

Education in Multiculturality Education to Interculturality

In Ecclesiastical Institutions of Higher Education
and in Formation Communities
for Catholic Consecrated Life in Italy

Edited by
Enrica Ottone – Luca Pandolfi



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Enrica Ottone, Luca Pandolfi (eds.)
**EDUCATION IN MULTICULTURALITY
EDUCATION TO INTERCULTURALITY**
**In Ecclesiastical Institutions of Higher Education
and in Formation Communities for Catholic Consecrated Life in Italy**

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Front cover

Pavel Égüez, *Grito de los Excluidos*, mural en cerámica.
Cotacachi, Ecuador 2001
(Photograph by Luca Pandolfi, 2007)

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“

Diversity always proves a bit frightening, for it challenges our securities and the status quo. [...] In the face of cultural, ethnic, political and religious diversity, we can either retreat into a rigid defense of our supposed identity, or become open to encountering others and cultivating together the dream of a fraternal society.

”

POPE FRANCIS

*Speech to the Hungarian Episcopal Conference
Apostolic visit to Budapest, September 12, 2021*

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Multiculturalism and Interculturalism

A Qualitative Analysis of the Perspective of Focus Group Participants

❖ Nina Deliu



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Abstract

This work examines the textual content of the focus group interviews conducted as part of the project “*Multiculturalism and education in Pontifical universities and formation communities of consecrated life*”. More specifically, it focuses on the first focus group, with an in-depth analysis of the question “*In your opinion, what is the difference between multiculturalism and interculturalism?*”. The aim is to investigate, by means of qualitative content analysis methods, participants’ understanding and perspective of the two key concepts of this project, which are often misinterpreted or interchangeably misused. Results will show that participants have a well-clear idea of the concept of *multiculturalism*, seen as a *matter of fact* of cultural *plurality* and *diversity*, and characterized by a *definite and static* nature. They also recognize that a multicultural plurality provides an opportunity for individual growth, but it must be regulated, especially at a communicative level, to allow for a mutually tolerant and respectful coexistence, without necessarily interfering with other cultures. On the contrary, in an *intercultural* context, it emerges the key role of *union and mutual sharing*, with a strong emphasis on *individuals’ cultural transformation*. In this regard, this contribution will bring light to a heterogeneous and often conflicting perspective about the intensity of such transformation. More specifically, to what extent individuals should preserve or lose their own cultural identities, as a result of the intercultural transformation process?

Keywords

Interculturalism – Multiculturalism – Cultural transformation – Focus group – Qualitative analysis

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A multicultural community, characterized by the presence of a more or less heterogeneous and diverse cultural pluralism, can give rise to a number of new *opportunities* for our society. However, its complex nature also leads to several *problems* and *challenges* which are well recognized. In fact, in order to allow a full recognition, exploitation, and exploration of new opportunities, individuals belonging to a multicultural community must be trained and educated to develop intercultural competences that could promote mutual sharing, in addition to tolerance and mutual respect. This requirement acquires a vital role in strongly multicultural contexts such as education communities, in which diversity offers a ground for concrete and constant cultural exchange; specifically, we refer to formation communities of consecrated life and ecclesiastical academic communities.

This is the specific context in which this *Action-Research-Training* project, entitled “*Multiculturality and intercultural competences in ecclesiastical institution of higher education and in formation communities of consecrated life*”, is carried out. The starting point is represented by an in-depth survey aiming to evaluate the understanding and perspectives that individuals belonging to such realities have on the two connected but different concepts of multiculturalism and interculturality.

1.1 Brief outline of the research framework

Research objective The specific research question we aim to cover in this work is related to the analysis of the two concepts of multiculturalism and interculturality and their subjective perception, and belongs to the extended focus group survey “*Multiculturality and intercultural competences in ecclesiastical institution of higher education and in formation communities of consecrated life*”. The entire survey is articulated in three thematic focus groups (corresponding to three different scheduled interviews), each of which focuses on the following research question, respectively:

1. *Multiculturality and interculturality*: the aim is to collect and assess participants’ understanding, opinion, and perspective about the two key concepts of the research and their relationship;
2. *Multiculturality and education*: the aim is to collect and assess participants’ understanding, opinion, and perspectives about the role multiculturalism has and should have in their education path, both at the individual level and at the institutional level with their educational offer;
3. *Intercultural competences in multicultural education communities*: the aim is to collect and assess participants’ opinions and perspectives on the skills and competences they believe are useful in strongly multicultural contexts.

Among the different objectives, discussed more in detail by Luca Pandolfi and Enrica Ottone in Part I of this Volume¹, we are interested in providing a comprehensive evaluation to understand: i) the extent to which the value offered by a multicultural community is recognized; ii) the extent to which the opportunities offered by a multicultural community are leveraged into the process of mutual exchange of cultural norms that brings to interculturality; iii) which are the limits and problems that may affect a multicultural community; and iv) how, or by means of which competences, the process towards interculturality is, or can be, achieved.

Preliminary hypotheses The fundamental hypotheses guiding the development of this work are illustrated as follows:

- a. *Members of multicultural communities* (academic institutions or formation communities of consecrated life) recognize the positive value of multiculturalism given by the coexistence of a cultural plurality and diversity. Furthermore, they are will-

ing to activate processes of mutual exchange and personal transformation in view of an increasing enrichment, with the aim of promoting interculturality;

- b. *Institutions* (academic or formation communities of consecrated life) recognize the value of cultural diversity as a source of enhanced “formative”² and educational opportunity for its members, who may increase their potential of developing adequate intercultural competences. However, in relation to how the underlying multiculturalism is handled or addressed, three different scenarios are hypothesized:
 - i. That multiculturalism is not handled at all, either because there is no actual necessity or because institutions are unable to address its implications;
 - ii. That multiculturalism is handled on the surface only, on the basis of a mere tolerance principle: tolerating the “diversity” for guaranteeing a peaceful coexistence;
 - iii. That multiculturalism is managed with an intercultural perspective, activating processes of mutual exchange and sharing, as well as individual and joint transformation, and involving the development of specific competences.

Further details on the research hypotheses are provided in the contribution of Pandolfi and Ottone³. In this *Report*, we will primarily focus on the first hypothesis, analyzing the opinions and perspectives of *individual members* of a multicultural community, rather than institutions.

Research study design The design of the research study as a whole is based on both qualitative (focus group and in-depth interviews) and quantitative data collection approaches. The latter consists of a structured questionnaire-based survey, in addition to a monitoring survey and two assessment surveys, one at an intermediate stage and one at the end of the study. While an in-depth answer to the broader questions of interest is only possible through a complete joint analysis, accounting for the different research phases and approaches (qualitative and quantitative)⁴, here we will only target a specific research question outlined more in detail in Section 1.2. This is primarily related to a qualitative survey conducted through focus group interviews⁵.

1.2 Specific research question

In this work, we will focus on presenting the results of the *qualitative content analysis* of the focus group interviews. More specifically, we will uniquely analyze the *first question* of the *first thematic* focus group, centered on the two concepts of multiculturalism and interculturality, i.e., “*In your opinion, what is the difference between multiculturalism and interculturality?*”.

The complete list of focus group themes and questions is reported in Appendix *The Three Focus Groups*⁶, Part V of this Volume, and it is often discussed by Fiorenza Deriu⁷. Based on the same focus group survey, but accounting for all the thematic areas and questions, in Deriu⁸, a discursive textual analysis of the content is carried out. Instead of such a “quantitative” analysis approach, this contribution will adopt a fully qualitative analysis strategy, which involves, first, reading and codifying the textual corpus, and, subsequently, analyzing the identified coding structure. The process will be documented later in Section 2.

Such analysis will allow us to study and answer the specific research question of interest with a higher degree of details, enabling the researcher to directly capture the nuances and subtleties of a discourse.

The main attention will be placed on participants’ understanding and perspective of the two key concepts of this project, i.e., multiculturalism and interculturality, which are often used interchangeably, also due to their semantic correlation. Further analysis will be conducted to understand whether there exist any differences between gen-

ders (more specifically, between focus groups with only males, only females, or mixed genders) or type of communities (communities of consecrated life or ecclesiastical academic communities, either students or teachers).

2

Methodology

2.1

The focus group interview

The focus group is a qualitative research method used for acquiring data through a group interview in which participants share their opinions and experiences on a specific topic of interest⁹. This technique, often employed in social research, involves a small number of people who have in common a determined experience. The discussions can be guided or open. To illustrate, the researcher or interviewer can follow a lineup of already prepared questions – as in this specific work – to elicit participants' impressions or feelings about a social phenomenon, potential suggestions, or any skills they have developed following a certain experience. However, even in the case of a pre-specified list of questions, these are not administered in a fixed/static way or individually to *each* of the participants. Instead, questions are directed to the entire group with the aim of exploring their dynamic interaction¹⁰.

The goal of the researcher is to understand participants' perceptions and attitudes – often too complex for being collected with static quantitative instruments such as questionnaires – and assess their reactions and evolutions during a continuous and dynamic interaction with the group. In virtue of such key characteristics, focus group interviews are able to capture the degree of consensus or positivity towards specific topics. Notice that such a degree of consensus cannot be summarized with a synthetic index, but it represents an articulated result, which can be used to better understand, formalize, and help to calibrate a decision-making process inclusive of participants' necessities¹¹.

Analogously to quantitative research surveys, in presence of a representative sample that has the potential to saturate the arguments of interest, the results of such qualitative surveys are expected to reflect a broader view that generalizes to the whole target population under study.

2.2

Target population and survey sample

In line with the research topic, the *target population* of the focus group survey has the characteristic of being strongly multicultural and is represented by:

- A. Ecclesiastical academic communities, with the following two units of analysis:
 - a. University teachers;
 - b. University students (both consecrated and laity men and women);
- B. Formation communities of consecrated life (female and male institutes).
 - The (focus group) *study sample* involves:
 - Thirteen (13) institutions, among which six (6) are ecclesiastical institutions of higher education and seven (7) are formation communities of consecrated life;
 - Twenty-six (26) groups, among which seventeen (17) belong to ecclesiastical institutions of higher education – with an equal balancing between groups of teachers only (n=8) and groups of students only (n=9) – and nine (9) belong to formation communities of consecrated life;
 - A total of 298 participants, with 47% females and 53% males.

Each group participated in a number of meetings or focus groups going from one to three (diversified according to the thematic and specific questions of interest). Overall, 65 focus groups have been conducted. A schematic is reported in Table 1; for further details, we refer to Pandolfi and Ottone¹².

Tab. 1 – Details of the final sample of the focus group survey

	University teachers	University students	ICL members	Total
Focus group participants	92	98	108	298
Unique interviewed groups	8	9	9	26 ¹³
Scheduled meetings per group	2	3	3	–
Overall meetings (focus groups)	12/16 <i>(4 groups participated only in one of the two scheduled meetings)</i>	26/27 <i>(1 group participated only in two of the three scheduled meetings)</i>	27/27	65
Institutions	6		7	13

The study sample was then extended to an additional number of groups of consecrated men and women that were reached during conferences or training courses by the principal investigators of this research (Luca Pandolfi and Enrica Ottone), leading to a total number of 429 participants. However, we emphasize that the additional participants were only involved partially in the third thematic focus group, thus, they are not part of the sample analyzed in this specific work, which focuses on the first thematic focus group.

The three thematic groups aim to evaluate the following aspects, respectively:

1. Participants perception of multiculturalism and interculturality;
2. Participants experiences in terms of mutual exchange and interaction, and potential educational proposals for promoting interculturality;
3. Critical educational aspects and specific competences.

Clearly, the research question we aim to cover in this work is related to the first thematic group, which involved overall 24 focus groups. For further details on the other thematic groups, and their related questions, we refer to Fiorenza Deriu¹⁴.

2.3 Data analysis

If on one side analyzing qualitative data arising from focus group interviews offers a substantial opportunity in terms of their interpretation, on the other side, accurate attention needs to be placed to address certain issues arising in such types of surveys.

Differently from other types of qualitative surveys such as individual interviews, here, the researcher has to decide the focus of the analysis: either at the individual level (with reference to each individual participant) or at the group level.

In this work, considering the strong degree of homogeneity of the individuals of each focus group, both in terms of their belonging community, the units of analysis (teacher or student), and in terms of their gender, we proceed with a group-level analysis. Indeed, almost half of the focus groups are characterized by only males or only females participants.

Furthermore, an analysis conducted at a group level determines a higher chance of capturing consensus in terms of shared attitudes and perceptions. Notice, however, that such a consensus could be erroneously inferred by the researcher when not all the participants actively intervene in the discussion.

Differently from quantitative surveys, whose analysis is often mostly based on the statistical software, and has a stronger degree of automation, analysis of focus group data requires greater involvement of the researcher and a direct engagement with the data content.

There exist two approaches for the analysis of such a type of textual or content data: the quantitative and qualitative approaches. In general, their combination and integration can bring rise to details on different aspects of the same interview, contributing to a research of great rigor and quality¹⁵.

To this end, in order to integrate the quantitative approach adopted in Fiorenza Deriu¹⁶, here we propose a completely qualitative analysis, conducted with the MAX-QDA software¹⁷.

2.3.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis (QCA), or analysis of qualitative data, represents one of the most commonly used approach for analyzing data arising from qualitative surveys¹⁸. QCA is considered a reliable, transparent, and highly interpretable method¹⁹.

Independently on the adopted type of QCA or type of qualitative survey, the approach is based on the construction of categories, better known as *codes*, and a system of codes, known as *coding frame* or *codebook*. What Bernard Berelson formulated for the QCA in 1952 can be highly extended to nowadays, with reference to both the qualitative and the quantitative approach:

«Content analysis stands or falls by its categories ... since the categories contain the substance of the investigation, a content analysis can be no better than its system of categories»²⁰.

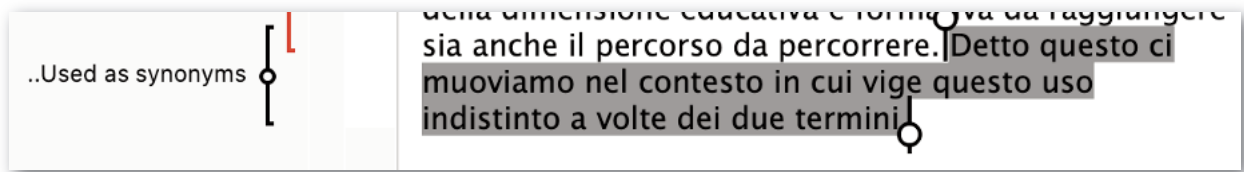
These categories or codes represent the constituting blocks for developing a theory or for inferring a conclusion while carrying out a qualitative analysis. There exist three ways of reasoning for doing so.

- a. The deductive, *top-down* or *concept-driven*, reasoning, according to which categories are *a-priori* defined based on:
 - a. an underlying theory;
 - b. the study of the literature (current state-of-the-art);
 - c. the research question (for example, according to the questions used by the researcher during an interview).
- b. The inductive, *bottom-up* or *data-driven*, reasoning, according to which the developing process of the codes occurs through an open *step-by-step* procedure. The starting point is the data itself; categories are appropriately assigned to the parts of interest, until full saturation. Subsequently, the coding frame undergoes a hierarchical reorganization and/or restructuring.
- c. A hybrid approach, based, first, on deductive reasoning, and then, inductive reasoning to integrate the former.

In this *Report*, a hybrid approach was adopted. After an initial phase in which the research questions, more specifically the questions and the key concepts raised during the interview, are studied, the textual data are codified according to these key elements. No underlying theories are considered at this stage, as they may compromise the textual richness, induce a bias in the results, or limit the *discovery* nature, which represents a great goal in qualitative research.

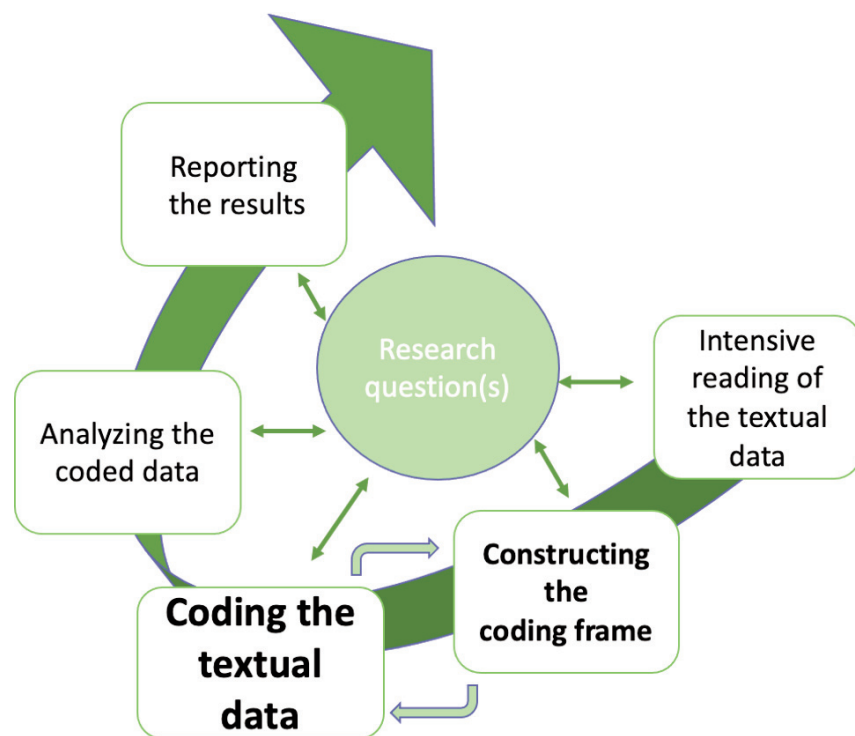
The coding step represents, thus, a decisive phase in QCA methods. More specifically, this process refers to the assignment of categories, or codes, to parts of the text that may have a key role. To illustrate it more concretely, the following figure (Fig. 1), reports a fragment of the analyzed corpus with its respective code.

Fig. 1 – Example of a code created in the QCA method.
The codified corpus alludes to the general misuse of the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism as two synonyms



The general process of a qualitative type of analysis with the QCA method is illustrated in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2 – General process of the QCA method



It becomes clear that the research question, or questions, play a fundamental role in providing an initial perspective and intuition to the intensive reading step, and subsequently the coding frame construction and the coding steps. Notably, the coding phase is based on the key concepts (and initial research hypotheses) that define the research question²¹.

