

Curriculum Vitae
Francesca Berti, PhD

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name and Surname: Francesca Berti

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Office: Faculty of Education, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

Regensburger Allee 16, 39042 Brixen (BZ, Italy), Room 3.23

EDUCATION

2014 - 2019, PhD in Education; University of Tübingen. Thesis: Traditional games and toys as a tool of intercultural education. Discovering the Shared Space of Play. Supervisor: Prof. Karin Amos

2002 - 2004, MSc in Development Studies; SOAS University of London. Thesis: Fair Trade in a growth crisis. Unfolding the complexity of the choice between productivity growth and the aspiration to change the market. Supervisor: Prof. Subir Sinha

1995 - 2001, Laurea con Lode in Lettere Moderne; University of Verona. Thesis: Verona napoleonica (1797-1814) nei carteggi dell'archivio dell'Accademia di Agricoltura Scienze e Lettere. Supervisor: Prof. Gianpaolo Romagnani

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

07.2021 - present, Junior Researcher, research project: "Educational research with a specific focus on inclusive and diversity education", Scientific-disciplinary field M-PED/03 (Didattica e pedagogia speciale). Faculty of Education, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen. Supervisor: Prof. Simone Seitz.

2016 - 2019, Research assistant, research project "WILLE: Wissenschaftliche Bildung und gesellschaftliche Verantwortung". Assignment: Qualitative evaluation of the project, transcription and analysis of interviews; mid-term and final report. Faculty of Education, University of Tübingen.

RESEARCH FOCUS

Play-based Learning, Heritage Education, Intercultural Education

RESEARCH PROJECTS

9.2023-ongoing, *Patrimonio in gioco. Sviluppo di competenze interculturali e sensibilità ecologica.*

9.2022-12.2022, *ChiPS – Children’s Playfulness in School*.

OTHER AFFILIATIONS

10.2023-Ongoing, member of the COST ACTION “Computational Techniques for Tabletop Games Heritage (GameTable - CA22145), WP5: Implementation, Dissemination, and Education

7.2023-Ongoing, adhering member of “Competence Centre of School Inclusion”, University of Bolzano/Bozen

5.2023-Ongoing, member of “Game Science Research Centre” (GSRC), IMT School for advanced Studies Lucca

12.2022-Ongoing, Società Italiana di Pedagogia (SIPED)

ACADEMIC TEACHING

PhD Level:

3.2024, Play-based Learning. Fostering playful learning and teaching, PhD Seminar, Faculty of Education, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen.

1.2024, Participatory Approaches to Intangible Heritage, PhD Course “Intangible Heritage in Socio-Cultural Innovation” (Lecture, Italian), University of Milano-Bicocca

1.2024, Participatory Approaches to Intangible Heritage, PhD Course “Intangible Heritage in Socio-Cultural Innovation” (Lecture, Italian), University of Milano-Bicocca

Master Level:

10-12.2023, General Didactics (Lab., German), Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

3-6.2023, Inclusive Education (Lab., German), Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

4.2023, Master Design for Kids (Lecture, Italian), Faculty of Design and Art, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

3.2023, Social Media (Lab., German), Bachelor in Communications, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

9-12.2022, General Didactics (Lab., German), Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

10.2022, Master Design for Kids, Faculty of Design and Art, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

3-6.2022, Inclusive Education (Lab., German), Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

10-12.2021, Intercultural Education (Lab., German), Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

SEMINARS

3.2023, *Play-based Learning: riflessioni per stimolare l’apprendimento ludico nella scuola primaria*.

Workshop, Convegno Didattica e Inclusione Scolastica – Inklusion im Bildungsbereich, 3-4.03.2023, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

- 11.2022, Die Entdeckung des geteilten Spielraums. Ein Projekt zur Förderung interkultureller Bildung mit traditionellen Spielen. Tagung SpielRäume 2022 - Die Kraft des Spiels und das Spiel als zentrale Lernform für Kinder im Elementarbereich. Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich.
- 11.2021, Narrare il museo. Casa del Gioco-Collezione Marco Fittá, Comune di Soave (Vr).
- 3.2020, Didattica del gioco. Seminar “Visual Communication”, Faculty of Design and Art, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen.
- 11.2018, Didattica con i giochi tradizionali. Seminar “Gioco, Cultura e Formazione”, Festival dell’Educazione, Torino.
- 11.2018, Didactics with Traditional Games and Toys. Seminar “Good or Bad games”, ERC Project “Locus Ludi. The Cultural Fabric of Games and Play in Antiquity”, University of Fribourg.
- 9.2016, Il Ludobus Interculturale di Tübingen. Seminar “Esperienze in gioco”, University of Verona.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Berti, F. (2023). *The Shared Space of Play. Traditional Games as a Tool of Intercultural Education*. Zürich: Lit Verlag. ISBN: 978-3-643-91231-2.

