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THE EXPERIMENTATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN BENEFICIARIES' JOB ORIENTATION[1]

1. Introduction

This contribution intends to offer a view on knowledge situated in social practices. The assumption is that during the development of the help relationship it is possible to share skills and generate knowledge which are helpful for building the migrant's personal network[2]. The èquipe of professionals operate to connect the person to the territory and put him or her in contact with citi-

[1] These topics are extensively developed in Tarsia T. (2015). *Inventare i servizi Sprar nellarea dello Stretto: una ricognizione*. In M. Colombo (a cura di). «Annuario CIRMiB 2015». Milano-Brescia. pp. 167-181.; Tarsia T. (2018a). *Saperi degli operatori e dei contesti nei percorsi di uscita dagli sprar*. In «Argomenti», 9, pp. 67-97; Tarsia T. (2018b). *Pratiche relazionali nella seconda accoglienza per richiedenti asilo*. In «Sociologia e politiche sociali». 3. pp. 127-47; Tarsia T. (2018c). *La seconda accoglienza come spazio conflittuale e le competenze degli operatori*. In «Educazione interculturale». 2. pp. 66-85; Tarsia T. (2018d). *Lo SPRAR come campo d'esperienza. Ambiente relazionale e pratiche professionali*. In M. Omizzolo (a cura di). «L'asilo come diritto. Richiedenti asilo, strutture ed operatori: ricerche e riflessioni e pratiche professionali». Aracne: Roma. pp.97-122; Tarsia T. (2018e). Gli assistenti sociali nello spazio relazionale della seconda accoglienza. In «La rivista di servizio sociale».2. pp. 44-49; Tarsia T. (2020a). *La conoscenza tacita degli operatori Sprar: quando i problemi generano saperi*. In «Mondi Migranti». 2. pp. 183-202; Tarsia T. (2020b). *Tercer sector y trabajadores sociales en la segunda recepción de refugia-dos en Italia*. in J. A. Vega Vega (a cura di). «La empresa social en España e Italia», Editorial Reus: Madrid. pp. 167-187. I would like to thank the coordinators, operators and beneficiaries who have given me the opportunity and the pleasure of listening to their personal and professional stories.

[2] Tarsia T. (2020a). *La conoscenza tacita degli operatori Sprar: quando i problemi generano saperi*. In «Mondi Migranti». 2. pp. 183-202; Gherardi S., Nicolini D. (2001). *Il pensiero pratico. Un'etnografia dell'apprendimento*. In «Rassegna italiana di sociologia». 2. pp. 231-256; Landri P. (2007). *Tra comunità e pratica*. «Sociologia del lavoro». 105. pp. 170-180; Orr J. (1995). *Condividere le conoscenze, celebrare l'identità. La memoria di comunità in una cultura di servizio*. In

zens, neighbours, officials and other social actors which may become a refer-
ence point once the beneficiaries have left the project. It is a complex operation
because the subjects, just like the authorities involved, are numerous and the
outcome of the operation is the result of a number of subsequent stages, which
are sometimes contemporary. Each step requires the acquisition of knowledge,
skills and competences on behalf of the migrant but also on behalf of the other
social actors directly or indirectly involved[3].

The first step is to consider the beneficiary's job orientation as a tile of a
more articulated mosaic: the government reception system for asylum seekers.
A second feature which must be considered is that the action takes place in a
complicated help relationship where operators and beneficiaries are subjects
capable of "agency", who move in a field where opposite forces clash[4]. A third
component is to think of this pathway as a learning process for all the subjects
involved[5]. The intent is to build an "ideal-type" starting from the components
which have been successful, keeping in mind that the social situation of these
projects is difficult to model, not only due to the geographical variety of the
settings in which they take place but also due to the heterogeneity of the profes-
sional figures involved and the organisational structures used.