Often, the working process occurs in a circular way. The coding frame can be revised and re-structured in multiple cycles, typically two²², as done in this work.

Once the coding phase is concluded and validated, the researcher proceeds with the analysis of the codified data. This can be performed according to two directions:

- a. *Category-based* analysis: the focus is on the topics, thus, the codes themselves; they can be analyzed one at a time, or more than one simultaneously;
- b. *Case-based* analysis: the focus is on the participants and their characteristics or specific subgroups, e.g., females.

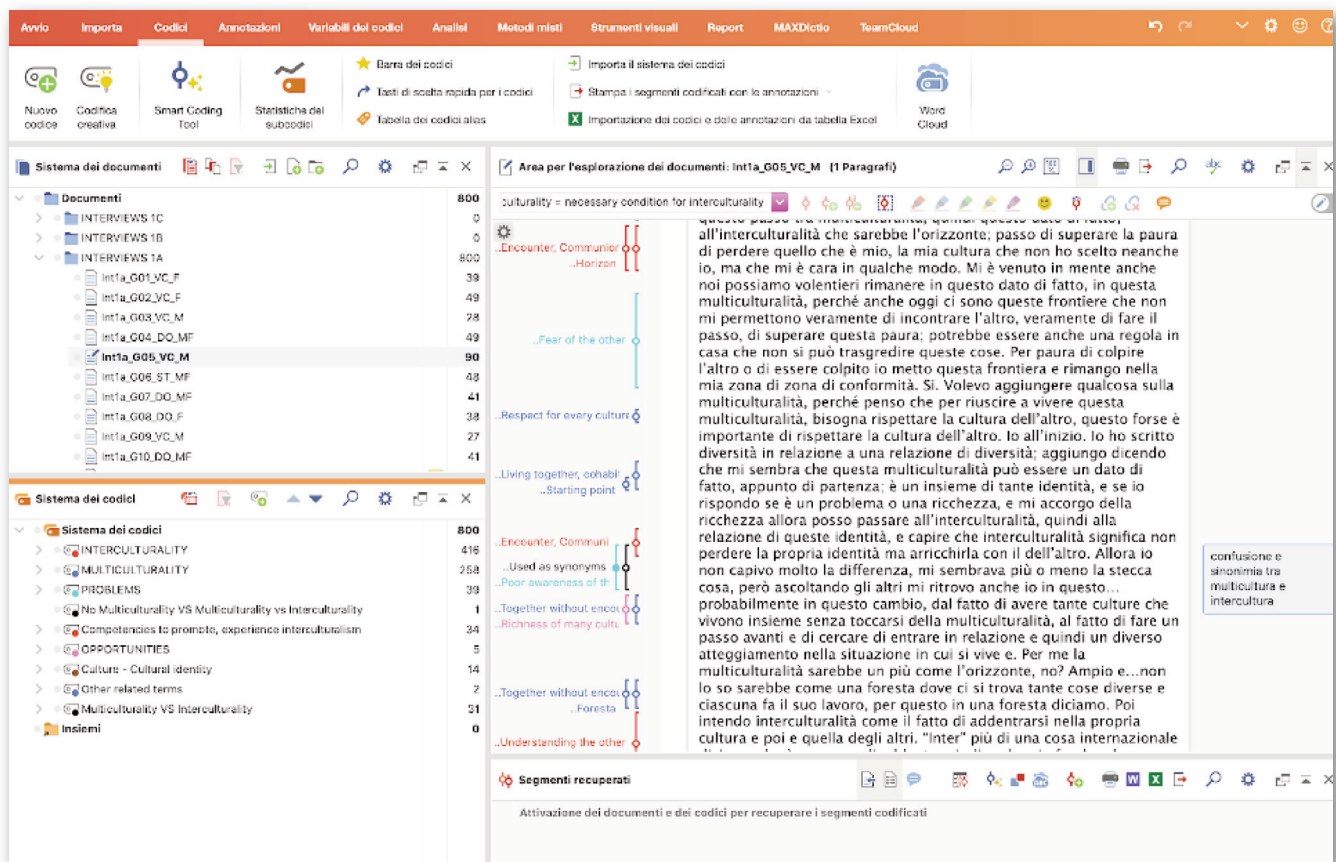
In this work, we will present both types of analyses.

2.3.2 MAXQDA Software

MAXQDA represents one of the most widely used softwares for qualitative data analyses worldwide. It can process different types of documents (e.g., textual data, tables, images, or recordings) and has a friendly and intuitive interface.

As depicted in Fig. 3, which illustrates the main interface of the software during the coding procedure of one of the focus group transcriptions, the presence of multiple windows allows for simultaneously reading the textual data and coding the parts of interest (top right), while keeping track of the different documents (e.g., focus group transcriptions; top left) and the coding frame created so far (bottom left).

Fig. 3 – MAXQDA 2022 interface (in Italian, with codebook in English), during the textual coding process



Further, this software offers different methods of textual data analysis (statistical methods such as frequencies, strictly qualitative methods involving the coding part, or mixed methods). A wide range of tools are also available for the visualization part – as later illustrated in the results section – and the reporting part, which can be automatically made according to the created code frame as well as the textual segments that were coded.

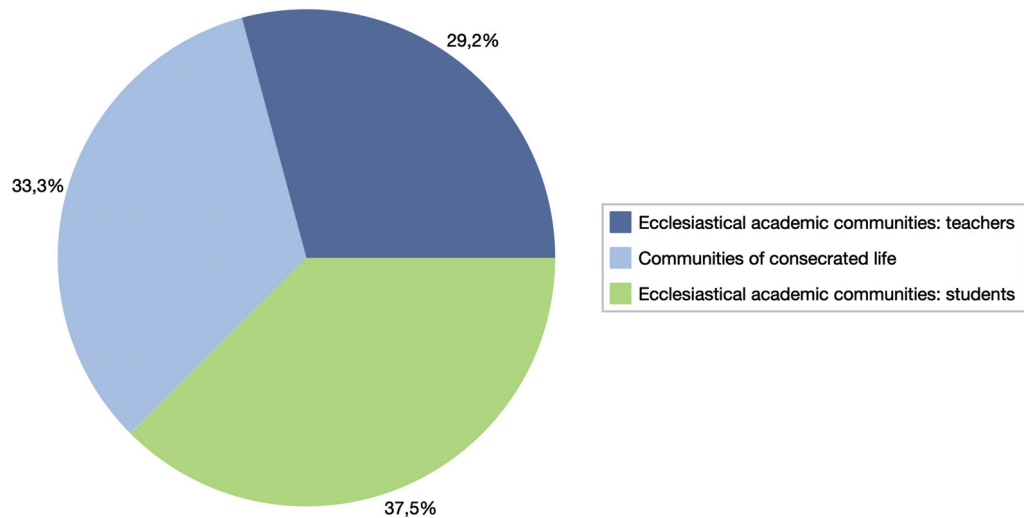
3 Results: participants

As reported in Section 2.2, the specific focus groups we refer to in this work have as target population the two realities of ecclesiastical academic communities and formation communities of consecrated life (female and male individuals).

The overall number of involved focus groups is 24, and our interest is in the first thematic focus group carried out during the first of the two or three scheduled meetings.

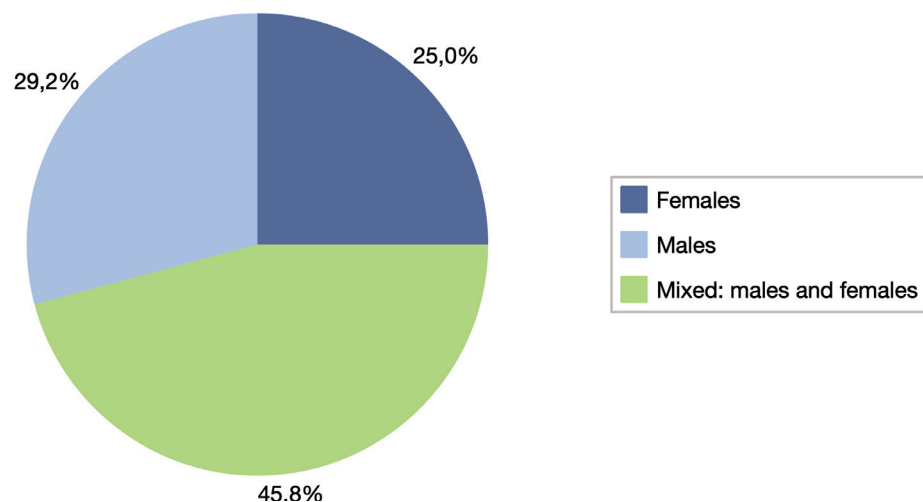
The sample distribution (with data aggregated by focus group) of the variable “Type of Community” is reported in Fig. 4. As shown, 33.3% (n = 8) of focus groups is constituted by participants belonging to formation communities of consecrated life, with the remaining ones 66.7% (n = 16) representing an ecclesiastical academic community. Among the latter, n = 9 are part of the “Teachers” group, while n = 7 refer to the “Students” group. We emphasize that students belong to higher education (university) institutes and can be either consecrated individuals or laity people.

Fig. 4 – Distribution of variable “Type of Community”



The different communities, or the different focus groups, involve either participants of mixed gender (males and females) or represent exclusively male or female participants. The gender distribution is reported in Fig. 5 and shows a certain balance between the two different genders.

Fig. 5 – Distribution of variable “Gender”



These two variables are utilized in the *case-based analysis* to understand differences between these “cases” or participants.

4

4. Results: wordcloud and codebook

4.1

4.1 Wordcloud: tokens frequency

The analyzed textual data is composed of 33,118 words or tokens, 13,110 of which are added to the exclusion list, as they are not considered relevant for the aim of our textual analysis. Examples of the latter include conjunctions (e.g., “and”) or some adverbs (e.g., “while”).

Adopting a conservative approach, based on which only *highly* non-relevant tokens were excluded, in Tab. 2 we report the list of most frequently detected words in our data. The tokens are reported in the original language (Italian), as well as in their English translation. This first approach to reading the results, only surfaces the problem of interest, providing a diversified view on the topic, with a high prevalence of words with a negative connotation such as: i) “not” or “no”, followed by ii) concepts that refer to the own person/figure (“I”, “me”, “my” which may allude to the fact that individuals are trying to express something that is subjective such as the personal opinion or view, and iii) the use of the words “other”/“different” and “this” *versus* “that”, which indicates a perception of someone or something that is different/extraneous within multicultural or intercultural contexts.

Subsequently, we can notice the high prevalence of the words “culture”, “cultures”, “multiculturality”, “interculturality”, which represent an echo of the research topic of interest. Finally, we can capture a more positive trait and attitude in discussing the phenomenon, with the use of tokens such as “us”, “with”, “together”, “also”, and “as” (used for making comparisons and detecting similarities).

Tab. 2 – List of the most frequent tokens

Order	Word (Italian; original language)	Word (English translation)	Frequency	Frequency %	Documents	Documents %
1	non	not	536	2.72	24	100.00
2	anche	also, as well	373	1.89	23	95.83
3	cultura	culture	371	1.88	24	100.00
4	io	I	366	1.86	24	100.00
5	culture	cultures	341	1.73	24	100.00
6	come	how	323	1.64	23	95.83
7	interculturalità	interculturality	273	1.39	23	95.83
8	multiculturalità	multiculturality	256	1.30	23	95.83
9	questo	this	246	1.25	24	100.00
10	insieme	together	220	1.12	24	100.00
11	con	with	196	0.99	21	87.50
12	ci	us	195	0.99	23	95.83
13	mi	me	183	0.93	21	87.50
14	me	me	178	0.90	23	95.83
15	altro	other	170	0.86	22	91.67
16	questa	this	168	0.85	23	95.83
17	diverse	different	153	0.78	23	95.83
18	quello	that	123	0.62	22	91.67
19	no	no	118	0.60	16	66.67
20	mia	my	113	0.57	19	79.17

Tab. 2 reports also the relative frequencies and the number of documents (or focus groups) containing that token.

Extending now the study of tokens to a deeper layer, where each word occurs an inferior number of times but has a primary importance for the thematic of interest, we report in Fig. 6 the word cloud of the first 50 more prevalent words within focus groups. A highlight is now placed on the keywords that define and characterize the words multiculturalism and interculturalism. These include “identity”, “encounter”, “relationship” and “many”.

It is now interesting to see the presence of verbal forms such as the keyword “living”, referred to a shared living in a given place (notice also the high frequency of “where”), and elements related to communication aspects (“say”), a crucial element for the establishment of a dialogue. While the token “written” is referred to a verb that is similarly related to communication aspects, the reader could notice that this word is often used by participants to express reflections (images and definitions) that were reported by themselves in a written form at the beginning of the interview. In fact, during the first focus group meeting, an initial brainstorming was scheduled, and participants were invited to write down a word related to multiculturalism and another one related to interculturalism.

Fig. 6 – Word cloud of the most frequent words or tokens (in Italian). Please refer to Tab. 2 for their English translation



4.2 Codebook: overview of the codes

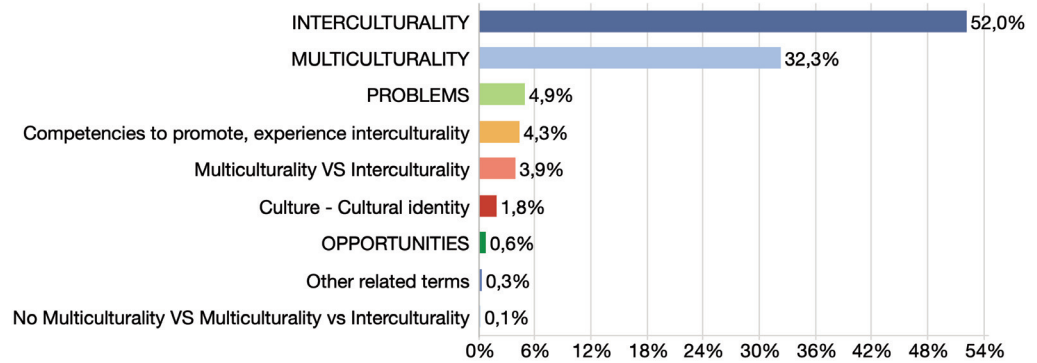
The reading, interpretation, and analysis of the textual data (in relation to the research topic), resulted in the construction of a codebook of 260 categories overall structured in a hierarchical way and a total of 800 coded segments. The full system of codes, with the relative frequency of the correspondent segments, is reported in the Appendix (Tab. A1). Here, we provide a general overview of the macro-categories and the main concepts that emerged from the focus group discussion.

In Fig. 7, we show the macro-categories defining the codebook created for the analysis of focus groups’ transcriptions. As one can notice from their frequency, the two concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism dominate participants’ discussions, with a clear predominance of the second term over the first one (427 versus 272).

The main reason for such a prevalence is related to the greater ease in understanding and explaining the phenomenon of multiculturalism compared to interculturalism, which requires greater efforts to provide the appropriate details and examples to reach the depth of this phenomenon.

During the focus group interviews, the discussion often touches upon the necessary competences for promoting interculturality, the opportunity created by multicultural communities, and their potential problems. These three topics have been coded as well and will be described in more detail in Section 6.

Fig. 7 – Macro-categories (level 1) of the final codebook



An overview of the lower-level categories (micro-categories) is anticipated in Fig. 8. Here, we can notice concepts such as “plurality, diversity, particularity”, and, more interestingly, “encounter, communion, exchange and contamination”, and “entering in dialogue, communication, relation”, which results in strong contrast with “together without meeting or relating”. As we will later illustrate, such a contrast is also induced by the basic opposition between multiculturalism and interculturality that characterizes the question of interest participants are asked to discuss, i.e., “In your opinion, what is the difference between multiculturalism and interculturality?”.

Fig. 8 – Overview of the partial codebook (i.e., 50 most frequent codes) based on the focus groups’ transcriptions

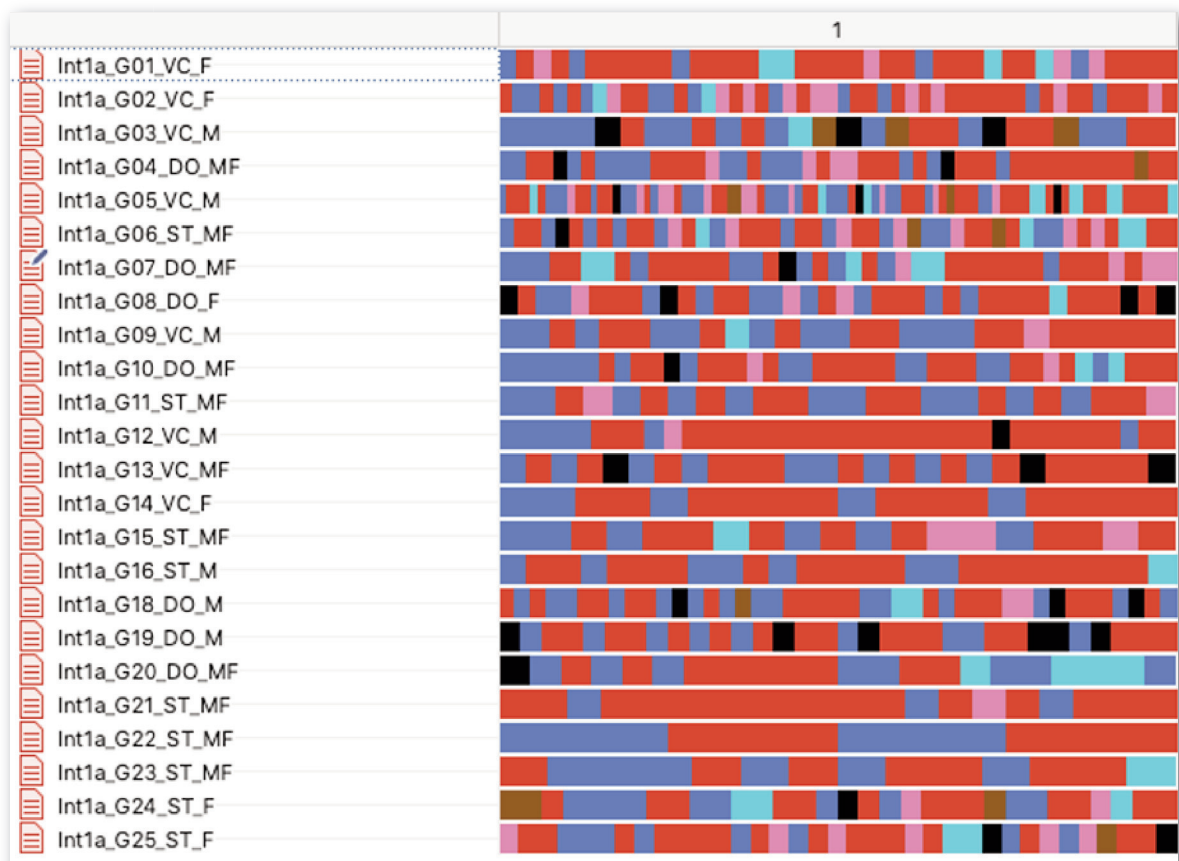


4.3 Comparison between transcription documents of the different focus groups

Fig. 9 provides an overview of the prevalence of the macro-categories reported in Fig. 7 with reference to each individual focus group. It clearly depicts the substantial focus during these interviews on the concept of interculturality (compared to multicultural-ity). Each row of Fig. 9 represents a textual document (i.e., the transcription of the interview) related to each focus group, with the different colors referring to the different macro-categories or macro-themes discussed during the interview. In addition to noticing the great imbalance favoring the phenomenon of interculturality, one could also notice a general pattern in the thematic subsequence. In fact, at the beginning of the interviews, the topic of multicultural-ity is typically covered (Fig. 9; blue color), followed then by discussions on the concept of interculturality (Fig. 9; red color), which is touched on during multiple moments of the interview and lasts until the end.