Chapters in books

Berti, F. & Seitz, S. (2024). Sviluppo di competenze ecologiche e cittadinanza attiva con il patrimonio immateriale. In Muscarà M., Poce A., Re M. R. & Romano A. (eds.) *Heritage Education. Tecnologie, patrimonio immateriale, paesaggio e sostenibilità*, p. 111-120. Pisa: Edizioni ETS. ISBN 978-884676870-4

Seitz, S. & Berti F. (2024). Weniger ist mehr? Die Potenziale einfacher Spielmaterialien und traditioneller Spiele für eine inklusive Ganztagsbildung. In V. Mehringer, Volker & W. Waburg (Eds.). *Diversität und Inklusion bei Spielzeug und Spielen*. Weinheim: Beltz Juventa (In print).

Berti, F. (2024). Sulle orme di John Dewey: la scuola attiva secondo Rebeca Wild (1939-2015). In F. Berti, S. Seitz & B. Weyland (Eds.), *Einblicke und Ausblicke: Perspektiven für Bildungsforschung und -praxis. Sguardi e traguardi: prospettive per la ricerca e la pratica educative*. Bolzano/Bozen: Bu,press (In print).

Berti, F. (2024). Per un approccio della somiglianza nell’educazione interculturale. In S. Capello & H. Demo (Eds.), *Didattica e inclusione scolastica Inklusion im Bildungsbereich. Emergenze educative - Vernetzt: costruire comunità*. Centro di competenza per l'inclusione scolastica. (In print).

Seitz, S. & Berti, F. (2023). Wenn die ganze Schule am Spielen ist. In M. Gutzmann & E. Osterhues-Bruns (Eds.), *Bewegungskultur in der Schule*. Frankfurt/Main: Grundschulverband. Grundschule aktuell - Zeitschrift des Grundschulverbandes e.V. ISBN 978-3-941649-35-4

- Berti, F., Hamacher, C. & Seitz, S. (2023). Throughout the day on the way to more educational justice? Children's views on all-day-primary schooling. In S. Seitz, P. Auer & R. Bellacicco (Eds.), *Inclusion in an international perspective – educational justice in the focus*. Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 91-117. ISBN 978-3-8474-2698-1
- Berti, F. (2022). Progetto "Parco delle Buone Pratiche": didattica ambientale e recupero di un bene comune da e per la comunità. In C. Braga & M. Cagol (Eds.) *Educare al cambiamento tra sostenibilità e responsabilità*. Bergamo: Zeroseiup, 53-62. ISBN 979-12-80549-23-5
- Berti, F. (2022): Pedagogia del gioco: il gioco inclusivo. Riflessioni sulla scuola come spazio ludico. In H. Demo, S. Cappello & V. Macchia (Eds.): *Didattica e inclusione scolastica - Inklusion im Bildungsbereich. Emergenze educative - Neue Horizonte*. Centro di competenza per l'inclusione scolastica, 09.2021. Bolzano: Bu,press, 53-71. ISBN 978-88-6046-189-6
- Berti, F. (2021). The Articulation of "Traditional" in Play Studies. In V. Dasen and M. Vespa (Eds.), *Play and Games in Classical Antiquity: Definition, Transmission, Reception*. Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 343-356. ISBN: 978-2-87562-288-4
- Berti, F., Kleinser P. & Müller F. (2020). Qualitätssicherung und -entwicklung von Service Learning: Eine qualitative Evaluation an der Universität Tübingen. In M. Merkt, T. Brinkner, A. Spiekermann, B. Stelzer & A. Werner (Eds.), *Hochschuldidaktik als professionelle Verbindung von Forschung, Politik und Praxis*. Bielefeld: WBV Media Verlag. ISBN 978-3-7639-6173-3

