

## INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN EDUCATION: CRITICAL REFLECTION IN THE MUSEUM CONTEXT

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***Summary** - The paper underlies the importance of the museum and international scientific partnership to promote and add value to the regional cultural heritage, as a condition for developing greater awareness of the civilisational framework of cultural inheritance at the global level.*

*The goal of the action research carried out in parallel in Italy and Serbia and involving 170 children was to devise, realise and evaluate an educational programme that would bring museums closer to children. Reflexivity and triangulation were used in this research endeavour based on a constructivist theoretical framework. Reflecting on the activities carried out and the data collected, the authors of this paper, as participants in the research, are able to validate several important roles of the museum as a place that facilitates the development of an awareness of the cultural heritage of one's own country, skills and capabilities, the social and individual construction of meaning, as well as the development of international partnership.*

*The research findings confirm that the field of qualitative educational discourse offers museums a respectable future in terms of linking theory and practice. In other words, museums will make it possible for scientific results to be more closely applied for the purpose of improving educational practice.*

**Key words:** *action research, intercultural dialogue, museum education.*

### **Introduction: an intercultural code in museum education**

The transmission of cultural heritage to future generations, in the new millennium defined as “the epoch of culture”, is aimed not only at the preservation of heritage, but also at the development and evaluation of cultural patterns, the affirmation of awareness of one's own identity, as well as at the enhancement of the economic and social development of a country. The idea behind this Pro-

ject<sup>1</sup> is reflected in the belief that interculturality, understood as an exchange and confrontation of different realities, is a privileged pathway leading to the acquisition of knowledge and the development of an identity in its social, historical and cultural dimension.

Established relations between educational institutions at all levels and museums from different cultural regions, by promoting cultural heritage locally, create conditions for closer cooperation. This cooperation is crucial for the realisation of projects that are intended for children who are to acquire knowledge through art, develop competences and become aware of their cultural inheritance as an aspect of global civilisation. In this sense, the Project underlines the importance of an international dialogue between EU member states as well as all other countries, with special emphasis on Euro-Mediterranean and Balkan countries that are strongly and deeply linked with Europe. There are numerous priorities, from upholding the value of solidarity to attaining social justice, from promoting inclusion and social cohesion to fighting against discrimination.

The project idea, conducted in 2008, the “European Year of Intercultural Dialogue”, was structured and realised in the rewarding exchange between partners in bilateral cooperation. It was based on an intercultural perspective as a principle that inspires both the curricula and the learning processes in museums<sup>2</sup>.

## **THEORETICAL FIELD OF RESEARCH**

### **Humanistic orientation of the selected theoretical conceptions**

The philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of our research are ontological assumptions and a personality model which describe humans as whole, self-conscious, authentic, intentional, creative, autonomous beings, who are free to choose and capable of critical thinking. Such starting posi-

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1 Partnership between the Diocesan Museum (Palermo, Italy) and the Gallery of Matica Srpska, with the support of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad (Novi Sad, Serbia), resulted in the project “Feel Art – Intercultural experience in museum education”. It was a segment of cooperation supported by the internationalisation programme of the Territorial Employment Pact Alto Belice Corleonese from Sicily and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina which was begun within a wider project I.Ne.P.S. (Italian Negotiated Programming in Serbia) – Exchange of experience in the area of negotiated planning in Serbia.

2 These assumptions were the basis for the research efforts of the authors of this paper in the project “European dimensions of the change of the educational system in Serbia”, financed by the Ministry for Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, as one of the partners in the international, intercultural and scientific cooperation.

tions determined our search for ways of developing autonomous and creative personalities within a humanistic approach to education. We chose a cognitive-developmental orientation, which strives to find methods and actions that foster children's freedom on one hand, and create necessary conditions for their optimal development on the other. The key issue is fostering motivation for learning. Personality development is geared toward the achievement of cognitive goals, which entail mastery of classification skills, concept usage, spatial relations, speech and communication (written and oral). It is possible to achieve mastery of the language of particular arts by engaging the children themselves. This primarily applies to the emotional engagement and involvement of intellectual and psycho-motoric activities (Bognar/Matijević, 2002, p. 177). Cognitive development is interactively related to social and emotional development (Piaget, Lavatelli, Weikart). Apart from cognitivist conceptions, and especially J. Piaget's developmental model, as well as L. S. Vygotsky's social development theory, this research is also based on personalist conceptions – C. Roger's non-directive teaching, models of creative learning and the development of personal freedom and social interactionist conceptions, i.e. the cooperative model of K. Lewin et al.