All focus groups fully cover the two points, i.e., they all focus on the two concepts of multicultural-ity and interculturality, and a great part also deals with the potential opportunities (Fig. 9; pink color) and problems (Fig. 9; green color) arising in multicultural contexts. Finally, the black color refers to the parts of the text where the two central concepts of this survey are jointly discussed and compared.

Fig. 9 – Comparison between focus groups in terms of their correspondent codebook and macrocategories



In Fig. 10 we also report the analytical distances (*block distance*²³) between statistical units (focus groups), with respect to the created codebook. The graph allows us to identify semantical clusters and understand the diversity and/or similarity between the different focus groups. The cluster positioned at the center of the plot, i.e., the central aggregation of points (each representing a focus group) shows a great

similarity between the textual documents, with the exclusion of three focus groups (G05, G07, and G18), in which emerges a major component of novelty and richness in describing the two concepts of multiculturalism and interculturality. This is particularly true for the second term, for which the block distance between the statistical units results to be slightly increased (compare Fig. 11 and Fig. 12).

Fig. 10 – Semantic clusters determined according to the *block distance* between statistical units (focus groups) with respect to the whole system of codes

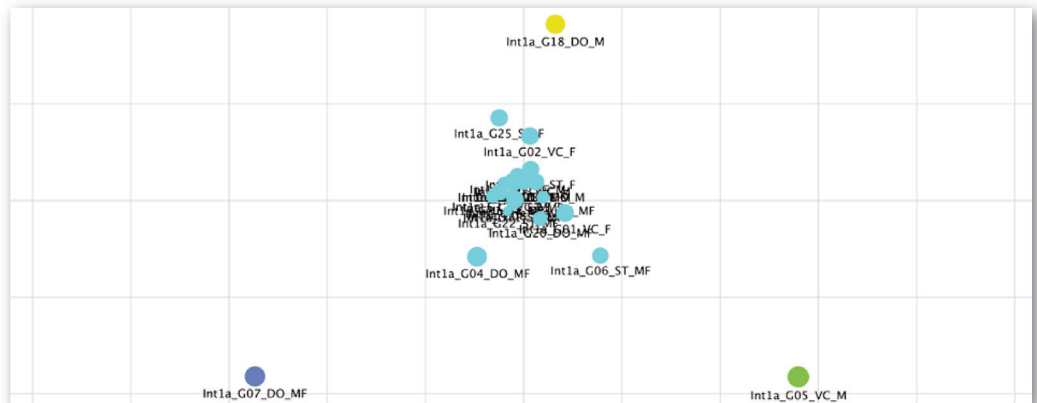


Fig. 11 – Semantic clusters determined according to the *block distance* between statistical units (focus groups) with respect to the codes uniquely related to multiculturalism

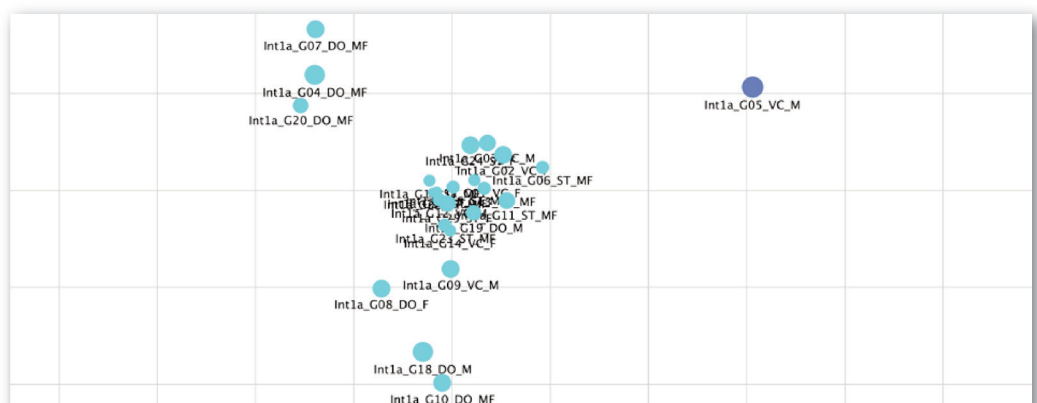
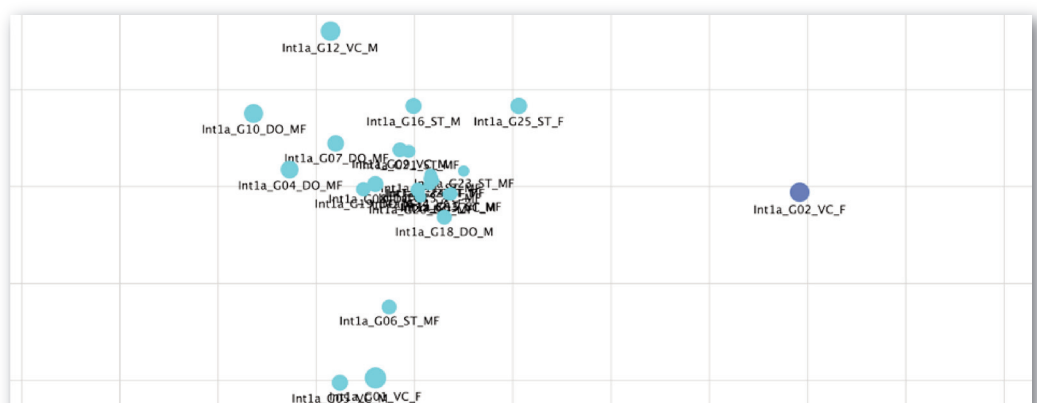


Fig. 12 – Semantic clusters determined according to the *block distance* between statistical units (focus groups) with respect to the codes uniquely related to interculturality



5

Results: multicultural ed interculturality

5.1

General overview

In Fig. 13 and Fig. 14, we provide a general overview of the most relevant codes characterizing the two concepts of multiculturalism and interculturality, respectively. It results immediately clear that the concept of multiculturalism is related first to the recognition of a “diversity” and “plurality” within a “certain space, time, context”. However, such “diversity” and “plurality” is subject to a “lack of encounter or relationship”.

Multiculturalism is seen as a “matter of fact”, of a “definite and static” nature. Furthermore, in a multicultural context the “cultural identity of each one” assumes a relevant role.

The notion of “personal identity” is re-stated again when the concept of interculturality is defined (Fig. 14). However, now a major role is played by “encounter, communion, exchange and contamination”, which is however constrained by the fact that it may occur “without blending, changing or losing the personal identity”.

Participants have it clear that in an intercultural context there’s a greater openness towards both “receiving and welcoming the other” as well as “giving to the other”. This process is however dictated by an a-priori “intentionality”, often characterized by a certain “commitment, effort”, for example, to “finding commonalities, a common purpose”.

Fig. 13 – Cloud of the codes corresponding to the concept of multiculturalism (10 most relevant or prevalent, codes)

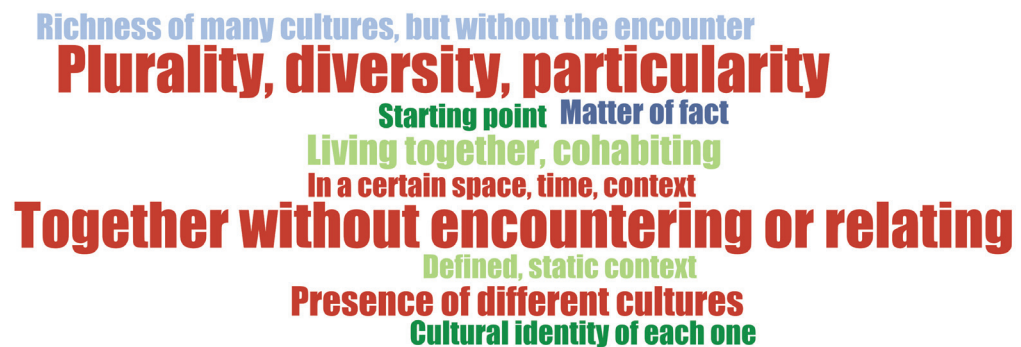


Fig. 14 – Cloud of the codes corresponding to the concept of interculturality (10 most relevant or prevalent, codes)

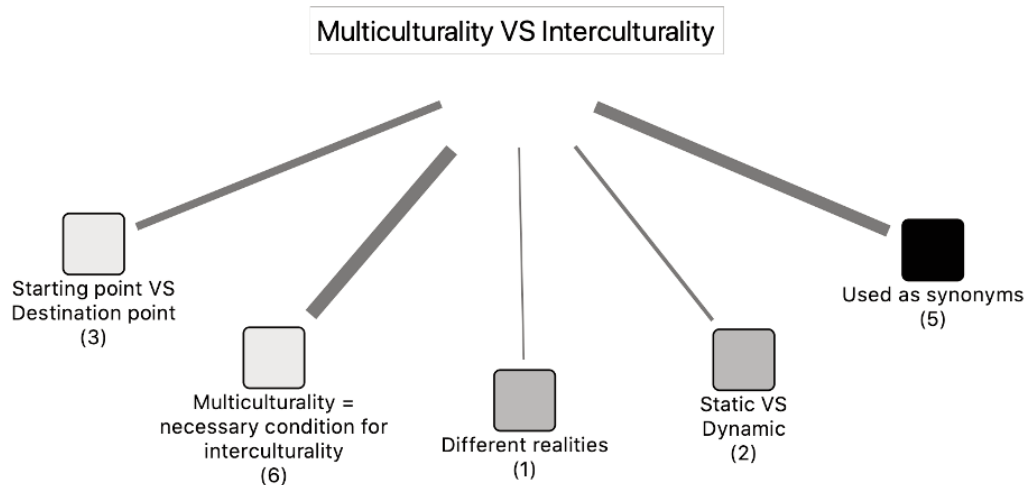


In general, the two concepts seem to be clearly understood; particularly, two highlights are placed on: i) the contrast between a static phenomenon, seen as a “starting point”, and a dynamic one, which culminates in the “destination point”; and ii) multiculturalism as a necessary condition for interculturality.

However, it is also emphasized that the two concepts are often used as synonymous.

In Fig. 15, an image of these contrasts is depicted; the intensity of each line is proportional to the relative frequency of each code.

Fig. 15 – Summary of the main differences between multiculturalism and interculturality. Line width indicates the frequency of each specific subcode: the thicker the line, the higher the frequency



5.2 Multiculturalism

Prior to entering into the merits of the multiculturalism-specific qualitative analysis, we provide its definition below.

«The term **multiculturalism** is used here to refer to that social and cultural phenomenon which is realized when there is a stable, and in some way interactive (with or without tensions) co-presence of people coming from different social and cultural backgrounds. The forms of multiculturalism (and models of multiculturalism), vary according to the possible interaction forecasted, promoted and received: these may go from separatist division, with few and well-defined interactions, to wider forms, marked by tolerance, exchange and life-work experiences in common. However, the horizon for multiculturalism (given that it is tolerant, welcoming and taken on as a project) still remains a form of reciprocal, cordial but essentially **weak exchange** unless there is a meeting between the protagonists involved which leads to major, content transformations (in cultural traditions, habits and customs, ways of thinking and behaving): a possible and diversified experience of cohabitation and cooperation»²⁴.

The key elements for describing a multicultural context are:

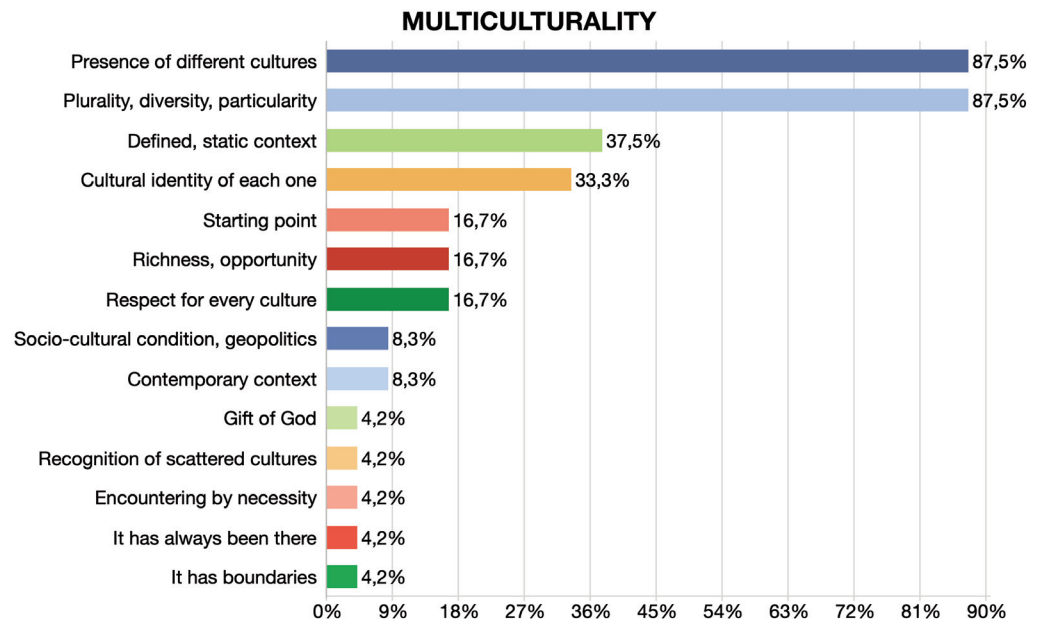
- stable co-presence
- different social and cultural backgrounds
- cordial but essentially weak exchange, and
- lack of substantial changes or transformations.

5.2.1 Key concepts emerged from the focus group survey

In Fig. 16 we provide a statistical summary of the sub-codes of the concept of multiculturalism, as emerged during the focus group interviews. To illustrate, the most frequent code is “presence of different cultures”, which was reported in 87.5% of the focus groups. One should notice that such code incorporates two of the key elements

as reported in the formal definition above (paragraph 5.2), i.e., “presence” or co-presence and “different cultures”. This is then followed by “plurality, diversity, particularity” – a key element as well – with again 87.5% of the focus group documents reporting it.

Fig. 16 – Statistics of focus groups’ sub-codes (level 2) corresponding to the concept of multiculturality



While these two codes have a high relevance within most of the focus groups, the remaining ones only cover from 4.2% to 37.5% of the transcriptions.

It is again uniformly evident how multiculturalism is perceived as a “defined, static” phenomenon, but at the same time, it is widely recognized to be a “starting point” for a process of growth and transformation towards interculturality. Participants also recognize it to be a source of “richness, opportunity”, but not exempt from difficulties or limits (“it has boundaries”).

However, some contrasts of opinions exist with reference to the temporal characterization of the concept: sometimes it is argued that multiculturalism “has always been there” and some other times it is considered to be part of a “contemporary context”.

As reported in the following original (i.e., in the original Italian language) textual segments, along with their extract in English (ENG), participants express that: “multiculturalism is a phenomenon that has always been there”, “it is a characteristic of nowadays societies”, and “it is the context of the contemporary world”.

*“La mia cultura e poi la tua cultura fa la multiculturalità. Quindi esistono. C’è una multiculturalità perché ce ne sono tanti. **La multiculturalità è un fenomeno che c’è sempre stato.** E poi multiculturalità è una cosa che è stata sempre apprezzata perché in quei tempi noi avevamo il nostro re, la nostra politica. In Italia c’erano degli stati di Savona, di quant’altro. Nessuno voleva andare a far parte dell’altro”. (Int1a_G09_VC_M, Pos 1).*

[Reduced extract in ENG: **Multiculturalism is a phenomenon that has always been there.** Furthermore, it has always been appreciated as in previous times we had our king, our political system. In Italy, there were the States of Savona. No one wanted to be part of any other State except their one].