Such complexity within the Sprars (nowadays Siproimi) originally lies in the
institutional mandate:

each territorial project is the combination of an "integrated reception"
methodology based on, as established by the guidelines, a holistic approach of
the services (physical reception; linguistic and intercultural mediation; guid-
ance and access to the territory's services; training and professional retraining;
job orientation and placement; housing guidance and support; social inclusion
guidance and support; legal guidance and support; psychosocial and health
protection), on the construction of individualized pathways of integration con-
sidering the characteristics of the host territory, in order to create reception
projects based on vocation, skills and competences of the local actors, taking

C. Pontecorvo, A.M. Ajello, C. Zucchermaglio, *I contesti sociali dell'apprendimento. Acquisire conoscenze a scuola, nel lavoro, nella vita quotidiana*. Milano: Led. pp.326-330.

[3] Biagiotti A., Tarsia T. (a cura di) (2020). *Traiettorie dell'inclusione. Esperienze e strategie di lavoro sociale con le persone straniere*. Carocci: Roma.

[4] Accorinti M., Spinelli E. (2019). *L'attività degli operatori sociali tra aiuto e controllo nel nuovo sistema di accoglienza*. In «La Rivista delle Politiche Sociali». 2. pp. 103-120; Lewin K. (1980). *I conflitti sociali: saggi dinamica di gruppo*. Franco Angeli: Milano.

[5] Tarsia T. (2020b). *Tercer sector y trabajadores sociales en la segunda recepción de refugiados en Italia*. in J. A. Vega Vega (a cura di). «La empresa social en España e Italia», Editorial Reus: Madrid. pp. 167-187.

into account the resources (professional, structural, economical), the welfare tools and political social strategies experimented over the years in the same territory[6].

These projects are services which cannot be placed in a precise category: they hardly ever provide direct services, apart from a few cases, but they support the beneficiary in relating to educational and social health services. They are also relational contexts[7] when, for example, they guide the person with individualized intervention projects[8] and they are also thresholds when, starting from the first weeks of arrival they prepare the beneficiaries towards the departure from the project and finally, they are conditioning environments, where it is necessary to adapt to the rules of communal spaces or cohabitation even when it occurs in a diffused hospitality manner. In this case, although the housing units require that few people cohabitate, if the members are not part of the same family they can host refugees of different nationalities and ages. It is easy to imagine how the operators often work in ambiguous and conflictual situations which may cause dilemmas; it is not uncommon for these professionals to find themselves having to mediate between the institutional mandate and their social mandate, between the help and control function[9].

This contribution's purpose is to highlight and point out, as explained further on, those strategies which have triggered righteous processes and which have had positive outcomes in the realities investigated. The legislation defines the institutional frame which must be referred to, but the single projects can become workshops of innovation and exchange of good reception practices. The idea here is not to point out a static picture but to trigger questions around an operational proposal, a solid basis for generating other possibilities. Although the various elements which will be described originate from practices situated[10] in the single experiences, in a game of reconstruction, that we consider as artificial, we will set the information, choices, decisions and various dilemmas set forth by the professionals. This paper's viewpoint is the workers' perspective

[6] Siproimi (2019). *Rapporto annuale 2018*. Roma. p.1.

[7] Donati P.(2007). *L'approccio relazionale al capitale sociale*. In «Sociologia e capitale sociale». 1. pp. 9-39.

[8] Tarsia T. (2020b). *Tercer sector y trabajadores …op. cit*.

[9] Tarsia T. (2018a). *Saperi degli operatori e dei contesti nei percorsi di uscita dagli sprar*. In «Argomenti», 9, pp. 67-97; Barberis E., Boccagni P. (2017*). Il lavoro sociale con le persone immigrate. Strumenti per la formazione e la pratica interculturale nei servizi*. Santarcangelo di Romagna (RN): Maggioli.