Articles in journals - Fascia A

- Berti, F. (2023): Il filo che lega il gioco nel mondo. Didattica ludica, narrazione e incontro interculturale. *Zeitschrift für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht* 28: 1, 241–256. Online available: <https://doi.org/10.48694/zif.3612>
- Berti, F. & D'Ambrosio M. (2022). Pedagogia del vivere e del sentire. L'agire educativo del corpo-teatro. In *Giornale Italiano di Educazione alla Salute, Sport e Didattica Inclusiva*, 3/2022. ISSN 2532-3296 ISBN 978-88-6022-455-2. Online Available: <https://doi.org/10.32043/gsd.v6i3.711>

Conference proceedings

- Berti, F. & Sebastiano L. (2024). Drawing relations: attorno a comunità, territorio e partecipazione attiva nell'Educazione al Patrimonio. In Atti del Convegno "Educazione Territorio Natura 2023" Bressanone, 31.11/2.12.2023 (In print).
- Berti, F. (2023): Mappe di comunità. Partecipazione e sviluppo di competenze ecologiche alla scoperta del patrimonio. In Atti del Convegno Nazionale SIPED "Sistemi educativi, Orientamento, lavoro", Bologna 3-4.02.2023. Lecce: Pensa Multimedia, 996-999. ISBN 979-12-5568-059-8
- Berti, F. (2022): "Das sind wir!". La narrazione come pratica di incontro dialogico, con me e l'altro. In Atti del convegno Nazionale SIRD "Ricerca didattica e formazione insegnanti per lo sviluppo delle Soft Skills". Palermo, 30.06-2.07.2022. Lecce: Pensa multimedia. ISBN 978-88-6760-000-0

Berti, F. & Gasperini, N. (2021). The City at Play. The Case of S'cianco Game in Verona and the Origin of Tocati - International Street Games Festival. In Academic Mindtrek '21. Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on Academic Mindtrek. New York: ACM, 33-40. ISBN 978-1-4503-8514-5

Berti, F. & Lapicciarella Zingari, V. (2019). Between similarities and cultural diversities: intercultural education meets intangible cultural heritage. The example of Traditional Sports and Games. In Proceedings of the 1st International Conference of the Journal Scuola Democratica. EDUCATION AND POST-DEMOCRACY, VOLUME III Governance, Values, Work and Future, 70-75. ISBN 978-88-944888-2-1

Articles in magazines

Berti, F. (2022). In cammino con i pacifici. Riflessioni sulla nonviolenza partendo da un gioco. Rivista Dida, n. 16/ settembre 2022, pp. 30-35.

Berti, F. (2019). Da "I giocattoli dei popoli" al Ludobus Interculturale. In Fenizi Stefania, Lombardini Ivana, Tassinari Alide, Amadori Donatella (eds), GiocarSí, Collana I quaderni della Lumaca, 2/2019, Cesena: Fulmino Edizioni. ISBN 9788861500570

Berti, F. (2015). Das Interkulturelle VHS-Spielmobil. In Weiterbildung. Dokumentation des Bündnisses für Lebenslanges Lernen zur Umsetzung der Empfehlungen der Enquetekommission „Fit fürs Leben in der Wissensgesellschaft“. Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart 2015. Available at: <https://www.fortbildung-bw.de/fuer-anbieter/buendnis-fuer-lebenslanges-lernen/publikationen-und-infomaterialien/>

KEYNOTES

9.2022, Trottorellando: percorsi di didattica attiva tra gioco e narrazione. Giornata della Didattica 2022, Assessorato alle Politiche Educative e Scolastiche, Comune di Verona.

10.2021, Pedagogia del gioco: il gioco inclusivo. Riflessioni sulla scuola come spazio ludico. Convegno „Didattica e inclusione scolastica - Inklusion im Bildungsbereich. Emergenze educative - Neue Horizonte. Free University of Bolzano/Bozen.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

6.2024, *Teachers' perceptions of well-being at school: liminal spaces and stretched times, between play and learning*, with Simone Seitz and Giulia Consalvo. Third International Conference of the journal "Scuola Democratica", June 3-4-5-6, 2024, University of Cagliari.

6.2024, *Children as Cultural Actors: participation and active citizenship through Heritage Education*, with Simone Seitz and Ludovica Sebastiano. Third International Conference of the journal "Scuola Democratica", June 3-4-5-6, 2024, University of Cagliari.