“Io ho scritto *L’oggi in Multiculturalità* che mi sembra un po’ la **caratteristica delle società di oggi** che sono formate da tante culture messe insieme per tanti motivi diversi”. (Int1a_G11_ST_MF, Pos 1)

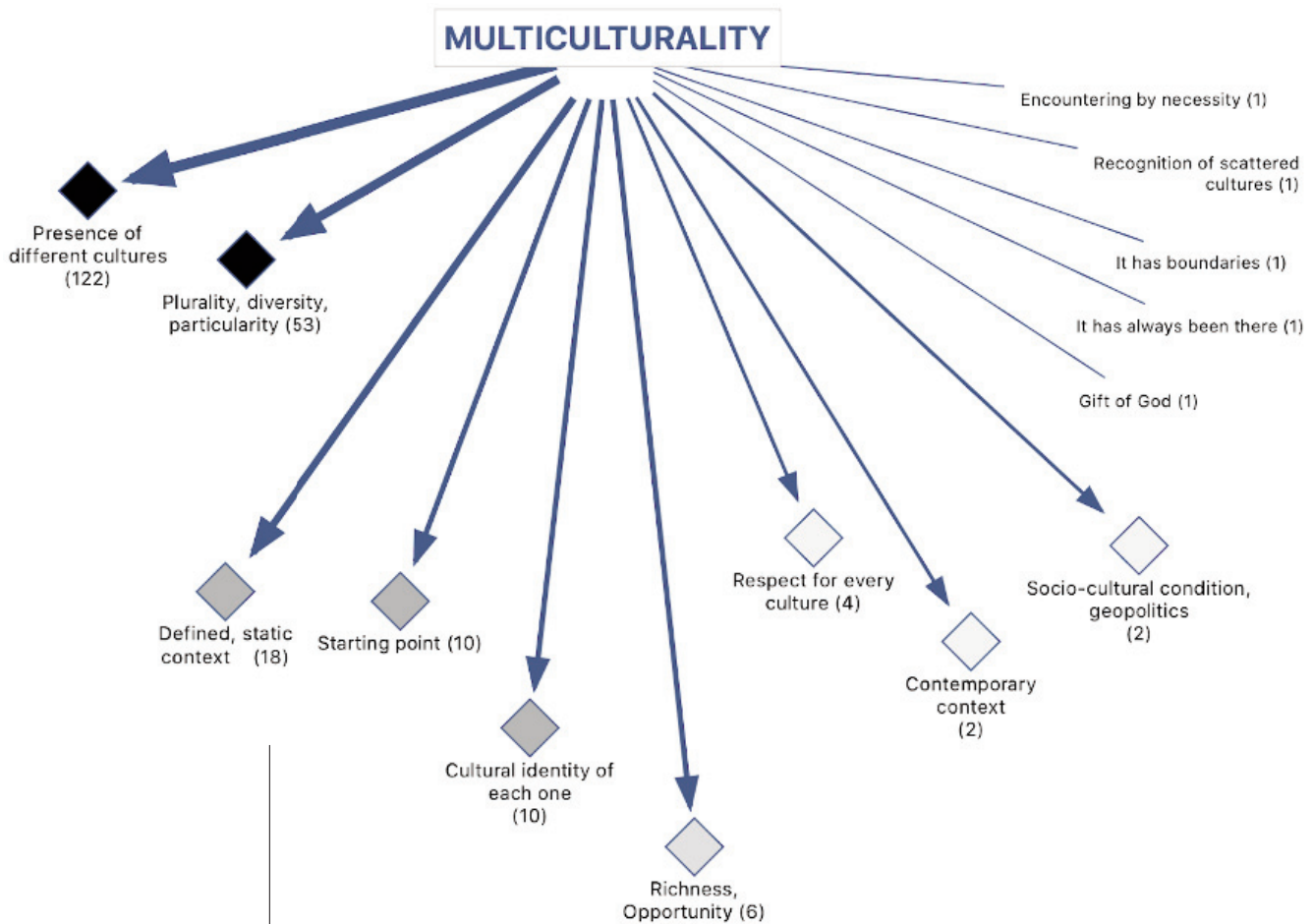
[Reduced extract in ENG: *I have written “Today” for multiculturality as it appears to me to be the **characteristic of nowadays societies**, which are formed by many cultures that come together for many different reasons].*

“Per me una cultura è la forma di un popolo quindi **la multiculturalità è un contesto nel mondo contemporaneo**”. (Int1a_G24_ST_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *To me, culture is the shape of a people, thus **multi-culturality is a context of the contemporary world**].*

Moving now to a code analysis based on the number of codified segments with the textual data, in Fig. 17 we report the statistics of the same categories illustrated in Fig. 16 with their absolute number of textual fragments. We can notice a high ordering agreement, with “presence of different cultures” (122 textual segments) and “plurality, diversity, particularity” (53 coded segments) again at the top.

Fig. 17 – Map of the subcodes (level 2) corresponding to the concept of multiculturality ordered according to their absolute frequency. Line width indicates the frequency of each specific subcode: the thicker the line, the higher the frequency



5.2.2 Varying degrees of intensity of interaction between different cultures

A more in-depth analysis of the concept of multiculturalism highlights an additional disagreement between participants' opinions, this time in relation to the level of interaction between different cultures.

More specifically, both in characterizing the co-presence and co-existence of cultural diversity (see also Fig. 18), the following positions are found:

1. Multiculturalism is referred to the diversity and plurality of different ways of living and interpreting reality as well as different values which:
 - a. Have some similarities, are shared, and allow for a harmonical living
 - b. Must be accepted and regulated/homologated in order to avoid any contrasts
 - c. Have limits or boundaries as they need to measure up with the belonging society.

2. A multicultural society is characterized by the co-existence of multiple cultures which:
 - a. Do not necessarily have borders
 - b. Only interact with similar cultures
 - c. Do not interact or relate to each other, either because:
 - i. They feel complete in their own culture

“E poi ognuna sento veramente che sono completa con la mia cultura e vedere la cultura di un altro mi sembra questo davvero mi sembra diverso. Questa è la multiculturalità. Questo ho sperimentato anche nella vita religiosa, nella vita comunitaria. Non ci vuole un passaggio, non è facile entrare nella cultura della mia compagna perché lei è completa con la sua cultura e io completa”.
(Int1a_G24_ST_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *It is not easy to enter the culture of my colleague as she is complete in her culture, and I am complete in my culture*].

- ii. There are no valid tools or knowledge on how to get in contact

“Eravamo tutti di diversi paesi uno accanto all'altro, ma senza la possibilità di accogliere la ricchezza uno dell'altro, non si sapeva nemmeno come fare”.
(Int1a_G07_DO_MF, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *We were all side by side from different countries, but we did not have the ability to welcome the richness of each other, we did not even know how to do it*].

According to Fig. 18, one can also notice that the most common opinion is that there is no relationship or interaction between the different cultures in a mere multicultural society. Furthermore, it is also commonly stated that the existing diversity should be regulated to allow peaceful co-living. Specific textual segments related to this aspect are reported in Fig. 19, in which one could observe that such regulations should occur first at a communicative level (standardization of languages).

Fig. 18 – Map of selected subcodes (level 2, 3 and 4) of the concept of multiculturalism. Line width indicates the frequency of each specific subcode: the thicker the line, the higher the frequency²⁵

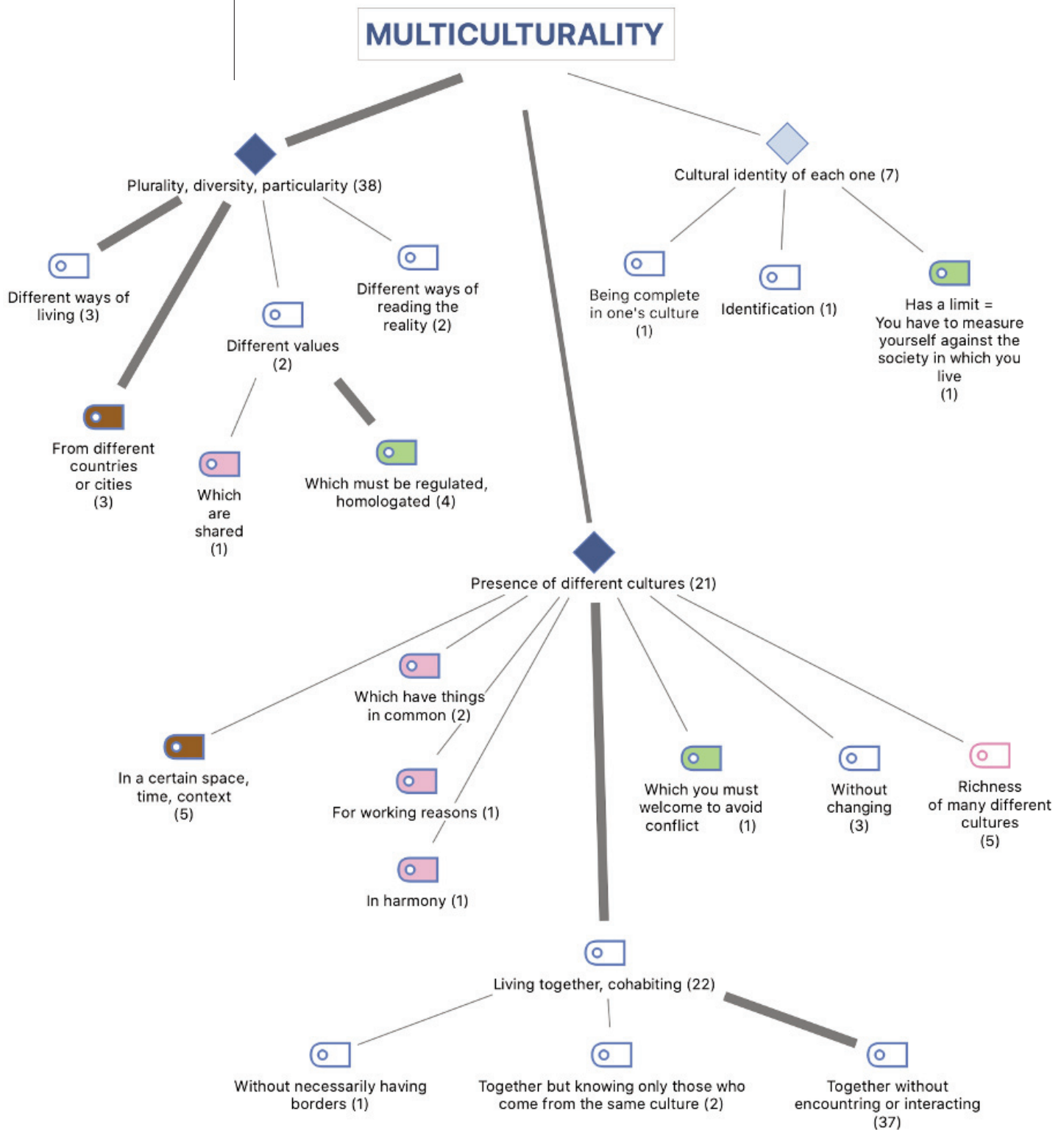
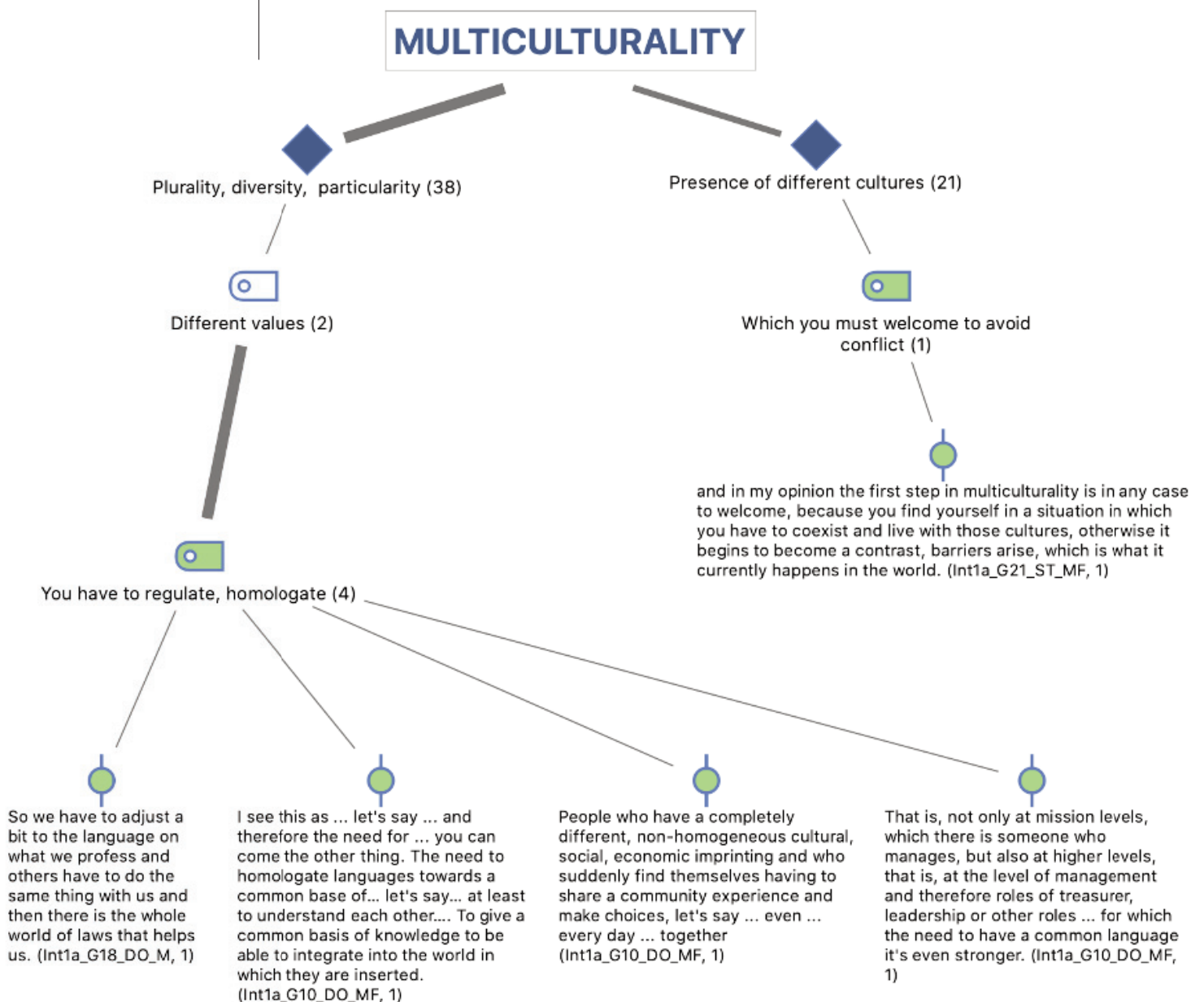


Fig. 19 – Map of selected subcodes (level 2, 3 and 4) and textual segments (ENG translation) of the concept of multiculturalism. Line width indicates the frequency of each specific subcode: the thicker the line, the higher the frequency

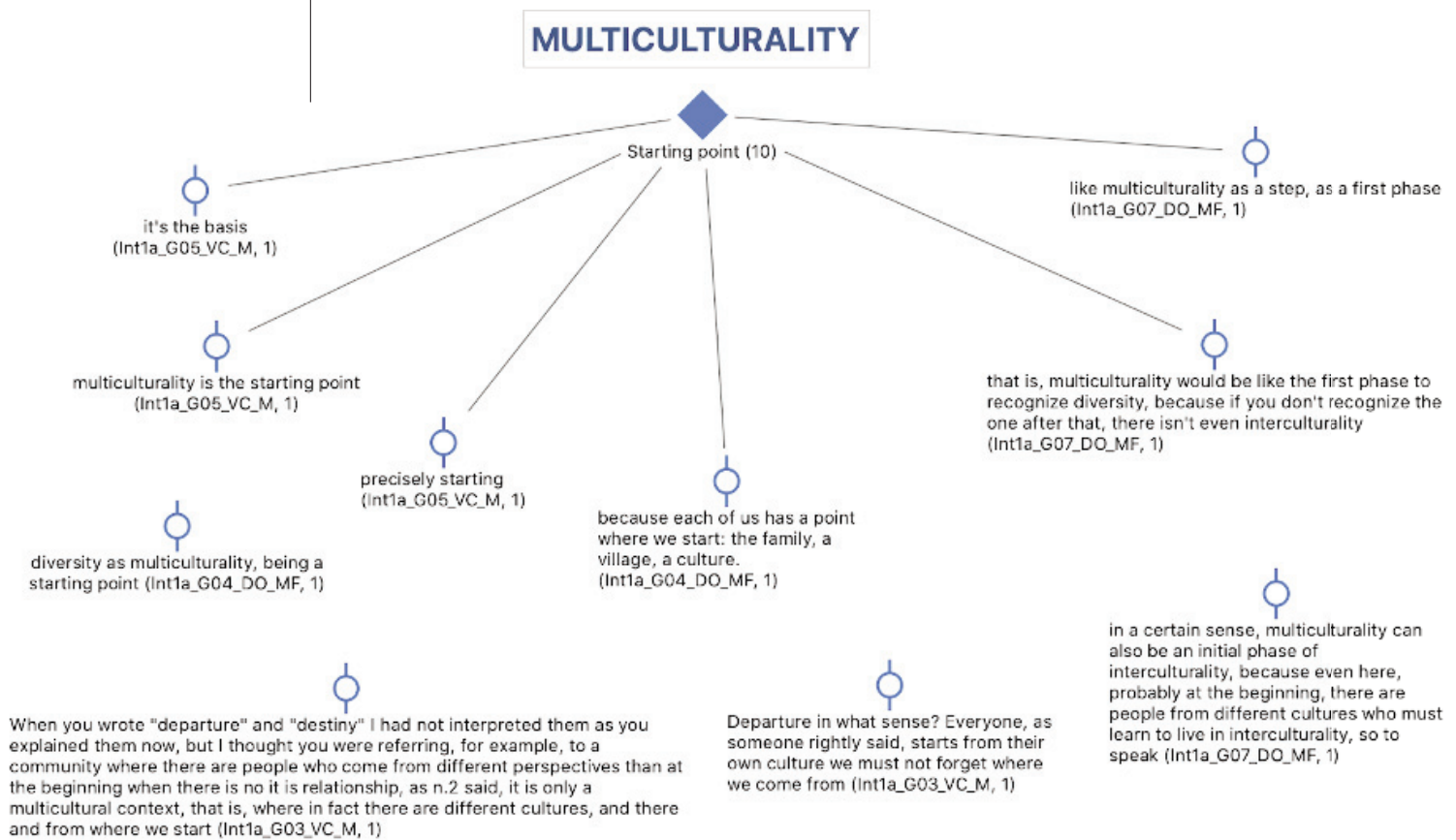


5.2.3 Starting point to live interculturality

While a general definition of multiculturalism would not involve the characteristic of being a “starting point” (multiculturalism is itself a process of territorial movements with multiple points of origin and a unique place or context of destination), it would certainly do when studied in relation to interculturality. Such a “starting point” aspect is expressed frequently and with a certain determination during the focus group interviews.