There is a good reason why creativity is the focus of every humanistically oriented pedagogy. Personal strivings and needs are not to be suppressed, but cultivated and refined, without the imposition of previously verified ideas and feelings, already formed patterns of thinking, rigidly prescribed models of behaviour and the usual verbal formulations of authority. We believe that such foundations respect the subjectivity of every person, their capability to realise themselves and express those latent powers that are hidden within every human being.

### **The field of educational discourse**

A great preoccupation with the issue of education is evident in all countries of the world today. It has become clear that in the new context of *the learning society* patterns of traditional cultural reactions are no longer appropriate. Time spent on education now covers a lifetime, and there are more and more educational institutions and more opportunities for learning (Delors, 1996). They should be meaningfully utilised so that the **concept of lifelong learning** can be put into practice in an integrated manner.

Learning in informal settings such as museums, for example, relates to the systematic and cumulative aspects of the experiential nature of learning based on encounters with real objects. Museums are open and dynamic environments where individuals of all ages can learn at their own pace, satisfy curiosity, research and test their own ideas, socialise and enjoy themselves.

Artworks displayed in museums, as layered and multilayered phenomena, offer variegated opportunities for people to experience, understand and

evaluate, but do not permit improvisation and superficiality (Gajić, 2006). Extending the concept of “experience” to include a mental element opens up a new opportunity to establish mutual relations between the realm of experience (emotional) and the realm of the rational (cognitive).

From this standpoint, active learning and the individual creation of meaning are natural processes that take place in museums (Griffin, 2000). J. Dewey’s (Djui, 1970) ideas about the importance of experiential learning, about children’s innate need to explore, handle tools and materials and construct, are very important in this respect. “Experiential learning” and “learning by doing” constitute the core of his pedagogy.

Piaget’s developmental theory of learning (Piaget, 1990) also had its influence on the recognition of the importance of the opportunity to handle real objects as part of the educational work of museums. The approach developed by Vygotsky (1962) agrees in certain aspects with Piaget’s, especially regarding the importance of activity in the process of learning and in the development of thinking. Still, Vygotsky puts much greater emphasis on the importance of communication and social transmission. J. Bruner (1996) also stresses the importance of action and discovery in the process of learning, treating every cognition as a form of (social) construction. Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences can also become an important ally regarding successful teaching in museums, because it indicates the need to identify activities that might become useful for a particular group of predisposed pupils (Milutinović, 2008).

There are many reasons for adopting a **constructivist model** as a theoretical basis for educational work in museums. Applying this model, museums can create a pleasant, friendly and stimulating learning environment that meets individual needs for concrete experience, individual contemplation, communication and social interaction.

## **METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCH**

### **Research approaches, orientations and paradigms**

The constructivist and interpretative approach in our research is directed toward understanding the complex world of experience lived through in the museum context, from the standpoint of those who have had such experience. It seems that the field of qualitative educational discourse in museums is more promising in terms of connecting theory and practice and the more direct application of scientific results to advance educational practice than quantitative approaches that have limited reach. What is more, the integrated configuration of a quantitative and qualitative research paradigm has shown itself to be more functional, especially in the methodological sense (Johnson / Onwegbuzie, 2004).

Apart from interpretation, the new scientific orientation emphasises not only the understanding and reflexivity of the research process and its results, but also recognition of the researcher's own standpoint. The epistemological position of new approaches gives ontological precedence to relations, that is, to relationism as opposed to essentialism.