[10] Lave J., Wenger F. (2006). *L'apprendimento situato. Dall'osservazione alla partecipazione attiva nei contesti sociali.* Trento: Erickson.

operating in second reception. The intent is to provide several useful points of discussion not only for those who enter this environment for the first time, but also for those who are veterans in the field and are interested in comparing their own way of building social inclusion processes with other workers. Before starting the analysis, it is necessary to outline the prominent features of the research design, the methods and tools adopted.

2. *Objectives and methodology of the research*

The research has been developed in two different phases. The first phase refers to the period from 2014 to 2018 in which 51 workers operating in different Sprar projects in Sicily, Calabria and marginally Sardinia, were interviewed. During this period the in-depth interviews and the focus groups involved concerned social workers, project coordinators, social and health workers, job orientation workers and cultural mediators. About ten beneficiaries were also interviewed. In the second phase, which started in 2018 and is still underway, a "participated educational and research board" was formed in order to extract tacit knowledge[11] incorporated in the reception workers' social practices. Such professional knowledge is conceptualized and therefore made explicit within the work group. This research, which uses collaborative techniques[12] requiring a direct and active involvement of the various stakeholders in a discussion space characterized by an atmosphere of confrontation and trust, helps the participants to give a new meaning to the routine of their work and their experience in the organisations. The long-term intent is to create a reverberation in terms of know-how in the help relationship built between the social workers and the refugees. The "participated educational and research board" is formed by academic scholars, refugees (previous beneficiaries from SPRAR projects), social workers and university students. Over the last two years the "boards" have involved 19 social actors who met about 5 times in each semester. This group had the task of structuring a co-teaching lesson for students attending the first year of Social Service Sciences at Messina University in 2018 and 2019. It concerned one of the "boards" formed within the research "Professional social practices

[11] Polanyi M. (2018). *La conoscenza inespressa*. Roma: Armando; Id. (1962). *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-critical Philosophy*. London: Routledge.
[12] Aldridge J. (2014), *Working with vulnerablegroups in social research: dilemmas by default and design*. In «Qualitative Research». 14(1). pp. 112-130; Beresford P. (2002). *User involvement in research and evaluation: liberation or regulation?*. In «Social Policy and Society». 1 (2). pp. 95-105.

in services throughout the territory: making knowledge explicit". The groups are heterogeneous in their form and they work to pin down what knowledge is present in the practice of reception services in order to co-construct a lesson attended by the whole group and where the group can take part in the discussion with the students about the topics dealt with during the meeting moments[13].

The researcher has gradually approached the complexity of some of the reception projects in the Ionian area of Calabria, in the Area of the Straight of Messina, and the Tyrrhenian area of Sicily. The starting point moved from the assumption that it would not have been possible to define a linear and univocal comprehension of what was happening in these spaces[14] but, on the contrary, it would have been necessary to have a wider initial viewpoint that would give the possibility to focus on particular aspects and phases such as the orientation interviews regarding training experiences or the èquipe's weekly meetings. In the first part of the research, besides the interviews and the focus groups, the information was studied starting from the field notes taken during the direct observation in the SPRARs in Calabria, whereas the second phase was and still is characterised by participatory and collaborative research techniques such as world cafes, circle time and brainstorming.

This contribution uses information obtained during the first phase of the research because it is consolidated and it is helpful in order to build a picture deriving from the various experiences. As a consequence, the legislative reference framework is prior to the c.d. "Security Decree" and "Security Decree bis" which have brought substantial changes in second reception in Italy in terms of migrant reception procedures and granting residence permits[15]. In spite of this, what is described further on may still be important for those who work in the reception field and it will possibly generate interest regardless of the changes which have occurred in the projects in Italy. Job orientation is currently a SIP-ROIMI objective and it continues to be put in relation to the achievement of autonomous and emancipated integration. The considerations expressed further on can be useful in terms of training, transmission of good practices and discussion with workers and administrators in the sector.

[13]   Tarsia T. (2020a). *La conoscenza tacita degli operatori Sprar: quando i problemi generano saperi*. In «Mondi Migranti». 2. pp. 183-202.