In Fig. 20 we report the codified segments which relate multiculturalism with the notion of the “starting point” just mentioned. We also refer to Fig. 15, which illustrates a clear dichotomy between “starting” and “destination” point.

Fig. 20 – Map of selected codified segments (ENG translation) with reference to the subcode “starting point” referred to the concept of multiculturalism



5.3 Interculturality

We start with the following definition of the concept of interculturality given by Pandolfi and Ottone²⁶, and then relate it to participants' view to understand how these are aligned with the underlying theory.

*«However, in contexts of rising multiculturalism, **interculturality** is a different phenomenon. It is realized with varying degrees of intensity and through long, complex processes, and involves not only acceptance and respect for the other person, in peaceful and tolerant cohabitation, but an exchange and a readiness to undergo reciprocal transformation. It constitutes a substantial, slow modification of some aspects of the presuppositions underlying our own cultural identity, perceived not in static, formal terms, but through processes of exchange, hospitality and inclusion of the culture of the other, processes which lead to an unexperienced merger and syncretism. Interculturality is perceived, here, not only as a horizon to construct but also as an awareness of the phenomena which lead to and filter down to the reconstruction of the presuppositions and assumptions underlying one's own "identity and cultural diversity". Interculturality is seen not to be the realization of an additional, in any case syncretic, static phenomenon, the production of a third, hybrid culture. Rather, it is envisaged in a dynamic and participatory mode, in a daily search for dialogue, reception, acceptance, understanding and the overcoming of conflict: collaboration and construction of a common and plural future. The future is conceived of as a reciprocal enrichment and a **dynamic reciprocal transformation**»²⁷.*

The identified key concepts include:

- Multiculturality as a basis (for interculturality)
- Realization through long and complex processes
- Acceptance and respect for the “other”
- Peaceful and tolerant cohabitation
- Reciprocal transformation, with potential changes in own cultural identity
- Reciprocal enrichment.

5.3.1 A higher depth and heterogeneity of notions

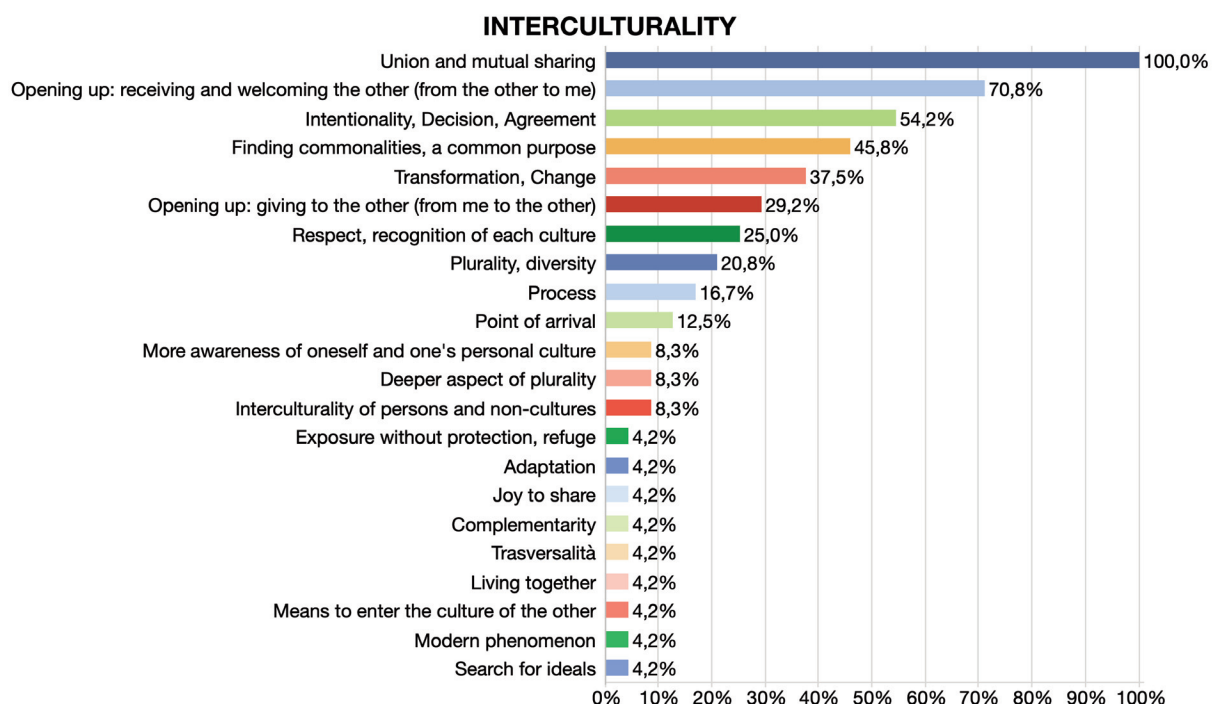
Analogously to the concept of multiculturalism, participants are again able to define the concept of interculturality and identify the key characteristics (see Fig. 21) that relate to it. However, a greater heterogeneity of opinions, terminology and images arise; see e.g.,

“Sono rimasto anche io colpito dalla varietà, dalla varietà dei termini per quanto riguarda l’interculturalità. E questa varietà di termini io la vedo come una cosa positiva perché a mio giudizio, mi auguro di non sbagliare, a mio giudizio essendo un processo, questo processo vede diversità”. (Int1a_G04_DO_MF, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *I was surprised by the variety of terminology used to characterize interculturality. And I see this variety positively, as, hopefully I am not wrong, being a process, the process evolves through diversities*].

As illustrated in Fig. 21, all transcribed documents report at least once the characteristic of “union and mutual sharing”, followed by “opening-up: receiving and welcoming the other” (70.8% of focus group transcriptions), while “opening-up: giving to the other” is only present in 29.2% of the focus groups. The direction of the concept of opening-up” has a relevant role: in fact, there is a major accent on the propensity and ability to accept and welcome the other and their culture, compared to the propensity and willingness to share with the other what belongs to us.

Fig. 21 – Statistics of focus groups’ sub-codes (level 2) corresponding to the concept of interculturality



5.3.2 Varying degrees of intensity of union and transformation

A more in-depth analysis of the subcode “union and mutual sharing”, which is covered in all transcribed focus group interviews, reveals that interculturality is the result of an encounter and exchange of different cultures. However, it should be noticed that this result, defined as an “arrival” or “destination point”, is not interpreted in a unique way. In synthesis, interculturality is viewed as a phenomenon of union and mutual sharing, which is realized through dialogue, communication, relationship, and exchange, and can lead to:

1. Preservation of personal identity, often with a greater consciousness of it

“Inter ho messo scambio, che c’è la conoscenza di un’altra cultura e mescolanza senza lasciare la cultura originaria”. (Int1a_G11_ST_MF, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *Meeting another culture, and mixing without leaving the original culture*].

“Dobbiamo interagire per poter beneficiare di quello che è diverso senza perdersi nella cultura dell’altro senza perdere la propria identità. Accogliere quello dell’altro senza che ci sia una fusione. Senza perdersi nella cultura dell’altro”. (Int1a_G12_VC_M, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *We must interact to benefit from what is different without losing ourselves in the culture of the other, without losing our own identity. Accepting the other without any type of fusion*].

2. Creating or understanding a third element or dimension

a. Which represents a synthesis

*“E invece io pensavo questa interculturalità o è andare oltre, o **creare una specie di sintesi**, cioè non ci sono le presenze parallele ma miste in qualche modo: sintesi”. (Int1a_G19_DO_M, Pos 1)*

[Reduced extract in ENG: *I thought that interculturality is something that either goes beyond, or **creates a type of synthesis**, based on which differences are not present parallelly but are mixed: synthesis*].

b. Which is not a synthesis, and may represent a greater reality

“Per me è un processo che dovrebbe portare a elaborare qualcosa di terzo, che non è né mio né tuo”. (Int1a_G08_DO_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *In my opinion, this is a process that should bring to the elaboration of a third element, neither mine nor yours*]

“Qualcosa di nuovo che non è una sintesi tra due culture ma un terzo richiede un processo credo che qui una elaborazione una maturazione reciproca”. (Int1a_G08_DO_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *Something new which is not a synthesis of two cultures but a third element*].

“Perché 1+1 invece di essere 2 si fa 3. Per dire che la prima parte l'individuo per dire rimane tale come è, la cultura rimane tale come è, però il risultato attraverso un dialogo, le due culture o tante culture lavorano con la terza idea”. (Int1a_G25_ST_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: Because 1+1 rather than being 2 is 3. To say that in the former case, the person and cultures remain invariant, but the result of the dialogue between two or more cultures contributes to the latter].

3. Cancellation of differences to create a single reality

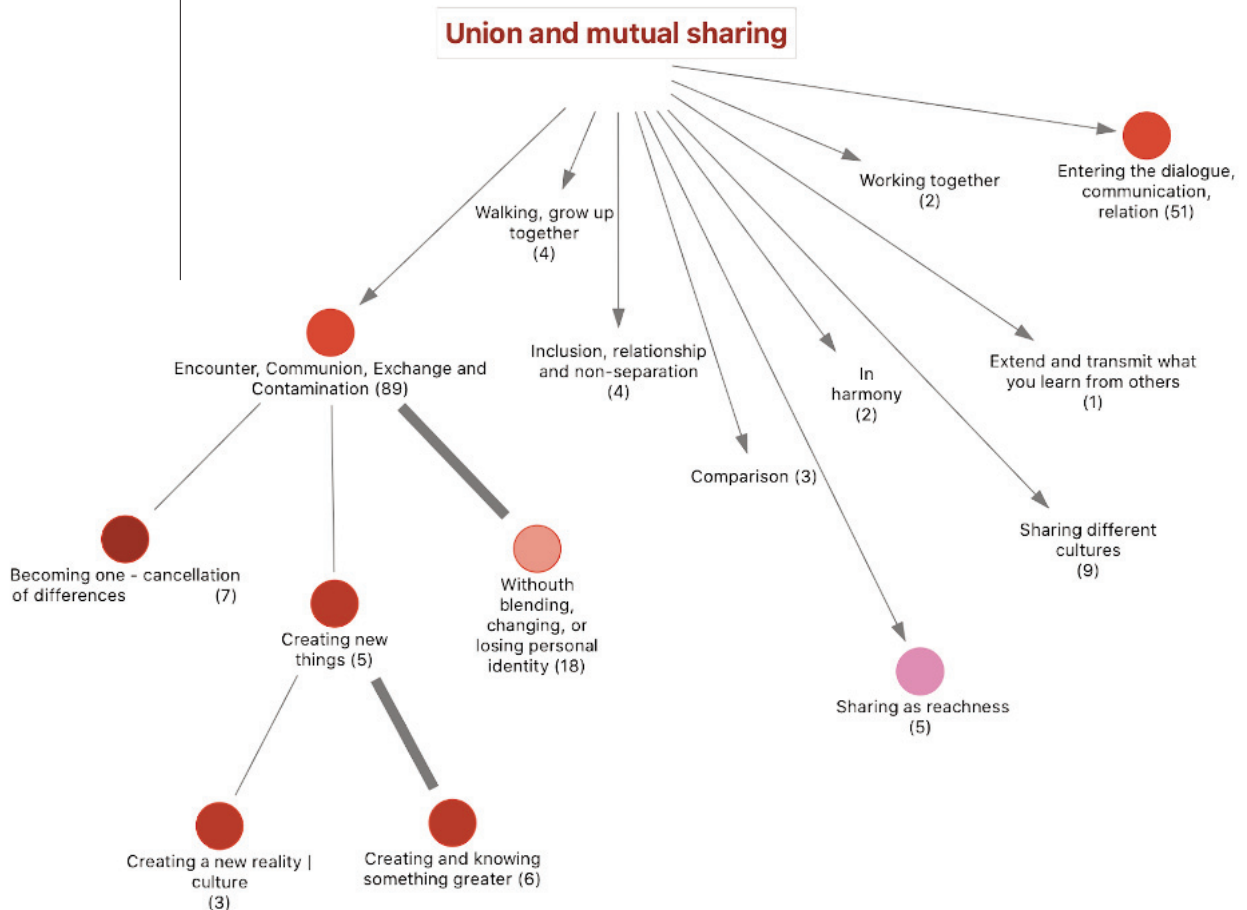
“Per interculturalità che nel collegio abbiamo i gruppi che mettono tutti insieme i paesi dell'Asia, Africa, latinoamericano e da qui da multiculturalità e quando entriamo nell'interculturalità ci fa uno; non c'è più la diversità”. (Int1a_G01_VC_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: From multiculturality we enter interculturality, becoming one; differences do not exist anymore].

“Ci sono momenti in cui effettivamente c'è una fusione...un incontro reale e un dialogo, la possibilità di potere fare trovare i punti in comune in cui queste realtà stanno insieme”. (Int1a_G10_DO_MF, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: There are moments in which there is actually a fusion... a real encounter and a dialogue, a possibility to find the common points in which these realities stand together].

Fig. 22 – Different points of view on the concept of “union and mutual sharing” characterizing interculturality



The temporal characterization appears to have again a certain weight in the definition of the concept. However, compared to multiculturalism, interculturalism is perceived uniquely as a “modern phenomenon”, and seems to be related to the web.

“Poi interculturalità è un fenomeno che è moderno, che sta entrando giusto a partire da internet e quant’altro. Perché le persone sono collegate in un certo modo. Quindi pure queste culture”. (Int1a_G09_VC_M, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *Then, interculturalism is a modern phenomenon, which started right after the internet and others. People are connected in a certain way, and similarly these cultures*].

Most of the focus groups recognize the dynamicity of the intercultural “process”, which becomes manifest after “transformations and changes” of our cultural identity. However, interculturalism is not a natural phenomenon anymore (i.e., not a “matter of fact” or “gift of God”) as in the context of multiculturalism. Instead, it is guided by a process of “intentionality, decision, agreement” and a search for “commonalities, a common purpose”, thus, it represents a direct action from the interested parts, a “commitment” from those who live together.

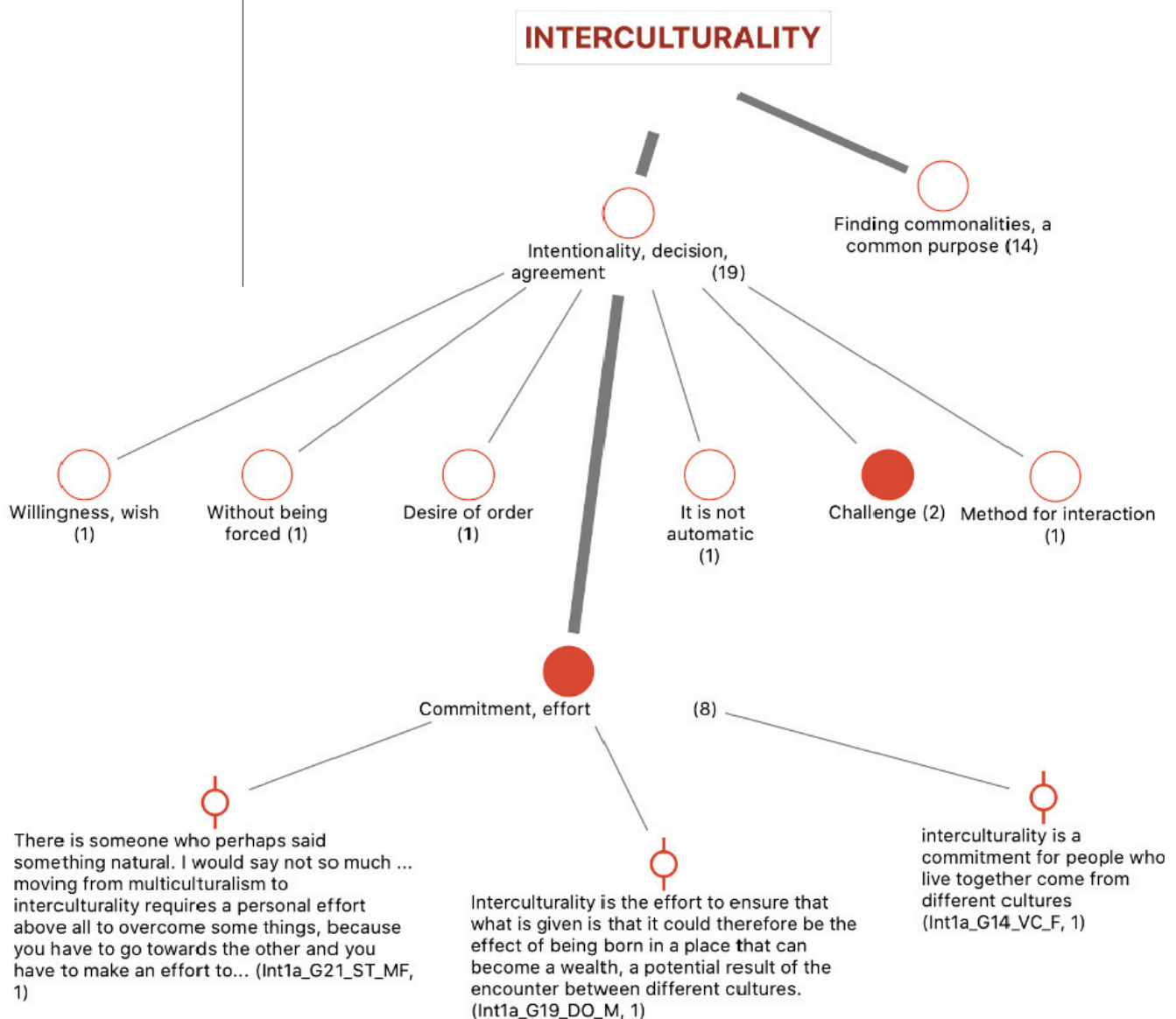
Sometimes intentions and agreements do not have an easy path and must be accompanied by a greater engagement and “effort”, often becoming a “challenge” (as shown in Fig. 23).

“L’interculturalità è lo sforzo di far sì che ciò che è dato di fatto, è che quindi potrebbe essere l’effetto del fatto di essere nati in un posto, possa diventare una ricchezza, una potenzialità frutto dell’incontro tra culture diverse”. (Int1a_G19_DO_M, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *Interculturalism is the effort of letting a matter of fact become a richness, a potentiality resulting from the encounter of different cultures*].

Such personal efforts enable thus the possibility of multiculturalism to become richness if well exploited.

