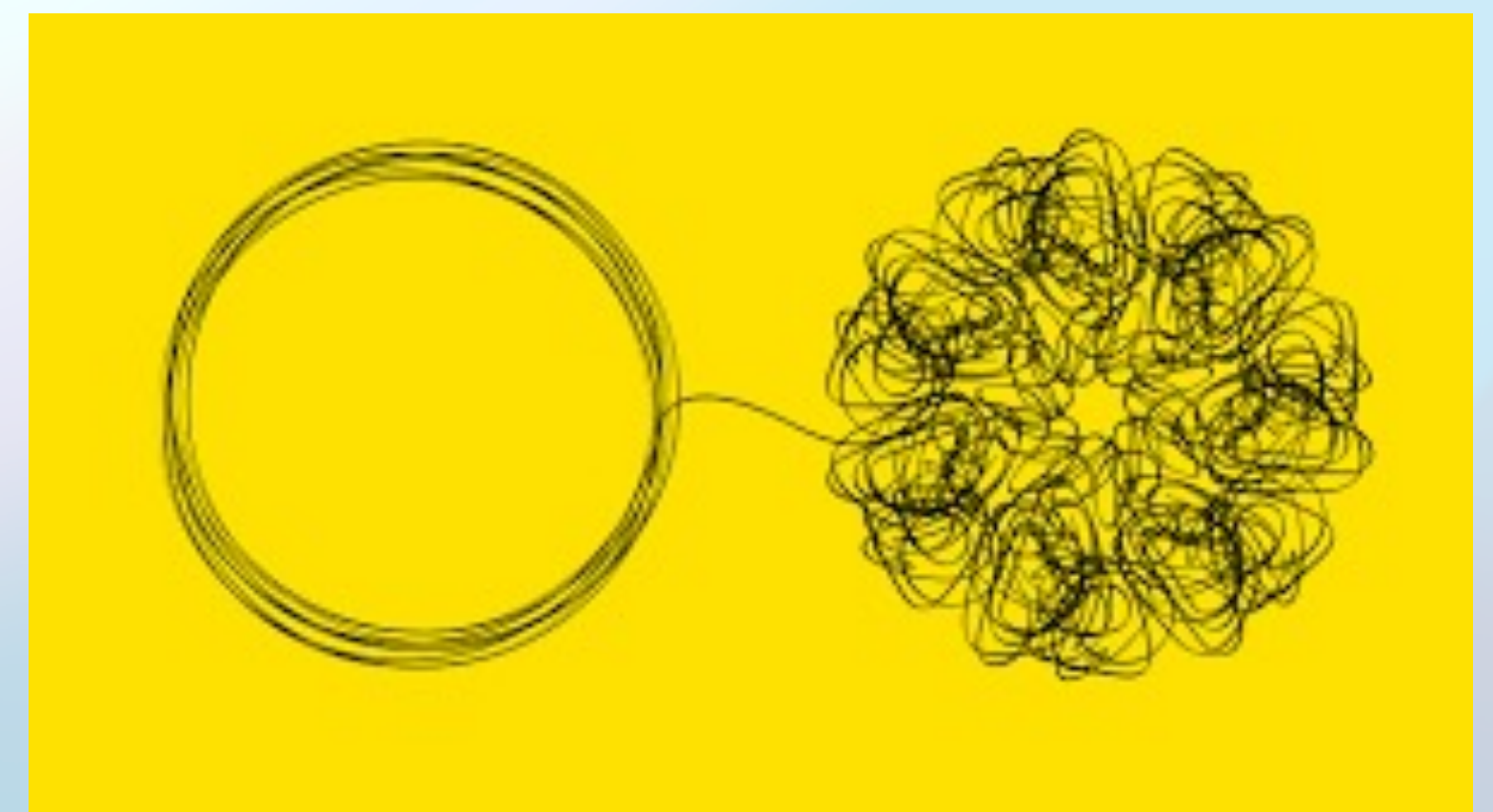
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