[14]   Becker H.S. (2019). *I problemi sociali*. PM Edizioni: Varazze (SV); id (2007). *I trucchi del mestiere. Come fare ricerca sociale*. Il Mulino: Bologna.

[15]   Ambrosini M., Campomori F. (2020). *La controversia dell'asilo: politiche di accoglienza e solidarietà contro i confini*. In «Politiche Sociali». 2. pp.181-200.

3. *The intricacy of the Italian Reception System. A brief overview*

This paragraph does not want to describe the passages of the Italian recep-
tion system, this may be examined in other contributions[16]. It will introduce
certain aspects of the reception system which are useful in order to study the
focus of this contribution. The reception of people seeking the status of refugee
is a complex path in Italy and its aim is to reach the beneficiary's integration.
The beneficiary is placed in a system of actions supposing that there is a help
relationship between a professional and a person needing help. In this case a
migrant requests, by filling in the c.d. "modello C3" form, to be assisted and
therefore receive services envisaged by the national welfare for the reception
of those seeking protection. It is important to state out that this paper refers
to what is called "second reception" and consequently, attention will concern
the help process which is triggered in this system of rules and relations. The
Siproimi network: "is a network of local authorities which access the National
Fund for asylum policies and services (FNPSA) and create integrated reception
projects within the local welfare state and collaborate closely with other institu-
tional interlocutors and with private social organisations"[17].

This description highlights two aspects which are interesting for this contri-
bution: the first is the network's form and the second regards inter-institutional
relations. What is referred to is the integration with the local welfare assistance
and the relation between governance and government. Both profiles are already
included in Law 328/2000. Second reception projects are developed as a ser-
vice whose effectiveness depends on the amount of infrastructures offered by
the territory and by the functioning of other local services. The scenario in
which these projects take place is not uninfluential. The same thought can be
extended to the local programmes and the fulfilment of social-health integra-
tion, which highlight how in certain areas, the shortage and lack of services is a
structural fact which has to be taken into account by the social workers when
defining the beneficiary's personal intervention project. On this matter, Barb-
eris points out how theories based on the "mixed embeddedness approach",

[16] Ambrosini M. (2020). *Sociologia delle migrazioni*, Il Mulino: Bologna; id. (2019). *Migra-
zioni*. Egea: Milano; Omizzolo M. (2018) (a cura di). *L'asilo come diritto. Richiedenti, strutture e
operatori ricerche e riflessioni*. Aracne: Roma; Bontepelli S., Faso G. (2017). *Accogliere rifugiati
e richiedenti asilo*. Cesvot, Firenze; Campomori F. (2016). *Le politiche per i rifugiati in Italia:
dall'accoglienza all'integrazione. Missione impossibile*. In «Social Cohesion Papers». 2.pp. 3-30;
Omizzolo M., Sodano P. (2015) (a cura di). *Migranti e territori. Lavoro diritti accoglienza*. Ediesse:
Roma; Elia A. (2014). *Rifugiati in Calabria. Risposte locali a disuguaglianze globali*. Rubbettino:
Soveria Mannelli.
[17] Siproimi*, op.cit*, p.1.

which conjugate Granovetter's paradigm with Polanyi's, confirm how the intensity and variety of the relations that the migrant has at his or her disposal in a certain environment can influence their actions: "The model emphasizes that entrepreneurial activities are affected by migrants' embeddedness in the structure (laws, rules, market characteristics, etc.) of the places where the business is conducted; at the same time, entrepreneurs are also embedded in their networks of social relations"[18] Two interesting considerations can be made. The first shows how these networks are not only linked to the fellow-countrymen and therefore connected to the sole beneficiary, but they also call natives into play. The second underlines how these connections also develop according to job opportunities offered locally and how they occur within a frame regarding "laws, rules, market characteristics and other aspects". Further on we will see how these elements are necessarily taken into consideration by the social service operators and by the beneficiary when they have to construct the job orientation process.