Fig. 23 – Interculturality and “Intentionality, decision, agreement” and “Challenge”: codes, subcodes and segments (ENG translation)



A fundamental characteristic of interculturality is to have a multicultural society as its basis (notice that this was previously depicted in Section 5.1 – Fig. 15) and be realized in a context of “plurality, diversity”. However, now such a “plurality, diversity” is part of a union and mutual sharing, a journey of reciprocal transformation, as illustrated in Fig. 24, and as reported in the following segments.

“La multiculturalità in un certo senso può essere anche una fase iniziale dell’interculturalità, perché anche qui probabilmente all’inizio si trovano persone di culture diverse che devono imparare a vivere in interculturalità diciamo così, cioè trasformare quella diversità in un’occasione di incontro e di conoscenza più profonda”. (Int1a_G07_DO_MF, Pos 1)

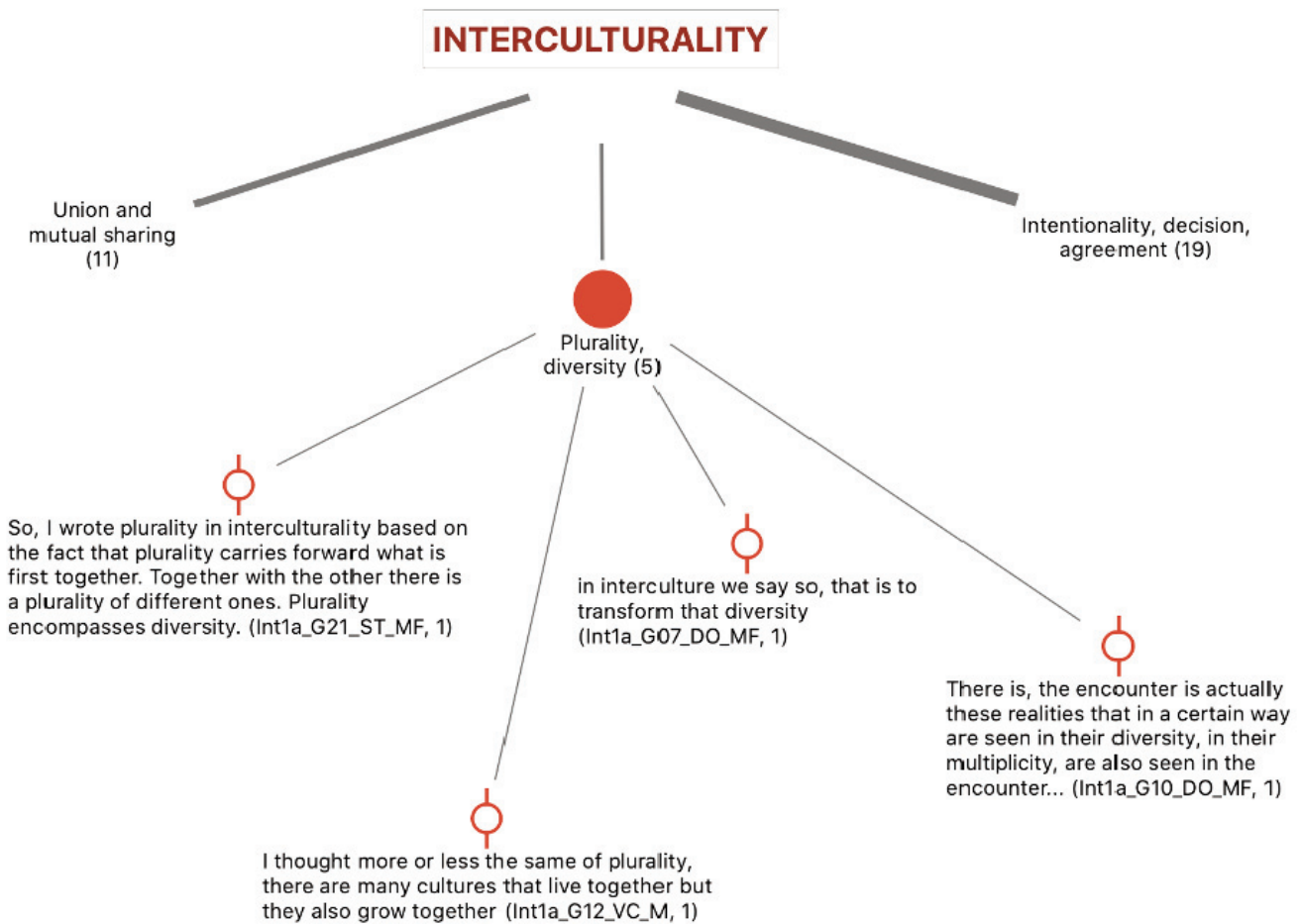
[Reduced extract in ENG: *Multiculturality, in a certain sense, can be regarded as the initial phase of interculturality, as the former is characterized by people of different cultures that must learn to live interculturality, namely, to transform the initial diversity into an opportunity of encounter and deeper understanding*].

“lo pensavo più o meno lo stesso della pluralità, ci sono tante culture che vivono insieme però crescono anche insieme”. (Int1a_G12_VC_M, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *There exist many cultures which co-exist and grow together*].

Now, the concepts of “plurality, diversity” appear to be deeper and more dynamic with respect to the ones introduced for describing multiculturalism: “growing together”, “transformation”, and “encounter”.

Fig. 24 – Map of selected subcodes and codified segments (ENG translation) with reference to the concept of “plurality, diversity” referred to interculturality



5.3.3 A comparison among focus groups of different gender

Generally, no relevant differences are noticed when comparing focus groups with respect to the two study variables of gender and type of community. An extensive comparison is reported in the Appendix (Tab. A3 and Tab. A4); here, we focus on the most substantial results shown in Fig. 25.

More specifically, focus groups of female participants only are more likely to highlight the aspect of “enrichment” dictated by the intercultural process. To illustrate, the subcode “transformation, change” is present in 16.7% of the of female focus groups and in 28.6% of male focus groups, but only in female focus groups it is seen as an “improvement, enrichment”. Values go from 50% in female groups only, to 27.3% of mixed groups and 0% of male groups only.

Fig. 25 – Comparison among focus groups with respect to variable “Gender”

	SESSO = F	SESSO = M	SESSO = MF	Totale
INTERCULTURALISM				
Process	16,7%	14,3%	18,2%	16,7%
Growth	16,7%		9,1%	8,3%
Transformation, Change	16,7%	28,6%	18,2%	20,8%
Improvement, enrichment	50,0%		27,3%	25,0%
Joy to share	16,7%			4,2%
Union and mutual sharing	50,0%	42,9%	9,1%	29,2%
Entering the dialogue, communication, relation	66,7%	100,0%	72,7%	79,2%
As enrichment	33,3%		36,4%	25,0%
Encounter, Communion, Exchange and Contamination	100,0%	100,0%	81,8%	91,7%
Becoming one - cancellation of differences	33,3%	28,6%	9,1%	20,8%
Synthesis		14,3%		4,2%
Creating new things	33,3%	14,3%		12,5%
Creating a new reality, culture		14,3%	18,2%	12,5%
Creating and knowing something greater	33,3%		18,2%	16,7%
What is created comes from everyone = richness	16,7%			4,2%
Without blending, changing or losing the personal identity	50,0%	42,9%	72,7%	58,3%
Sharing as enrichment	33,3%	14,3%	18,2%	20,8%
Opening up: giving to the other (from me to the other)	33,3%	14,3%	9,1%	16,7%
Giving: sharing own belongings	33,3%	14,3%		12,5%
Communicate your identity			9,1%	4,2%
Enrich others by sharing	16,7%	14,3%		8,3%
Opening up: receiving and welcoming the other (from the other to me)	33,3%	28,6%	18,2%	25,0%
Taking the good things of the other	16,7%			4,2%
Perfecting and enriching oneself with other cultures	50,0%	28,6%	18,2%	29,2%
Accepting others and diversity	33,3%		9,1%	12,5%
Valuing other cultures	16,7%			4,2%
Accepting what is different even if it is difficult		14,3%		4,2%
Welcoming diversity (and the other) = richness	16,7%	14,3%	27,3%	20,8%
Σ SOMMA	816,7%	542,9%	500,0%	591,7%
# N = Documenti/Partecipante	6 (25,0%)	7 (29,2%)	11 (45,8%)	24 (100,0%)

6 Problems, opportunities and necessary competences to promote interculturality

6.1 Problems and limitations

Although the analysis of potential problems and limits of multiculturalism does not represent a central goal of this work, a few reflections that arose during the first thematic focus group interview allow us to reconstruct a list of potential elements useful for such analysis.

In Fig. 26 we provide a general overview, while in Fig. 27 and Fig. 28 we characterize the potential problems in relation to the multicultural and intercultural phenomenon, respectively.

Fig. 26 – Code cloud of potential problems related to multicultural and intercultural contexts



Fig. 27 – Potential problems related to multicultural contexts

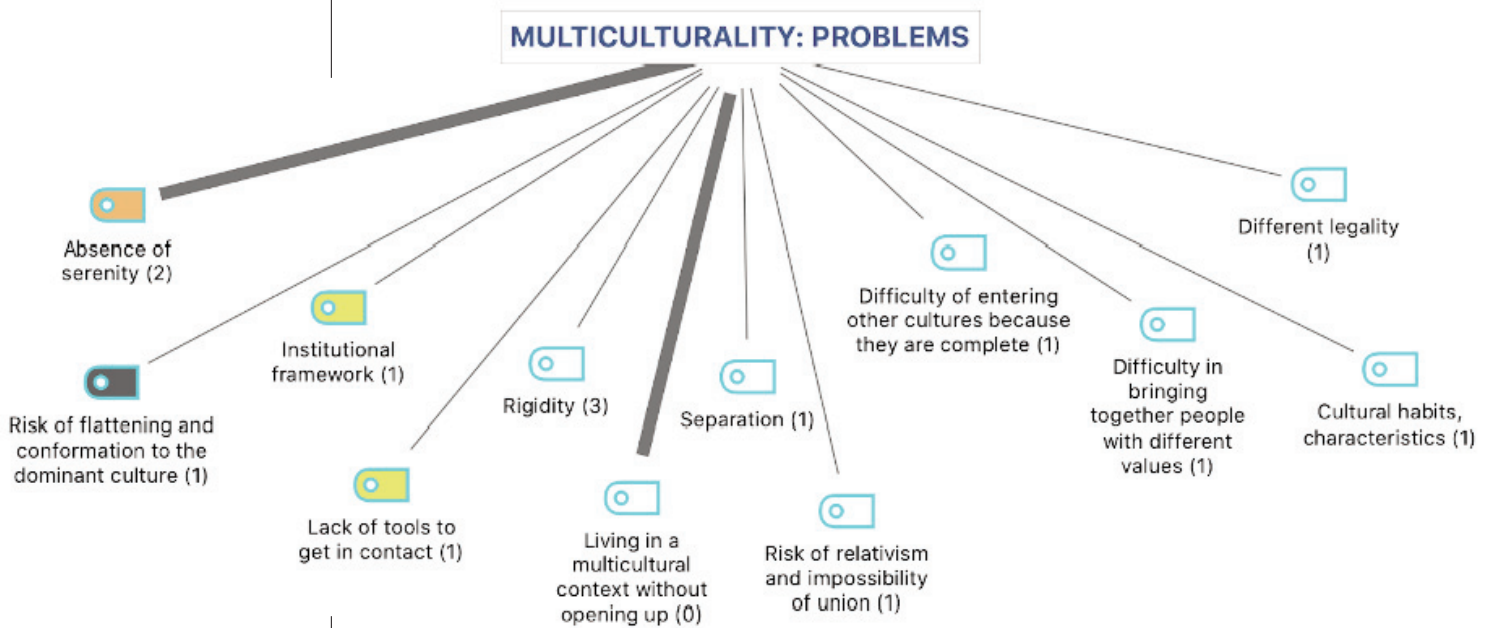
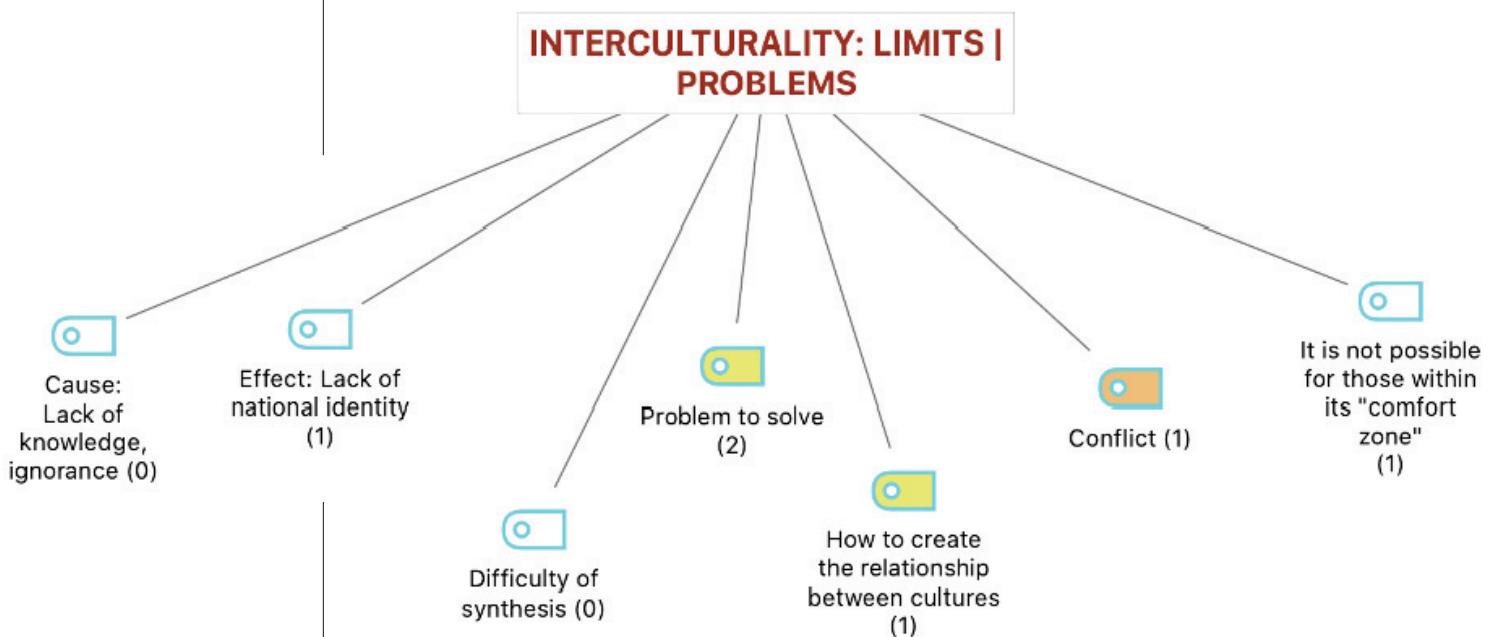
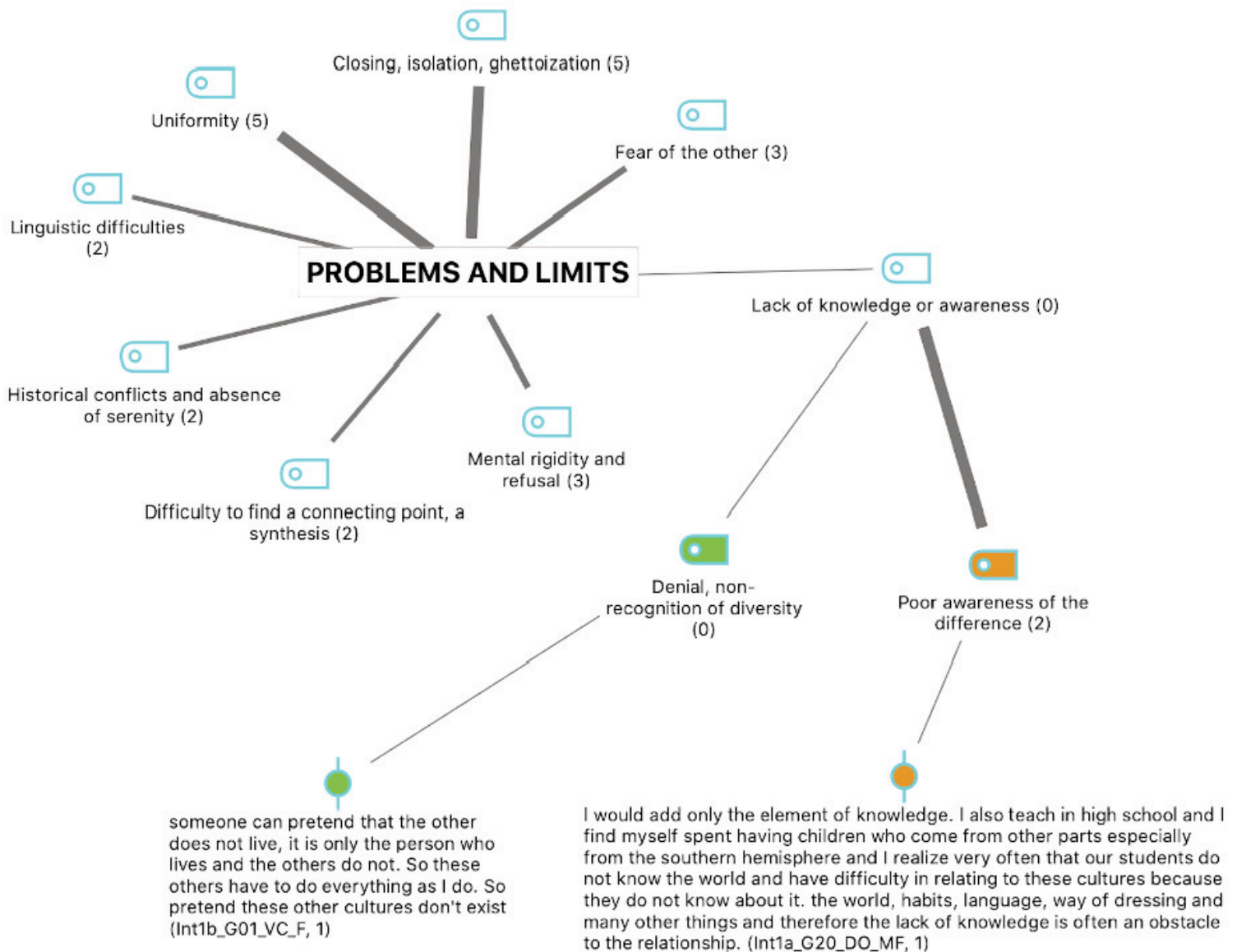


Fig. 28 – Potential problems related to intercultural contexts



We notice, however, that the boundary between the problems related to multiculturalism and the problems related to interculturalism is not always clear. For this reason, we primarily advise the more general integrated map shown in Fig. 26 and Fig. 29.