3.2024, *Heritage at play. Developing intercultural and ecological competences through traditional games*. International Association of Intercultural Education Conference 2024, 27.03.2024,

Technische Universität Chemnitz.

- 12.2023, *Drawing relations. Riflessioni attorno a comunità, territorio e partecipazione attiva nell'educazione al patrimonio*, with Ludovica Sebastiano. International Conference „Educazione Territorio Natura 2023“, 1.12.2023, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen.
- 11.2023, *Heritage Education mit traditionellen Spielen: Kinder entdecken Erbe*. Conference „Schule als Spielraum/Scuola Spazio Ludico“. 23.11.2023, Free University of Bolzano/Bozen.
- 10.2023, *Scuola spazio ludico: tra gioco, giochi e cornice ludica*. Conference „Game based learning e playful learning: il valore educativo del gioco“. 20.10.2023, Istituto Nazionale di Astrofisica, Bologna.
- 9.2023, „*Wenn die ganze Schule am Spielen ist?*“ *Ganztagsbildung aus der Perspektive von Kindern*, with Hamacher Catalina & Seitz Simone. 31. Jahrestagung der DGfE-Kommission Grundschulforschung und Pädagogik der Primarstufe. 27.-29.09.2023, Universität Siegen.
- 9.2023, *Discovering the Shared Space of Play. Traditional Games as a tool of Intercultural Education*, Scientific Conference of the 7th International Pliocke Festival „Safeguarding traditional games and sports for social inclusion. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage“, 08-09.2023, Croatia.
- 8.2023, *How to Foster Cultural Diversity? The Potential of the Similarity Approach in Intercultural Education*. Conference ECER 2023 „The Value of Diversity in Education and Educational Research“, 22 – 25.08.2023, Universität Glasgow.
- 2.2023, *Narrare, mappare, salvaguardare. Riflessioni didattiche tra educazione al patrimonio e educazione ecologica*. Convegno Nazionale SIPED, 3-4.02.2023, University of Bologna.
- 10.2022, *La cura, da me al mondo. In cammino con La Carovana dei Pacifici*. Conference “La narrazione come pratica di cittadinanza”. Fondazione Ferrero, Alba.
- 9.2022, *Sviluppo di competenze ecologiche e cittadinanza attiva con il patrimonio immateriale*. International Conference Heritage Education. Comparing practices and Experiences. SIPED Gruppo di lavoro sull’Educazione al Patrimonio. University of Enna “Kore”.
- 8.2022, *The primary school as a playful space. Fostering playful learning and teaching*. The 30th Annual EECERA Conference (EECERA 2022). University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland.
- 7.2022, *On John Dewey’s Footprint: the active school according to Rebeca Wild*. The 10th European Conference on Education (ECE2022). UCL, Institute of Education, London.
- 4.2022, *Beyond the morning-afternoon dichotomy. Multi-professional collaboration as a key concept of inclusive all-day primary school*. With Hamacher Catalina & Seitz Simone. Teaching and Learning for an Inclusive, Interconnected World - Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE2022). Sestri Levante.
- 11.2021, *Progetto “Parco delle Buone Pratiche”: didattica ambientale e recupero di un bene comune da e per la comunità*. Sesto Convegno Internazionale Educazione Territori Natura. Percorsi di cittadinanza a partire dalla scuola. Free University of Bolzano.
- 10.2021, *Play and Storytelling. Discovering an Intercultural Education Practice with Tradition Games and Toys*. 1st International Conference “Storytelling as a Cultural Practice – Pedagogical and Linguistic Perspectives”. Free University of Bolzano.