We have accorded a legitimate status to action research as a qualitative and reflexive technique and approach in our research. Its theoretical and epistemological starting point is the critical theory created within the Frankfurt School and built on the foundations of the Enlightenment tradition, German classical philosophy and the hermeneutic tradition (Carr / Kemmis, 1986).

Action research simultaneously contributes to learning and improving pedagogical practice and the development of a grounded pedagogical theory (Reason, in Gojkov, 2007). A very important facet of this research is that it takes place in the context of change, as an attempt to solve problems (Haggarty / Postlethwaite, 2003). It involves the transformation of educational practice, "controlled innovation", i.e. an attempt to change and advance educational practice while learning about it (Smith, 1982).

Two criteria for determining the scientific value of our action research have been singled out: **interpretative validity** (how we document the steps, argue our interpretation, how systematic the procedure is, the closeness of the object of research) and **communicative validity** (Halmi, 2005). As distinctive characteristics of our research, we point out **reflexivity** – a critical personal re-examination at various levels and a continuous, functional, critical examination of the research practice/process in order to discover its assumptions, values and prejudices (Wilkinson, 1988, p. 495) and *triangulation* – the application of different perspectives and a comparison of different standpoints.

### **Methodology**

The selected research problem reflects our longstanding interest and theoretical preoccupation with museum pedagogy and the pedagogy of art, as well as our wish to develop museum educational programmes. Promoting and giving value to the regional cultural heritage in Italy and Serbia constitute the wider context of the problem selection.

The research goal was to devise, put into practice and evaluate the educational programme "Feel Art – An intercultural experience in museum education" in order to bring museums as places for ambient learning, education and identity development closer to children, in an attempt to promote and popularise the value of historical and artistic heritage.

The goal of this research was put into operation through the following **research tasks**: (1) make children aware of the culture in their territory and realise that there are differences between Serbia and Italy regarding culture and religion; (2) open up the museum for the local community and establish

relations with the territory it belongs to, as well as with its social, educational and cultural institutions, most of all with preschool institutions and schools; (3) develop a concept of education in the museum that is reflected in multiple teaching strategies within educational programmes with an intercultural matrix, in order to facilitate an exchange of experience and cooperation as well as a specific approach to works of art; (4) evaluate the historical and artistic heritage through an active “reading” of paintings and a sensory approach to works of art, which contribute to the development of children’s perceptual abilities (smell, taste, vision, hearing, and touch); (5) develop imagination, cognitive abilities, creativity and a critical attitude by contrasting different cultural identities; (6) develop social competences through cooperation and communication.

We applied a non-probability sampling strategy, i.e. the convenience method and sampling based on judgement. The validity of the selected participants depended on their special characteristics that put them into our sample based on the variables of age, life experience, preschool and school background, situational relationship with other subjects in the sample and the researcher. Organisational reasons determined the inclusion of second, third, fourth and fifth grade pupils from the “G.E.Nuccio” elementary school (ages 7 to 10, 94 pupils in total) in Palermo, children from the preschool institution “Radosno detinjstvo” in Novi Sad (ages 5 to 6.5, 35 children in total), as well as first and second grade pupils from the elementary schools “Jovan Popović” and “Žarko Zrenjanin” (ages 6.5 to 8, 41 pupil in total) in Novi Sad. Our sample therefore consisted of 170 children in total.

The data collected in the museums in both countries underwent various types of processing (qualitative analysis and descriptive statistics), and the conclusions were drawn on the basis of the interpretation of data collected by means of the following research tools: participatory observation protocol, filled-in worksheets, children’s artworks and audio-visual recordings.