Fig. 29 – Potential problems related to multicultural and intercultural contexts



Based on what was observed in the textual data, we report a summary of the problems highlighted by the participants, to be understood as **causes and limits for the realization of interculturality**:

1. Problems related to an individual person:
 - a. Poor knowledge and consciousness of the other
 - b. Mental rigidity and denial:
 - i. Fear of the other
 - ii. Feeling different or stranger
 - iii. Feeling complete and safe in the own culture
 - c. Poor collaboration
 - d. Lack of tools and methods
2. Problems related to culture and history:
 - a. Existence of historical conflicts
 - b. Different cultural characteristics (values, religions, languages)
 - c. Different legalities

3. Problems related to the institutional framework:
 - a. Lack of instruments
 - b. Lack of adequate measures and laws
 - c. Tendency towards separation
 - d. Poor collaboration.

Moving now to the problems that arose as a **consequence** of multicultural contexts, the main aspects are:

1. The possibility or risk of relativism, and a consequent absence of serenity, agreements, and national identity.

“Però molto spesso si rischia di slittare in un relativismo perché in un’accezione del multiculturalismo si arriva a sostenere l’impossibilità dell’unificazione tra le sub-culture, cioè quello appartiene ad una certa cultura e non può cambiare, deve essere accettato così come è”. (Int1a_G18_DO_M, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *There is a risk to jump into relativism, as the notion of multiculturalism alludes to the impossibility of unification of subcultures, namely, one belongs to one culture and it cannot change, it must be accepted as it is*].

2. The risk of uniformity and flattening, with a consequent absence of personal identity

“Di solito la nostra tendenza è di formare una uniformità, l’altra doveva fare come io faccio o l’altra doveva vivere come io vivo”. (Int1a_G01_VC_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *Usually, our tendency is to create uniformity, the other must do as I do and the other must live as I live*].

The discussion about the opportunities offered by multicultural contexts is only touched on during the interviews. The main accent is placed on the richness offered by the confrontation between different cultures and the role this confrontation has for personal enhancements by improving the knowledge one has of the personal and others’ cultures, as expressed in the following lines.

“Mi rendo conto che sto diventando in qualche modo più me stesso, sempre più mi rendo conto della mia cultura d’origine diciamo”. (Int1a_G07_DO_MF, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *I realize that I am becoming more myself, namely I am more aware of my culture of origin*].

6.2 Competences to promote interculturality

Although the research question of this work is primarily focused on the two key concepts of multiculturalism and interculturality, several interesting aspects emerge on the potential competences to promote interculturality in multicultural contexts.

In particular, we identify four/five areas (as also illustrated in Fig. 30), represented by:

1. Promotion of individual/personal competences
 - a. Enhancement of knowledge and awareness

“Io aggiungerei solamente l’elemento della conoscenza. Io insegno pure alle scuole superiori e mi ritrovo spesso ad avere ragazzi che vengono da altre parti soprattutto dal sud del mondo e mi rendo conto con molta frequenza che i no-

stri alunni non conoscono il mondo e hanno difficoltà a relazionarsi con queste culture perché non ne conoscono il mondo, le abitudini il linguaggio, il modo di vestire e tante altre cose e quindi la mancanza di conoscenza è spesso un ostacolo alla relazione". (Int1a_G20_DO_MF, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *The lack of knowledge is often an obstacle for a relationship*].

"poi la consapevolezza di formare parte di qualcosa di una comunità e di non essere dominante nel senso dominante che non c'è una cultura che domina le altre". (Int1a_G14_VC_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *The awareness of being part of something, a community, and of not dominating, as there are no cultures that dominate other cultures*].

b. Consciousness and the emotional sphere

"io faccio un passo avanti verso l'interculturalità e il mezzo per fare questo passo, è l'amicizia. Anche se siamo nelle nostre aule di università, io posso avere il massimo livello di conoscenza, ma per l'amicizia io devo uscire da me stesso e così faccio amicizia con gli altri". (Int1a_G21_ST_MF, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *I take a step towards interculturality and the means of realizing it is through friendship. [...] I need to get out of myself to make friends*].

"la conoscenza ma non solo la conoscenza come informazione perché questo sarebbe multiculturalità ma una conoscenza che va con un atteggiamento di apertura verso l'altro un'apertura che non ha paura e implica un atteggiamento di profondo rispetto e di moralizzazione implica una coscienza di essere comunità non solo fisicamente". (Int1a_G14_VC_F, Pos 1)

[Reduced extract in ENG: *Not only the knowledge as information, as this would be limited to multiculturality, but a knowledge that has an aptitude of opening up towards the other, without fear*].

2. Planning and identification/creation of tools

"Quindi penso che per passare dalla multiculturalità bisogna fare un progetto, bisogna avere degli strumenti che aiutano". (Int1a_G07_DO_MF, Pos 1)

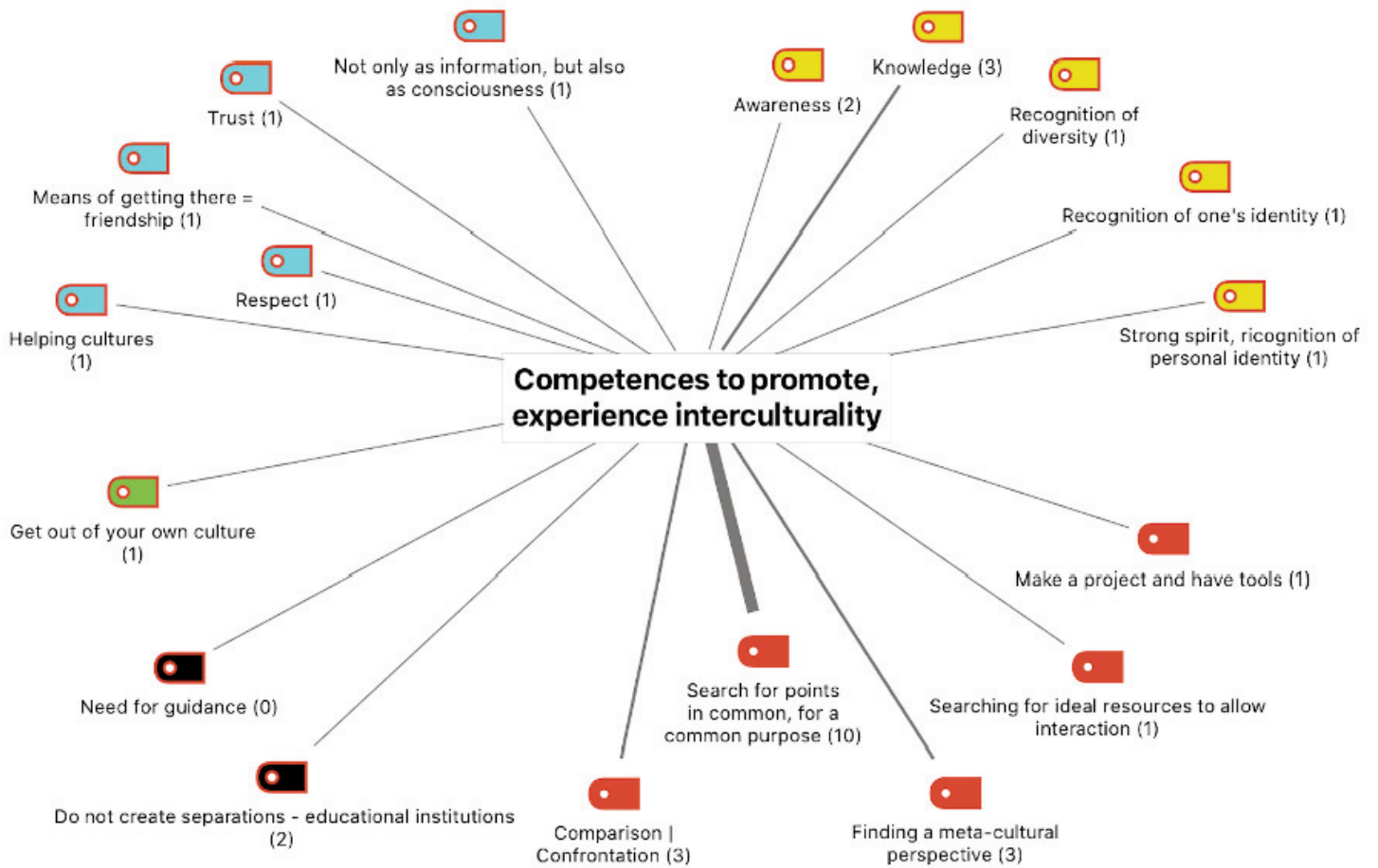
[ENG: *To switch from multiculturality (to interculturality) it is necessary to make a plan and to have a set of tools that may help*].

3. Institution and regulation

"Per cui professori devono per forza anche stare con gli studenti, e gli studenti non devono essere compartimentati in lingue o culture diverse ma insieme no, sennò non vedo come può nascere un'interculturalità, se non in senso artificiale". (Int1a_G07_DO_MF, Pos 1)

[ENG: *Professors must necessarily stay with students, and students must not be partitioned into different languages or cultures, but must stay together, otherwise, I cannot see how interculturality could be realized unless in an artificial way*].

Fig. 30 – Potential problems related to multicultural and intercultural contexts



7

Conclusions

M*ulticulturality* In general, participants recognize the role of multiculturalism: multiculturalism as a basis of interculturality, the opportunities it offers, and at the same time, the potential problems and limits that should be overcome, at both an individual and institutional level. It appears completely clear that the concept of multiculturalism has in the first place the characteristic of diversity and plurality, within a certain space, time, and context. However, it is also subject to a lack of exchange, encounter, and relationship.

Multiculturalism is seen as a matter of fact, a determined and static nature of co-presence. Communication and sharing are relatively minimal.

The common (prevalent) opinion is that a multicultural context as such is not necessarily characterized by any type of encounter and relationship between the different cultures, and that diversity should be regulated and homologated to allow peaceful living. It is also interesting to notice that such a regularization should take place especially at the level of communication (language).

Interculturality Participants are able to recognize and describe with a high degree of accuracy the opportunities and richness of the phenomenon of interest, as well as the characteristics at the basis of an intercultural society. Particularly, all focus groups point to the relevant role of the union and mutual sharing among different cultures, with a great accent on the potential transformations that involve the interested individuals.

However, there also emerge some contrasts of opinions in relation to the final realization and ultimate result this union, sharing and individual transformation leads to.

In synthesis, interculturality is seen as a phenomenon of union and mutual sharing, which occurs through dialogue, communication, relationship, and exchange, and may determine different degrees of individual transformation, going from a better awareness of each one's personal identity and its reinforcement, to complete dissipation of differences and creation of a unique reality.

A number of images that compare the two key concepts of this work are reported in the following Fig. 31.

Fig. 31 – Images that compare the two key concepts of interest: multiculturalism and interculturality

Chaos (no form) VS Harmony (form)
Separate houses VS Communicating houses
Multiculturalism VS Interculturality
White light VS Rainbow World VS China
1+1 = 2 VS 1+1 = 3 Matter VS Form Pile of bricks VS House
Minestrone VS Salad bowl Mixed colors VS defined colors
Matter of fact (static) VS Action (dynamic)
Society VS Community
Family VS International community
Universities yesterday VS Today

Problems and competences to promote interculturality Although this analysis does not represent a central goal of this work, the survey allows for building a clear synthesis of the potential problems characterizing a multicultural society and the main limits in implementing a process of interculturality. These refer to individual aspects (knowledge, fear of the other), cultural and social aspects (historical conflicts, different values, and legitimacies), and institutional aspects (lack of adequate measures and laws).

The potential problems also suggest a number of solutions (competences and skills) to be developed and additional aspects to act on in order to promote interculturality. These include personal competences (improvement of the knowledge, awareness, and consciousness, as well as emotional education), or measures to be adopted by institutions and instruments to be provided to individuals belonging to multicultural societies.





Appendix

Tab. A1 – Full codebook of the analyses textual data

1. Multiculturalism VS Interculturality	0
1.1 Multiculturalism = necessary condition for interculturality	6
1.2 Starting point VS Destination point	3
1.3 Different realities	1
1.4 Static VS Dynamic	2
1.5 Used as synonyms	5
1.6 IMAGES 0	
1.6.1 White light VS Rainbow	1
1.6.2 Mixed colors VS defined colors	1
1.6.3 Chaos (no form) VS Harmony (form)	1
1.6.4 Society VS Community	1
1.6.5 Minestrone VS Salad bowl	1
1.6.6 Pile of bricks VS House	1
1.6.7 Matter of fact (static) VS Action (dynamic)	2
1.6.8 Matter VS Form	1
1.6.9 Universities yesterday VS Today	1
1.6.10 Separate houses VS Communicating houses	1
1.6.11 Family VS International community	1
1.6.12 $1 + 1 = 2$ VS $1 + 1 = 3$	1
1.6.13 World VS China	1
2. No Multiculturalism VS Multiculturalism vs Interculturality	1
3. Competences to promote, experience interculture	0
3.1 Get out of your own culture	1
3.2 Respect	1
3.3 Search for ideal resources to allow interaction	1
3.4 Need for guidance	0
3.5 Trust	1
3.6 Make a project and have tools	1
3.7 Recognition of diversity	1
3.8 Do not create separations – training institutions	2
3.9 Comparison Confrontation	3
3.10 Recognition of one's identity	1
3.11 Helping cultures	1
3.12 Strong spirit, recognition of personal identity	1
3.13 Finding a meta-cultural perspective	3
3.14 Search for points in common, for a common purpose	10
3.15 Awareness	2
3.16 Knowledge	3
3.16.1 Not only as information, but also as consciousness	1
3.17 Means of getting there = friendship	1
4. INTERCULTURALITY	0
4.1 Search for ideals	1
4.2 Adaptation	1

4.3 Living together	2
4.4 Modern phenomenon	1
4.5 More awareness of oneself and one's personal culture	2
4.6 Exposure without protection, refuge	1
4.7 Process	6
4.7.1 Growth	2
4.8 Complementarity	1
4.9 Transversality	1
4.10 Deeper aspect of plurality	2
4.11 Means to enter the culture of the other	1
4.12 Interculturality of persons and non-cultures	3
4.13 LIMITS PROBLEMS	0
4.13.1 It is not possible for those within its "comfort zone"	1
4.13.2 How to create the relationship between cultures	1
4.13.3 Problem to solve	1
4.13.4 Conflict	1
4.13.5 Difficulty of synthesis	1
4.13.6 Effect: Lack of national identity	1
4.13.7 Cause: Lack of knowledge, ignorance	1
4.14 Plurality, diversity	5
4.15 Respect, recognition of each culture	4
4.15.1 Without imposing on others	1
4.15.2 Without being superior	6
4.16 Transformation, Change	6
4.16.1 Improvement, enrichment	6
4.17 Joy to share	1
4.18 IMAGE	0
4.18.1 Horizon	1
4.18.2 Child	1
4.18.3 Identity	1
4.18.4 Wisdom	1
4.18.5 Archipelago of islands	1
4.18.6 House, more systematic set of bricks	1
4.18.7 Meltingpot	1
4.18.8 Mosaic	1
4.18.9 Cappuccino	1
4.18.10 International community	1
4.18.11 Parresia: a single spiritual family	1
4.18.12 Soul	1
4.18.13 Intertwining	4
4.18.14 Network of connections	1
4.18.15 People: going together to do something	1
4.19 Point of arrival	4
4.20 EXAMPLES	0
4.20.1 Language	1
4.20.2 Lessons	3
4.20.3 Holidays	1
4.20.4 Rome today	1
4.20.5 Dances	2
4.20.6 Greeting	1

4.20.7 Food	3
4.21 Union and mutual sharing	11
4.21.1 Comparison	3
4.21.2 Entering the dialogue, communication, relation	44
4.21.2.1 As enrichment	7
4.21.3 Extend and transmit what you learn from others	1
4.21.4 In harmony	2
4.21.5 Inclusion, relationship and non-separation	4
4.21.6 Walking, grow up together	4
4.21.7 Doing work together	2
4.21.8 Encounter, Communion, Exchange and Contamination	48
4.21.8.1 Becoming one – cancellation of differences	7
4.21.8.1.1 Synthesis	1
4.21.8.2 Creating new things	5
4.21.8.2.1 Creating a new reality, culture	3
4.21.8.2.2 Creating and knowing something greater	6
4.21.8.2.2.1 What is created comes from everyone = richness	1
4.21.8.3 Without blending, changing or losing the personal identity	18
4.21.9 Sharing different cultures	9
4.21.10 Sharing as enrichment	5
4.22 Opening up: giving to the other (from me to the other)	18
4.22.1 Participate to the culture of the other	3
4.22.2 Giving: sharing own belongings	4
4.22.2.1 Communicate your identity	1
4.22.2.2 Enrich others by sharing	2
4.22.3 Necessity to avoid closure	3
4.22.3.1 Closure = problem for the encounter	3
4.23 Opening up: receiving and welcoming the other (from the other towards me)	9
4.23.1 Being interested in the other	1
4.23.2 Listening the other	3
4.23.3 Adapting to the other	2
4.23.4 Taking the good things of the other	2
4.23.5 Better understanding the reality of the world	1
4.23.6 Perfecting and enriching oneself with other cultures	8
4.23.6.1 Getting rich without losing your identity	3
4.23.6.2 Learning to know yourself	1
4.23.6.3 Learning to value one's own culture more	2
4.23.6.4 Every culture is not perfect	3
4.23.7 Allow yourself to be contaminated	1
4.23.8 Understanding the other	5
4.23.9 Welcoming with respect	7
4.23.10 Accepting others and diversity	6
4.23.10.1 Valuing other cultures	1
4.23.10.2 Accepting what is different even if it is difficult	1
4.23.10.3 Welcoming diversity (and the other) = richness	5
4.23.11 Learning from the other	4
4.23.12 Without judging, criticizing	3
4.24 Intentionality, Decision, Agreement	20
4.24.1 Will, Wish	1
4.24.2 Without being forced	1