- 06.2021, *The City at Play. The Case of S'cianco Game in Verona and the Origin of Tocati - International Street Games Festival*. With Gasperini Nicola. Academic Mindtrek 2021, University of Tampere.
- 09.2020, *Traditional Games and Sports (TGS) in Italy, between vitality of practices and challenges of transmission in educational contexts: a pilot project*. International Conference "Tocati, A Shared Heritage 2020. Time of communities, between Intangible Cultural heritage and Educational Contexts", Verona.
- 11.2019, *Towards a similarity approach in intercultural education. Fostering teacher's attitude towards searching for similarities among cultures*. International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE) Conference "Another Brick in the Wall: Transforming Education", Amsterdam.
- 6.2019, *Between similarities and cultural diversities: intercultural education meets intangible cultural heritage. The example of Traditional Sports and Games*. With Lapicciarella Zingari Valentina. First International Conference "Scuola Democratica", University of Cagliari.
- 5.2019, *Learning by playing – Play practices and cultural transmission in Stewart Culin's writings*. XXII Board Games Studies Colloquium "Games on Board: Education, Tradition, Prospect", University of Bologna.
- 9.2018, *Meanings of "tradition" in the context of play*. Conference "Play and Games in Antiquity. Definition, Transmission, Reception", ERC Project "Locus Ludi. The Cultural Fabric of Games and Play in Antiquity", Swiss Museum of Games, La-Tour-de-Peilz.
- 4.2018, *Bocce, Boules, Pétanque... deep in Swabia land*. XXI Board Games Studies Colloquium "Dialogues and Interactions", Benaki Museum Athens.
- 9.2017, *La balistica del piolo - Giocattoli tradizionali e interculturali*. Forum della Cultura Ludica, "Tocati - International Street Games Festival" Verona.
- 4.2017, *Playing S'Cianco (Tip-cat): A Traditional Street Game Reawakens the City of Verona*. XX Board Games Studies Colloquium "Models, Metaphors and Meanings", University of Copenhagen.
- 4.2016, *Top Stories – Narratives qualities of traditional games*. XIX Board Games Studies Colloquium, Deutsches Spielearchiv Nürnberg.

OTHER WORKING EXPERIENCES

- 1.2022 – ongoing, Curator of the exhibition "Poetica del Gioco. Roberto Papetti artigiano artista", 2022: Comune di San Giorgio di Nogaro (Ud); 2023: Museo d'arte di Ravenna (MAR); 2024: Castello D'Albertis - Museo delle Culture del Mondo, Comune di Genova.
- 11.2022 – 6.2023, Participation in the project "La vita segreta dei giocattoli", bando MIUR "Il linguaggio cinematografico e audiovisivo come oggetto e strumento di educazione e formazione - Piano Nazionale Cinema e Immagini per la Scuola 2022" Responsible for monitoring and evaluation. Project coordinator: Associazione Culturale Zalab, Padova.

- 2.2023 - 4.2023, Participation in the project "GENERA-Generare Processi di Trasformazione", supported by Fondazione San Zeno Verona. Workshop: "Play-based Learning: riflessioni per stimolare l'apprendimento ludico nella scuola primaria". Project coordinator: Hermete Cooperativa Sociale Onlus, Fumane (Vr).
- 10.2021 - 3.2022, Participation in the designing and reopening of "Casa del gioco. Collezione Marco Fittà", Comune di Soave (Vr).
- 6.2020 - 7.2021, Responsible for educational area, Associazione Giochi Antichi, Verona (Italy). Project writings and development of the cultural centre "Casa Colombare – Centro per la salvaguardia dei Giochi e Sport Tradizionali". National responsible for the Erasmus+ Project "Opportunity - fostering social inclusion and gender equality in formal and nonformal educational contexts through applying traditional sports and games" (622100-EPP-1-2020-1-ES-SPO-SCP). Project coordinator: University of Lleida.
- 4.2019 - 8.2021, Team member and trainer of the Erasmus+ "SPIEL - Spielpädagogik in europäischen Ländern". Project coordinator: *Mensch Raum Land* e.V, Berlin.
- 10.2012 - 4.2016, Design and realisation of the "Das Interkulturelle-vhs Spielmobil" Volkshochschule Tübingen e.V. (Germany). The Intercultural Playbus was a vehicle equipped for playing activities. Travelling with exclusively traditional games and toys, it was intended to be a tool for intercultural education, offering a play space for children and adults aimed at fostering dialogue in a multicultural context. It allowed creative actions and responses among participants and guarantees spaces, materials, times and relation for social participation. The Intercultural Playbus was an original idea I implemented together with Volkshochschule Tübingen. It was funded by the Ministry of Culture of Baden-Württemberg for the first two years, and later by the Municipality of Tübingen. Between 2012 and 2016, the Intercultural Playbus visited more than 160 schools, family centres, museums and libraries. In 2013 it was recognised as "Best Practice" by the Ministry of Culture of Baden-Württemberg, and in 2014 it was awarded the Tübingen's Prize for Integration (*Integrationspreis*).
- 2.2007 - 12.2009, Museum Educator, Museo Africano, Verona (Italy). Play-based workshops on developmental education, through the discovery of traditional games in various cultures, for elementary and high schools. Play-based events for families.
- 5.2007 - 9.2009, Educator and Project Coordinator, Centro Polifunzionale Don Calabria, Verona (Italy).
 1) Project "Help - Actions to prevent and combat early school leaving" Project management and coordination of the twelve partner schools. Relations with the regional office of reference. Preparation of reports, monitoring and evaluation of the project. 2) Project "Il Caleidoscopio". Street-based Youth Work", Comune di San Bonifacio (Verona). Management of the collaboration between the two Partners, coordination of the team of educators, relations with social workers. Management of relations with other subjects of the territory involved in the project: teachers and school managers, child neuropsychiatry, parish priests. Qualitative and quantitative evaluation. Mid-term and quarterly reports.
- 3.2005 - 9.2007, Team member of "Ludobus Ridoridó", Associazione Culturale Ridoridó, Verona