## PHASES OF THE ACTION RESEARCH

### **First phase: Plan of action**

Although the very idea of the museum has acquired new meanings, today in Serbia it is still difficult to put into practice the idea that the presentation of museum material and the way it is used by visitors are at least as important segments of museum work as the protection and scientific processing of that material (Milutinović, 2003). Respecting global societal changes, museums have the responsibility of building quality relationships among individuals, groups, communities and cultures. In these times of identity crisis, museums can help people discover their own cultural roots and thus better understand

themselves as well as others (Gajić / Milutinović / Klemenović, 2008). For all these reasons, **it is necessary to explore viable approaches for bringing museums and artworks closer to children, and to offer ways of changing the present status of museums as conservatorial institutions and presenters of cultural heritage into museums as proactive educational institutions.**

In this context, the Gallery of Matica Srpska in Novi Sad launched educational programmes to bring art and the cultural heritage closer to its youngest visitors. From short workshops in the beginning (**Museums and Friendship Building**, 2003; **Touch the Untouchable** 2004; **Art Topics**, 2005), which were followed by continuous educational programmes (**My Portrait for the Museum**, 2006; **Beauties and Heroes**, 2007), a new system of programmes for children was developed – from day workshops to yearly programmes.

These educational programmes, as well as the knowledge and experience of the scientists and museum workers, formed the basis of cooperation between the Diocesan Museum and the Gallery of Matica Srpska. Thus, the vision of the educational role of the museums acquired a wider context of intercultural cooperation of two institutions that had the idea of applying the same model of educational programme with the artworks from each of the institutions.

### **Second phase: Strategic action**

In various periods, the educational programme **Feel Art** included the following activities: 1. Presentation of the programme in kindergartens and schools; 2. Educational workshops with continuous evaluation; 3. Organised tours of the standard exhibition and evaluation; 4. Presentation of the results and an exhibition of children’s work in the Diocesan Museum and in the Gallery of Matica Srpska.

<i>Diocesan Museum, Palermo</i>	<i>Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad</i>
<i>1. Presentation of the educational programme in kindergartens and schools</i>	

During the first stage of the programme in both countries, there was an organised meeting with the groups of children included in the Project that lasted about an hour, and was held in the corresponding schools and the kindergarten. The programme activities were described on that occasion, and special emphasis was put on the five senses. In addition, the participants were given relevant information about the referential context, and specific features of the museums were emphasised. The children received an explanation that at the same time their peers in another country were going through a similar experience, and they were informed about the geographical and cultural characteristics of that country and the museum in question.

<i>Diocesan Museum, Palermo</i>	<i>Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad</i>
<i>2. Educational workshops with continuous evaluation</i>	<i>2. Organised tour of the standard exhibition and evaluation</i>

The second stage of the action in the Diocesan Museum included educational workshops. The idea was to engage the five senses of children and stimulate their individual appreciation of the artworks through observation accompanied by appropriate instructions. Every encounter was focused on the interpretation of the artworks, chosen to affect a particular sense, and was followed by the request to fill in the specially prepared accompanying worksheets.

The first workshop covered the development of hearing and touch. The artwork that was supposed to engage hearing predominantly was the **Coronation of the Mother of God**, by a Spanish painter from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Children were first asked to recognise the musical instruments. Afterwards, they listened to the recordings of these instruments and filled out worksheets with questions such as: How many musical instruments do you see in the painting? Which of them do you recognise? Who plays these instruments in the painting? Draw the instruments you like most! For touch, children were shown artworks from various materials, which represented **The Birth of Christ, The Assumption of the Mother of God and The Mother of God in Heaven**. Tactile feelings were expressed on worksheets through the following questions: What do you feel when you touch the sculpture? Among the “light” and “dark” parts, which seem to be colder, and which smoother? Draw and colour the work you like most!

The second workshop was aimed at the development of taste and smell. Children were first presented with an oil painting from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, **St. Benedict the Black**, in which they were supposed to recognise elements that appealed to taste. Here, too, worksheets were offered. In order to active children’s sense of smell, the chosen artworks were made of wood: **San Cristoforo** (19<sup>th</sup> century), **Ornamental Motive from the Crucifixion** (18<sup>th</sup> century). Different kinds of wood were used, and worksheets contained the following questions: What kind of trees do you know? What are their names? Did you know that this kind of tree had a smell? Draw the object you liked most!