4.24.3 Desire to order	1
4.24.4 It is not automatic	1
4.24.5 Challenge	2
4.24.6 Method for interaction	1
4.24.7 Commitment, Effort	8
4.25 Finding commonalities, a common purpose	14
5. MULTICULTURALITY	0
5.1 It has boundaries	1
5.2 Encountering by necessity	1
5.3 It has always been there	1
5.4 Socio-cultural condition, geopolitics	2
5.5 Gift of God	1
5.6 Recognition of scattered cultures	1
5.7 Defined, static context	6
5.7.1 Matter of fact	12
5.8 Contemporary context	2
5.9 PROBLEM	0
5.9.1 Absence of serenity	2
5.9.2 Risk of flattening and conformation to the dominant culture	1
5.9.3 Lack of tools to make contact	1
5.9.4 Habits Cultural characteristics	1
5.9.5 Separation	1
5.9.6 Living in a multicultural context without opening up	2
5.9.7 Institutional framework	1
5.9.8 Risk of relativism and impossibility of union	1
5.9.9 Difficulty in bringing together people with different values	1
5.9.10 Different legality	1
5.9.11 Difficulty of entering other cultures because they are complete	1
5.9.12 Stiffness	1
5.10 Cultural identity of each one	7
5.10.1 Identification	1
5.10.2 Has a limit = You have to measure yourself against the society in which you live	1
5.10.3 Being complete in one's culture	1
5.11 IMAGE	0
5.11.1 Forest	1
5.11.2 Water and Oil	1
5.11.3 Border	1
5.11.4 Italy	1
5.11.5 Mosaic	1
5.11.6 Parallel figures	1
5.11.7 Hidden treasure	1
5.11.8 Brazil	1
5.11.9 Numbers	1
5.11.10 Pile, set of bricks	1
5.11.11 Subway	1
5.11.12 Set of islands	3
5.11.13 Photograph of a state of affairs	1
5.11.14 Tribe	1
5.11.15 City	1
5.11.16 Person	1

5.11.17 Many faces with their own face and identity	1
5.11.18 Family	1
5.11.19 Garden with flowers	1
5.11.20 Tree with branches	1
5.11.21 Society that embraces all cultures	1
5.12 Presence of different cultures	21
5.12.1 In harmony	1
5.12.2 In a certain space, time, context	5
5.12.3 For working reasons	1
5.12.4 Who have things in common	2
5.12.5 Which you must welcome to avoid conflict	1
5.12.6 Without changing	3
5.12.7 Richness of many different cultures	5
5.12.8 Living together, cohabiting	22
5.12.8.1 Without necessarily having borders	1
5.12.8.2 Having a relationship	0
5.12.8.3 Together but knowing only those who come from the same culture	2
5.12.8.4 Together without encountering or relating	37
5.12.8.4.1 Indifference	0
5.12.8.4.2 In the group or even in the individual	1
5.12.8.4.3 Living together, but each closed in their own culture	4
5.12.8.4.4 Richness of many cultures, but without the encounter	15
5.12.8.4.4.1 without being able to accommodate the richness of the other	1
5.13 EXAMPLES	2
5.13.1 University – education institutions	1
5.14 Starting point	10
5.15 Plurality, diversity, particularity	38
5.15.1 Different ways of living	3
5.15.2 From different countries or cities	3
5.15.3 Different values	2
5.15.3.1 Which are shared	1
5.15.3.2 Which must be regulated, homologated	4
5.15.4 Different ways of reading reality	2
5.16 Richness, Opportunity	5
5.16.1 Accepting others to live together	1
5.17 Respect for every culture	4
6. PROBLEM	0
6.1 Need to have an open mind	1
6.2 Poor collaboration in the modern context	1
6.3 Difficulty of entering other cultures because they are complete	1
6.4 Multiculturality: Rigidity	1
6.5 relate only to those who are part of the same culture	1
6.6 Linguistic difficulties	1
6.7 Poor awareness of the difference	1
6.8 Fear of the other	3
6.9 Closure isolation ghettoization	4
6.10 Feeling different or stranger	1
6.11 Denial non-recognition of diversity	1
6.12 Uniformity	5

7. OPPORTUNITIES	1
7.1 Become more yourself	1
7.2 More awareness of one's own culture	1
7.3 Better knowledge	1
7.4 Improvement as a person	1
8. Culture – Cultural identity	2
8.1 Starting point	1
8.2 Name of Action	1
8.3 Form of a people	1
8.4 Baggage that we take with us	1
8.5 Culture is experience	1
8.6 Relating and enriching oneself without losing one's identity	1
8.7 Plurality within cultures	1
8.8 Knowledge of one's own culture	4
8.9 Culture is 'mixed'	1
9. Other related terms	0
9.1 Inculturation	2

Tab. A2 – Comparison among focus groups with respect to variable “Gender”

	GENDER = F	GENDER = M	GENDER = MF	TOTAL
INTERCULTURALITY	0	0	0	
Search for ideals	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Adaptation	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Living together	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
Modern phenomenon	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
More awareness of oneself and one's personal culture	0	0	18.2%	8.3%
Exposure without protection, refuge	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Process	16.7%	14.3%	18.2%	16.7%
Growth	16.7%	0	9.1%	8.3%
Complementarity	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Trasversalità	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Deeper aspect of plurality	0	14.3%	9.1%	8.3%
Means to enter the culture of the other	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
Interculturality of persons and non-cultures	0	14.3%	9.1%	8.3%
Plurality, diversity	0	14.3%	36.4%	20.8%
Respect, recognition of each culture	0	28.6%	9.1%	12.5%
Without imposing on others	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Without being superior	16.7%	14.3%	18.2%	16.7%
Transformation, Change	16.7%	28.6%	18.2%	20.8%
Improvement, enrichment	50.0%	0	27.3%	25.0%
Joy to share	16.7%	0	0	4.2%
Point of arrival	16.7%	14.3%	9.1%	12.5%
Union and mutual sharing	50.0%	42.9%	9.1%	29.2%
Comparison	0	14.3%	9.1%	8.3%
Entering the dialogue, communication, relation	66.7%	100.0%	72.7%	79.2%
As enrichment	33.3%	0	36.4%	25.0%
Extend and transmit what you learn from others	16.7%	0	0	4.2%
In harmony	0	14.3%	9.1%	8.3%
Inclusion, relationship and non-separation	16.7%	14.3%	9.1%	12.5%

Walking, grow up together	0	28.6%	18.2%	16.7%
Doing work together	0	0	18.2%	8.3%
Encounter, Communion, Exchange and Contamination	100.0%	100.0%	81.8%	91.7%
Becoming one – cancellation of differences	33.3%	28.6%	9.1%	20.8%
Synthesis	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
Creating new things	33.3%	14.3%	0	12.5%
Creating a new reality, culture	0	14.3%	18.2%	12.5%
Creating and knowing something greater	33.3%	0	18.2%	16.7%
What is created comes from everyone = richness	16.7%	0	0	4.2%
Without blending, changing or losing the personal identity	50.0%	42.9%	72.7%	58.3%
Sharing different cultures	50.0%	42.9%	0	25.0%
Sharing as enrichment	33.3%	14.3%	18.2%	20.8%
Opening up: giving to the other (from me to the other)	33.3%	14.3%	9.1%	16.7%
Participate to the culture of the other	33.3%	14.3%	0	12.5%
Giving: sharing own belongings	33.3%	14.3%	0	12.5%
Communicate your identity	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Enrich others by sharing	16.7%	14.3%	0	8.3%
Necessity to avoid closure	16.7%	14.3%	0	8.3%
Closure = problem for the encounter	16.7%	14.3%	9.1%	12.5%
Opening up: receiving and welcoming the other (from the other t	33.3%	28.6%	18.2%	25.0%
Being interested in the other	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Listening the other	0	28.6%	9.1%	12.5%
Adapting to the other	0	28.6%	0	8.3%
Taking the good things of the other	16.7%	0	0	4.2%
Better understanding the reality of the world	16.7%	0	0	4.2%
Perfecting and enriching oneself with other cultures	50.0%	14.3%	9.1%	20.8%
Getting rich without losing your identity	33.3%	14.3%	0	12.5%
Learning to know yourself	16.7%	0	0	4.2%
Learning to value one's own culture more	16.7%	0	9.1%	8.3%
Every culture is not perfect	33.3%	0	0	8.3%
Allow yourself to be contaminated	16.7%	0	0	4.2%
Understanding the other	33.3%	14.3%	9.1%	16.7%
Welcoming with respect	50.0%	28.6%	18.2%	29.2%
Accepting others and diversity	33.3%	0	9.1%	12.5%
Valuing other cultures	16.7%	0	0	4.2%
Accepting what is different even if it is difficult	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
Welcoming diversity (and the other) = richness	16.7%	14.3%	27.3%	20.8%
Learning from the other	50.0%	0	0	12.5%
Without judging, criticizing	33.3%	0	9.1%	12.5%
Intentionality, Decision, Agreement	33.3%	42.9%	36.4%	37.5%
Willingness, Wish	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
Without being forced	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
Desire to order	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
It is not automatic	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Challenge	0	0	9.1%	4.2%
Method for interaction	0	14.3%	0	4.2%
Commitment, Effort	33.3%	28.6%	27.3%	29.2%
Finding commonalities, a common purpose	33.3%	85.7%	27.3%	45.8%
TOTAL	1,400.00	1,157.14	900.00	1,100.00
N = Documents/Participant	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Tab. A3 – Comparison among focus groups with respect to variable type of community

	TYPE OF COMM. = TEACHERS	TYPE OF COMM. = STUDENTS	TYPE OF COMM. CONS. LIFE	TOTAL
INTERCULTURALITY	0	0	0	
Search for ideals	14.3%	0	0	4.2%
Adaptation	14.3%	0	0	4.2%
Living together	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
Modern phenomenon	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
More awareness of oneself and one's personal culture	28.6%	0	0	8.3%
Exposure without protection, refuge	14.3%	0	0	4.2%
Process	42.9%	0	12.5%	16.7%
Growth	28.6%	0	0	8.3%
Complementarity	0	11.1%	0	4.2%
Trasversalità	0	11.1%	0	4.2%
Deeper aspect of plurality	0	11.1%	12.5%	8.3%
Means to enter the culture of the other	0	11.1%	0	4.2%
Interculturality of persons and non-cultures	28.6%	0	0	8.3%
Plurality, diversity	42.9%	11.1%	12.5%	20.8%
Respect, recognition of each culture	0	22.2%	12.5%	12.5%
Without imposing on others	0	11.1%	0	4.2%
Without being superior	0	11.1%	37.5%	16.7%
Transformation, Change	42.9%	22.2%	0	20.8%
Improvement, enrichment	28.6%	33.3%	12.5%	25.0%
Joy to share	0	11.1%	0	4.2%
Point of arrival	28.6%	0	12.5%	12.5%
Union and mutual sharing	14.3%	11.1%	62.5%	29.2%
Comparison	14.3%	0	12.5%	8.3%
Entering the dialogue, communication, relation	85.7%	66.7%	87.5%	79.2%
As enrichment	42.9%	22.2%	12.5%	25.0%
Extend and transmit what you learn from others	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
In harmony	0	11.1%	12.5%	8.3%
Inclusion, relationship and non-separation	14.3%	11.1%	12.5%	12.5%
Walking, grow up together	42.9%	0	12.5%	16.7%
Doing work together	14.3%	11.1%	0	8.3%
Encounter, Communion, Exchange and Contamination	71.4%	100.0%	100.0%	91.7%
Becoming one – cancellation of differences	14.3%	11.1%	37.5%	20.8%
Synthesis	14.3%	0	0	4.2%
Creating new things	14.3%	0	25.0%	12.5%
Creating a new reality, culture	28.6%	0	12.5%	12.5%
Creating and knowing something greater	28.6%	22.2%	0	16.7%
What is created comes from everyone = richness	0	11.1%	0	4.2%
Without blending, changing or losing the personal identity	57.1%	77.8%	37.5%	58.3%
Sharing different cultures	14.3%	22.2%	37.5%	25.0%
Sharing as enrichment	42.9%	0	25.0%	20.8%
Opening up: giving to the other (from me to the other)	0	11.1%	37.5%	16.7%
Participate to the culture of the other	0	0	37.5%	12.5%
Giving: sharing own belongings	0	11.1%	25.0%	12.5%
Communicate your identity	14.3%	0	0	4.2%
Enrich others by sharing	14.3%	0	12.5%	8.3%
Necessity to avoid closure	0	0	25.0%	8.3%

Closure = problem for the encounter	0	11.1%	25.0%	12.5%
Opening up: receiving and welcoming the other (from the other t	14.3%	33.3%	25.0%	25.0%
Being interested in the other	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
Listening the other	14.3%	11.1%	12.5%	12.5%
Adapting to the other	0	11.1%	12.5%	8.3%
Taking the good things of the other	0	11.1%	0	4.2%
Better understanding the reality of the world	0	11.1%	0	4.2%
Perfecting and enriching oneself with other cultures	14.3%	33.3%	12.5%	20.8%
Getting rich without losing your identity	0	22.2%	12.5%	12.5%
Learning to know yourself	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
Learning to value one's own culture more	0	11.1%	12.5%	8.3%
Every culture is not perfect	0	11.1%	12.5%	8.3%
Allow yourself to be contaminated	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
Understanding the other	0	22.2%	25.0%	16.7%
Welcoming with respect	42.9%	11.1%	37.5%	29.2%
Accepting others and diversity	0	11.1%	25.0%	12.5%
Valuing other cultures	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
Accepting what is different even if it is difficult	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
Welcoming diversity (and the other) = richness	28.6%	11.1%	25.0%	20.8%
Learning from the other	0	11.1%	25.0%	12.5%
Without judging, criticizing	0	11.1%	25.0%	12.5%
Intentionality, Decision, Agreement	85.7%	11.1%	25.0%	37.5%
Willingness, Wish	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
Without being forced	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
Desire to order	0	0	12.5%	4.2%
It is not automatic	14.3%	0	0	4.2%
Challenge	14.3%	0	0	4.2%
Method for interaction	14.3%	0	0	4.2%
Commitment, Effort	57.1%	11.1%	25.0%	29.2%
Finding commonalities, a common purpose	71.4%	33.3%	37.5%	45.8%
TOTAL	1,228.57	866.67	1,250.00	1,100.00
N = Documents/Participant	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00



Endnotes

1. Cf. E. OTTONE – L. PANDOLFI, *Interculturality in Multicultural Education and Formation Communities: An Action-Research-Training Project in Italy*, in ID. (eds.), *Education in Multicultural Education to Interculturality: In Ecclesiastical Institutions of Higher Education and in Formation Communities for Catholic Consecrated Life in Italy*, Urbaniana University Press, Città del Vaticano 2023, 33-68.
2. Cf. note 1 in E. OTTONE – L. PANDOLFI, *Education in Multicultural Education to Interculturality*, in ID. (eds.), *Education*, 19.
3. Cf. OTTONE – PANDOLFI, *Interculturality*, in ID. (eds.), *Education*, 40-45.
4. Cf. *ibid.*, 52-62.
5. Cf. *ibid.*, 57-61.
6. Cf. *The Three Focus Groups*, in OTTONE – PANDOLFI (eds.), *Education*, 356-363.
7. Cf. F. DERIU, *Intercultural Competences in Multicultural Education and Formation Communities: Key Concepts Identified by the Text Analyses of Focus Groups*, in OTTONE – PANDOLFI (eds.), *Education*, 70-112.
8. Cf. *ivi*.
9. Cf. D.L. MORGAN, *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*. Vol. 16, Sage publications, London 1996.
10. Cf. J. KITZINGER, *Qualitative Research. Introducing Focus Groups*, "British Medical Journal" 311 (1995) 7000, 299-302.
11. Cf. M.L. DE NATALE, *Pedagogia e giustizia*, EDUCatt-Università Cattolica, Milano 2014.
12. Cf. OTTONE – PANDOLFI, *Interculturality*, 45-52.
13. Number of groups that participated to at least one of the scheduled meetings or focus groups.
14. Cf. DERIU, *Intercultural*.
15. Cf. M.J. RAICH, *Hybrid Analysis of Textual Data: Grounding Managerial Decisions on Intertwined Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis*, "Management Decision" 52 (2014) 4, 737-754.
16. Cf. DERIU, *Intercultural*, 70-112.
17. MAXQDA 2020, VERBI Software, Berlin 2019. Available from www.maxqda.com.
18. Cf. U. KUCKARTZ, *Qualitative Text Analysis: A Guide to Methods, Practice and Using Software*, SAGE, Los Angeles, CA 2014; M. SCHREIER, *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA 2012.
19. Cf. U. KUCKARTZ, *Qualitative text analysis: A Systematic Approach. Compendium for Early Career Researchers in Mathematics Education*, Springer, Cham 2019.
20. Cf. B. BERELSON, *Content Analysis in Communication Research*, Free Press, Glencoe, IL 1952, 147.
21. Cf. KUCKARTZ, *Qualitative Text Analysis: A Guide*.
22. Cf. J. SALDANA, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA 2015.
23. The block distance is a distance measure which is used in statistics to compare two or more statistical units with respect to certain characteristics of interest, in our case the codes. It accounts for the frequency of each code of the codebook for each focus group separately. For further details, Cf. S. ZANI – A. CERIOLI, *Analisi dei dati e data mining per le decisioni aziendali*, Giuffrè editore, Milano 2007.

24. Cf. OTTONE – PANDOLFI, *Interculturality* 39.
25. It should be noted that in MAXQDA's maps the values specifying the frequency of each code can change when subcodes are revealed as well. To illustrate, in Fig. 17 the code "plurality, diversity, particularity" has 53 coded segments, while in Fig. 18 it has 38 coded segments; the difference is simply contained in the sub-codes referred to the code "plurality, diversity, particularity", which accounts for overall 15 coded segments.
26. Cf. OTTONE – PANDOLFI, *Interculturality*, 39-40.
27. *Ivi*.