(Italy). Playbus and play-based workshops and events in several primary schools in the province of Verona. Project writing, staff training, partners networking and collaboration with local administration and civil society.

10.2004 - 6.2005, Project Assistant – International Cooperation Technical Assistance, Agmin Italy, Verona (Italy). Participation in tenders under the Framework Contract for the provision of technical assistance to States receiving international aid from the European Community (EC AMS 451). Selection of consultants, contracting, budgeting, logistical and administrative support for experts on mission. Regular correspondence with international consultants and European Delegations.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

B2 English: CEFR B2, Language Centre University of Bolzano/Bozen, July 2002

B2 German: Attestato bilinguismo B2 italiano-tedesco, Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano, May 2022

Appendix – Publication of the Dissertation (Lit Verlag)

The Shared Space of Play

Traditional Games as a tool of intercultural education

The research investigates a practice of intercultural education with play-based learning. Its aim is to respond to the major constraints of the field of intercultural education, namely, the limitations of its practice and the risk of falling into a culturalist representation of cultures. This risk, repeatedly highlighted by literature on the subject, relates to the tension residing in the field itself, of seeking to valorise both the universality of human beings and the diversity of cultures. Since this latter aspect is often predominant, however, the outcome is that differences among cultures become even more emphasised. Consequently, cultures are, involuntarily, represented as separated from each other. I suggest overcoming this dichotomy by shifting the attention from diversity to similarity between cultures. The search for similarities, in fact, allows us to highlight spaces where cultural elements overlap, mix and blend, and where cultural transmission transcends borders. Furthermore, this study suggests that it is only after the acknowledgement of similarity that it is also possible to distinguish and appreciate cultural diversity.

An approach encompassing the acknowledgement of similarity requires an attitude that looks at “the relation that connects” (Bateson, 1972 and 1979). In this exercise – searching for similarities to discover cultural in-betweens - traditional games have strong potential. They are present in all cultures, from the past to the present, and they surprise us for both on account of their extreme variety and their incredible similarity. On the basis of such similarities, they can be grouped into families, as for example, the families of spinning tops, cup and balls, bowling, bowls games, tip-cat games, etc. Hence, when they are used as the setting of an intercultural education practice, they allow us to highlight the universality of the experience of play, while also revealing the variety of cultural traditions. In other words, they attain a representation of cultures that attest to variety in unity. To recall a metaphor by Wittgenstein – who used games as an example for his concept of family

resemblances - these games represent “the fibres” that “run through the whole thread” holding together the experience of play of children and adults in the world (Wittgenstein 1968 [1953]).

The research is rooted in play studies, spanning the disciplines of intercultural pedagogy and cultural anthropology. Moreover, a semiotic perspective has been added to investigate the function of traditional games and toys in the setting of the classroom: in semiotic terms, the setting temporarily transforms the classroom into a space of play, since games and toys convey the message “this has to do with play”. In a multicultural classroom, such a setting allows for the emergence of the “shared encyclopaedias” (Eco, 1976 and 1984) of participants - children and also the adults involved - concerning the experience of playing with traditional games in different cultures. From a didactical point of view, traditional games allow the teacher to capture the curiosity and attention of children in a “field of experience” in which they are immersed (Dewey, 1910).