Since the programme *Feel Art* in the Diocesan Museum had started one month earlier, the research team from Novi Sad had an opportunity to gain certain insights through direct observation and useful dialogues with the Italian team, which resulted in certain modifications to the original plan. Experience showed that it was not advisable to deal with two senses during one encounter with certain age groups. It was therefore agreed that activities in the Gallery of Matica Srpska would take place in the form of weekly workshops/encounters (for each sense), for the duration of four weeks, and that each session would



last one hour for each class/group. Since it had been noted that children's attention declined in the third stage of the programme in the Diocesan Museum ("guided tour"), the research teams agreed that the tour of the standard exhibition in the Gallery of Matica Srpska should precede the educational workshops.

The second stage of the research action in the Gallery of Matica Srpska (guided tour of the standard exhibition) was used to expand children's experience in a contextualised environment: was it possible to experience smell and how could this be done, was it possible to sense taste and touch and to hear a sound just by viewing a work of art?

<i>Diocesan Museum, Palermo</i>	<i>Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad</i>
<i>3. Organised tour of the standard exhibition and evaluation</i>	<i>3. Educational workshops with continuous evaluation</i>

The third stage of the research action in the Diocesan Museum involved a "guided tour", which facilitated detailed familiarisation with the Museum, but was also a moment in the final validation of the children's experience, especially in relation to their expressed interest and to efficacy. At this stage, there was a decline in the children's attention, which indicated that the time allotted for this activity was inappropriate for children of that age.

Concerning the educational workshops in the Gallery of Matica Srpska, for each workshop there were selected works of art that stimulated specific senses in various ways.

The first workshop was devoted to the development of the sense of smell. Children talked about what kind of smells there were, which smells they liked and which they did not, and what kind of sensations were caused by: fruits (an unknown painter from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, **Still Life with Watermelon**), flowers (Sava Petrosić, **A Girl with a Flower**, 1839 and an unknown painter from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, **Flowers in a Blue Vase**). Worksheets followed with the assignments: Do you recognise the objects that have a smell in the paintings (draw them or write them down)? Which objects in the painting do not have a smell? Draw the objects whose smell you like or do not like! The next workshop was devoted to the sense of taste. Depending on the objects presented in the paintings, children differentiated between different tastes: sweet (Dimitrije Ž. Petrović, **Still Life with Watermelon**, 1857), salty, hot (Milan Konjović, **Onion, Checked Napkin**, 1951), and bitter (Đorđe Bošanjac, **Still Life with Orange Peel**, 1956).

Hearing was the topic of the third workshop. Children recognised what in the paintings could produce sounds and imitated them: sea waves, volcano eruption (Dimitrije N. Petrović, **Vesuvius in Flames**, about 1870), birds, frogs,

rustling of leaves (unknown author, **Still Life with Bird**, 1840), musical instruments (Dimitrije Stakić, **Moses on Mount Sinai**, about 1860). They expressed their impressions by filling out the worksheets in answer to the following prompts: Do you recognise the sounds in the paintings? Order the paintings according to the strength of the sounds produced by the objects they depict! Which instrument would you like to play? Draw a musical instrument or a natural phenomenon whose sound you like! The fourth workshop was devoted to the sense of touch. Observing the exhibited paintings, children imagined what kind of tactile feeling would be produced by the objects in them: a bow, a necklace, hair, lace (Uroš Predić, **A Girl from a Burger Family**, 1904), metal sculptures (Sava Sandić, **The Penguin**), marble (Slavka Sredović Petrović, **A White Bear**), wood (Sava Sandić, **A Medusa**) and plastics (Ana Bešlić, **A Pillow**).

The programme in the Gallery of Matica Srpska was continuously evaluated. With the benefit of hindsight from the Diocesan Museum, a modification was introduced in the part of the programme in the Gallery of Matica Srpska related to the final evaluation, which this time took place outside the museum. The next stage of the action was organised in kindergartens and schools, and it confirmed that a carefully planned topic, well adjusted to children's interests and experience, stimulates creativity and develops sensitivity for works of art.

