



The Making of...": A Path between Cultures

Guest post by Bruno Alicata and Giorgia Culotta

In the following contribution we wish to present 'The Making of' the video of Class 5B which won the Second Prize in the 2018 CID international video competition "What Does Intercultural Dialogue Look Like?" (<http://centerforinterculturaldialogue.org/2018/07/09/2nd-prize-cid-video-competition-class-5b/>) It is important because making the video became the occasion for a meta-reflection on what 'intercultural dialogue' means to us and, at the same time, the occasion to actually practice several forms of intercultural dialogue. Therefore, besides the final result – which came unexpectedly, and made us greatly rejoice! – we wish to show how a collective and co-constructed endeavor can be the occasion to realize intercultural practices in their widest and most profound sense. – Paola Giorgis, Teacher, the School of Arts "Aldo Passoni," Turin, Italy.

Bruno Alicata: *"The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed."* (Carl Gustav Jung, 2005 [1933], p. 49) Taking my cue from Jung, I must say that this experience was transformative, I believe for each person who took part in our work. As one of the most important reasons why we chose to take part in this competition was to experience an inner transformation by meeting other personalities from other cultures, I can say that, at the end of all this, this objective was fulfilled.

I will start by illustrating the basic structure of our project. The two main structural metaphors that best define our work are a tree and a Russian doll: the first could be applied to the theoretical and organizational part of the project, while the second applies to the practical part. The former began with our personal reflection, which later expanded to the rest of the participants; while the practical elements of the project started with a task completed by all the group involved and ended with specific tasks completed by a single person.

The work involved during this journey proceeded step by step, starting with our personal reflections and ideas regarding intercultural dialogue; from this, we presented the project to our classmates, explaining the guidelines of the project and how we intended to realize it, and a substantial group of students agreed to join us along this journey. The communication worked well because we truly believed in what we were going to do: this was clear to the people we talked to, who then decided to take part in the project.

As Jacque Fresco said: “The shape and solutions of the future rely totally on the collective effort of people working together. We are all an integral part of the web of life” (2007, p. 11) In this “web of life,” we chose to follow the thread of the web which led everyone to the most efficient and satisfying performance. This was made possible both through group tasks/actions (such as writing the script, deciding how and what to film, deciding what to say and do during the shooting, etc.) and personal tasks (such as recording, editing, painting, organizing the set, etc.). From my perspective, **the most rewarding task was the group writing, because we talked a lot, we talked in depth, and most importantly, we talked with our hearts, which resulted in a clear and real expression of ourselves via the script.**

The entire project started with this idea: would it be possible to each express ourself and our culture using only a single word or phrase? We chose to accept this challenge and dive deeply into it. The most challenging part was bringing this idea into the scene, but with the right expression, the right tone of voice, and the right gestures, we managed to pull out something that satisfied us.

I would like to conclude with a final quote by Oscar Wilde: “The aim of life is self-development. To realize one's nature perfectly - that is what each of us is here for” (1908, p. 28). This experience left me with a deep and profound admiration for other cultures and a new point of view of my own. Because, as already expressed better by Jung, the most beautiful and important part of meeting the others is, as in a chemical reaction, the transformation of both substances in the process. Through this experience, I developed myself, and for this reason I will always be grateful to this project. Regarding all that I learned from it, **I wish to encourage everyone to meet new people, and try to learn something from these encounters, because this is what makes life and society so special and wonderful.**

Giorgia Culotta: Our project started with a few students, then spread to a crowd, involving many people, from those who worked backstage to the ones who spoke in the video. It was *group work* in which everyone was welcomed and essential. Both of these aspects are linked to the idea of ‘intercultural dialogue’ which was the focus of our reflection: **to us, ‘intercultural dialogue’ implied an exchange, an intertwining of several points of view, often different from each other.**

Thus, everyone was welcomed because the concept of intercultural dialogue could be embodied thanks to all the opinions of the participants, so that the more they participated, the better; and everyone was essential, because the concept itself necessarily presupposes the interaction of more than one person. That, in my opinion, was the most important and interesting part of the work: **I think that this kind of experience, from the opening discussion to the realization of the video, is very precious, since it has the power of opening people's minds.** In fact, it allowed us to meet new people and to listen to their points of view about the theme developed. In such a way, we could learn to understand and to accept others’ ideas and relate to them. This is something we often forget to do, as Newton said: “Men build too many walls and not enough bridges” (attributed to Newton by Georges Pire, 1958).

During this project, my role was basically related to casting. I organized the entrance of the participants, and I wrote down their names, what they wanted to say, and what it meant. Therefore, thanks to my role, I had the chance to talk to all the schoolmates who participated in this project,

to meet them, and to get acquainted with their mother tongues or with the language they chose to use. I also had the occasion to bump into all the all the different ideas everyone had, which is definitely far more fascinating than to know about just theoretically.

On balance, I'm quite satisfied with our work and how this path ended; I think it enriched all of us. The only thing I think would have been nice to add was to visually show, through the use of colors, how all of those words, those thoughts, those languages, those cultures have connections among them. That is, to visually show the "intercultural web."

*To conclude, I wish to add a brief note which regards the very final scene of the video. After the end credits, we can see a student, Elia, who, in Russian (his mother tongue) asks "How are you?" I believe that in this final question lies the answer to the question of the Call, "What does intercultural dialogue look like?" as **'intercultural dialogue' is first and foremost an interaction showing mutual interest, curiosity, and care.** – Paola Giorgis, Teacher, the School of Arts "Aldo Passoni," Turin, Italy.*

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