<i>Diocesan Museum, Palermo</i>	<i>Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad</i>
<i>4. Presentation of the results and the exhibition of children's work</i>	

The last stage of the action was to take place in the museums, where children's work was to be presented. This stage took the form of multimedia exhibitions, the presentation of drawings made by Italian and Serbian children and the promotion of the publication that showed the experience that was gained through drawings and worksheets. The data we have collected are certainly positive. The Project created conditions for an intercultural exchange at two levels: at the level of the distribution of knowledge and experience between the research teams, and at the level of children's learning and expression.

### **Third phase: Evaluation and critical reflection**

The starting ideas made it possible to identify a framework for critical reflection: **an intercultural perspective**, as a principle that inspires educational work, and **learning processes** in the museum.

In carrying out the Project, the intercultural aspect was translated into an exchange of experience from local environments, the Diocesan Museum as a museum of sacral art and the Gallery of Matica Srpska with works of sacral and general art. The educational model based on intercultural partnership did

not represent a uniform approach. The educational approach in the museums was projected in relation to the context and the territory. In this regard, the past and the future, the cultural heritage and children's creativity became the bridge that spanned different cultures, customs and territories. The children's works inspired by the works of Italian and Serbian art became the exhibits, which connected the Diocesan Museum and the Gallery of Matica Srpska. This Project thus built a solid base for the next step in the confrontation and exchange of experience, which meant children's direct contact with the culture and art of another country.

The process of learning, as the second referential framework of critical reflection, is specific because of the context of the environment, and because of the characteristics it acquires in this environment. Different modalities for the acquisition of information (painting, word, sound, touch), appropriate for different learning styles, ensured the active participation of the children. The operational modalities of educational work implied individual cognitive effort expressed through conversation, drawings and especially designed worksheets that were used as tools for knowledge construction. Most often, the children expressed their answers on the worksheets through drawings (98.2% of the sample of preschool and school age), whereas a somewhat smaller percentage of children (86.5%) also answered questions which required them to connect a particular taste with a particular facial expression on the traffic light of feelings, or to order the pictures according to the strength of sound produced by the objects presented in the paintings (82.3%). A smaller number of children (just 9.15%) answered the question "What are the sculptures like?" by stating a different number of features: smooth, cold, rough, hard, soft, warm, etc. Three features were mentioned by 7.5% of the sample, four features by 31.6%, five features by 51.7% and six features by 9.2% of the sample.

Since drawing is one of the basic forms of children's expression, which reflects the level of their general intellectual development, the development of fine motor skills, their perception and, finally, their temperament or the feelings they have and the way they think about the environment, we analysed these drawings in order to answer the previously set research tasks. The drawings represented two-dimensional objects, usually with a prominent perspective (mostly in drawings by children of 6 to 9 years of age), and a combination of different elements. Considering the level of their expression, they were mostly re-drawings, drawings by observing the authentic object and free drawings from memory and imagination. Apart from static conditions (a flower, a tree, a musical instrument), children also tried to capture dynamic processes (a volcano eruption, sea waves, birds' flight). Based on an analysis of the elements in these drawings – shapes, structural and spatial relations, schematic presentation of processes, concretisations and abstractions – it was possible to recognise different conceptual structures and mutual relationships. The choice

of colours depended more on momentary inspiration, emotion and temperament than on the colour of the actual object.

The opportunity to use the preferred learning style resulted in a wealth of socially and individually construed meanings, and the development of skills and abilities. To mention but a few: by drawing notes, children (16.2%) emphasised the functional aspect of the musical instrument, i.e. its capacity to produce a sound (understanding the function of an object); a great number of children (70.6%) linked the feeling of warmth with objects made of ceramics, which was defined as a smooth material, and the feeling of cold with objects made of bronze, which was a rough material (recognition and description of different qualities of the material); children (43%) recognised categories of musical instruments – for example, they differentiated brass and woodwind instruments from stringed instruments (classification, category recognition and description). Children, for example, depicted not only the chosen instrument, but they also detected relations and relationships – for example, a wooden sculpture was linked to the drawing of a tree (5.4%), which indicated a connection established between materials – wood and the final product – a work of art (observation and understanding of crucial relationships). Although the skills and abilities we have just described do not constitute proof of the outcomes of learning in the museum, they certainly confirm that a process of learning did take place.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Discussion of the issues related to the field of qualitative pedagogical discourse, and especially the critical scientific value of action research and its relevance for the practice and planning of educational policy, have a prominent pragmatic dimension. The cultural heritage of a certain territory situated in the museum context bears exceptional educational potential that should be used when working with the public, especially with preschool and school populations, but also with teachers and educators.

Experience gained from the Project has doubtlessly contributed to a better understanding and appreciation of the historical and artistic heritage of the territories involved. It has also helped build an international partnership where each of the partners, depending on their own experience, actively cooperated in the development of valid teaching methods and good practice. Generally speaking, the interdisciplinary and intercultural programme **Feel Art** successfully showed the potential of the museums as learning organisations to transform the educational system of a particular community and help schools abandon traditional methods of working.

In monitoring the educational programme, we have concluded that a participatory observation protocol (with widely defined categories, which contain phenomenological descriptions of sample behaviour) can be recommended as a valid form in the formative assessment of a programme, which is focused on the further development and improvement of a project. Especially valid were the data acquired through observation and discussion between researchers and workshop leaders, which, to a certain extent, helped shed light on the workshop leaders' hidden agendas, their implicit beliefs about what should be done with children in a museum and how it should be done, as well as the discrepancy between what had been planned and what was actually achieved. This exchange was also useful because of the different perspectives and views of the phenomena studied. Quality data acquired through formative evaluation, i.e. systematic monitoring of the programme activities, were used to modify and improve the programme, but also as information about the programme effects.

The exchange of experience between Italian and Serbian scientists and experts confirmed the important role of the museum as a place that raises awareness of one's cultural heritage, which is a prerequisite for an understanding of cultural diversity. The educational programme **Feel Art** can be understood as an example of a model of cooperation between museums across Europe. Such cooperation could help cultural integration in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and assist in the formulation of cultural policies on the European continent.

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## **INTERKULTURALNI DIJALOG U OBRAZOVANJU - KRITIČKA REFLEKSIJA U MUZEJSKOM KONTEKSTU**

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***Sažetak** - U tekstu se objašnjava značaj muzeja i međunarodnog znanstvenog partnerstva u promociji i valorizaciji regionalnog kulturnog nasljeđa, kao preduvjetu razvijanja svijesti o civilizacijskom okviru kulturnih tekovina na globalnom nivou. S ciljem osmišljavanja, realizacije i evaluacije edukativnog programa radi približavanja djece muzejima, paralelno je u Italiji i Srbiji provedeno akcijsko istraživanje kojim je bilo obuhvaćeno 170 djece. Istraživački projekt, utemeljen u konstruktivistički teorijski okvir, odlikuje refleksivnost i triangulacija. Refleksije provedenih aktivnosti i prikupljenih podataka omogućuju autoricama teksta da, kao sudionice istraživanja, vrednuju važnu ulogu muzeja kao mjesta razvijanja svijesti o kulturnoj baštini vlastite teritorije, vještina i sposobnosti, socijalne i personalne konstrukcije značenja, te oblikovanja međunarodnog partnerstva. Istraživački nalazi potvrđuju da polje kvalitativnog obrazovnog diskursa, muzejima nudi respektabilnu perspektivu u pogledu povezivanja teorije i prakse, odnosno mogućnosti neposrednije primjene znanstvenih rezultata u funkciji unapređivanja obrazovne prakse.*

**Ključne riječi:** akcijsko istraživanje, interkulturalni dijalog, obrazovanje u muzeju