3.1 The help relationship with the beneficiary

In SPRAR projects, which are the last stage of what is considered as the Italian governmental reception chain, a pathway is activated and the essential indications are described in the operational guidelines published on the official SIPROIMI network website (Protection System for Beneficiaries of International Protection and for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors), previously SPRAR network (Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees). Several social workers support the beneficiary's life project (social service workers, cultural mediators, L2 teachers, legal operators, social-health and reception workers). Their task is to create a line of actions which facilitate the inclusion of the person, the project's guest: "social work as a 'methodology of life planning', where professionals assist people to make choices about how to live in a world of multiple choices"[19]. The beneficiary is taken care of by the whole multi-professional èquipe, even though each team chooses how to organise itself and share the work necessary to guide the person. The professional figures involved may be varied. During the period of the research people would be sent anywhere in the country even without a stay permit, therefore, the guest would be supported by a legal operator to prepare for the interview by the local authority Commis-

    [18] Barberis E., Solano G. (2018). *Mixed Embeddedness and Migrant Entrepreneurship: Hints on Past and Future Directions. An Introduction*. In «Sociologica». 2. pp. 1-22. (3).
    [19] Ferguson H (2003). *Outline of a critical best practice perspective on social work and social care*. In «The British Journal of Social Work». 33. pp. 699-707. (701).

sion. At the same time the person would be supported in his or her life project through actions which would place him or her in the surrounding environment by subscribing to the National Health System and by attending L2 classes at the CPIA or other projects,[20] up to the job orientation stage.

The beneficiary is then interviewed, supported by a specific operator, the cultural mediator and sometimes by other professionals such as social assistants and a balance of competences is drawn up[21]. The social workers start to reconstruct the beneficiary's life and work history with care and attentiveness: it is a delicate process which sometimes touches raw nerves and which makes it is necessary to support the person to regain self-esteem and, therefore, give him or her the possibility to look towards the future. These are not easy results to obtain given the traumatic events of the migrants' who arrive in the projects. It is not easy to remember and re-evaluate one's past in the perspective of attempting a new start in an unknown country, where it is necessary to use a foreign language and where one has few reference points[22]. These interviews are often necessary to create an atmosphere of trust and to break tension and anger, to restore dignity and awareness of one's personal life.

3.2 The learning process

Second reception operators are professionals who have had to adapt their professional knowledge, giving it a new meaning, and also acquire further knowledge in an ever changing political-legislative and organisational setting. Supporting a beneficiary is a reciprocal learning process[23] which involves the operators and the refugees but also citizens, various employers from the local authorities and all those people, who in some way, are involved in the integration process. For example, in job orientation cases we consider the operator who has this specific task, the beneficiary, the shop owners and the entrepreneurs, other workers or employees, and the community related to the specific area in which the SPRAR is set, as social actors. They are all considered as social actors because they are potentially capable of "agency". All these people participate in a learning process on various levels and structure geometrically var-

[20]   Elia A. (2020). *L'accesso all'istruzione per adulti delle donne rifugiate: percorsi di apprendimento e di resilienza*. In A. Biagiotti, T. Tarsia (a cura di). «Traiettorie dell'inclusione… op. cit». pp. 49-60.

[21]   Tarsia T. (2020b). *Tercer sector y trabajadores …op. cit.*

[22]   Hughes E.C. (2010). *Lo sguardo sociologico*. Il Mulino: Bologna.

[23]   Colombo M., Scardigno F. (2019) (a cura di). *La formazione dei rifugiati e dei minori stranieri non accompagnati*. Vita e Pensiero: Milano.

iable relations. The social operator is engaged, with the beneficiary, to discover what competences can be used and in which sector; the potential employer has to search for and coordinate the most appropriate strategies for the migrant's training process; the trainee studies the technical aspects of the job and also all the tacit knowledge regarding the practical knowledge of actions carried out by the colleagues, and so on[24].

It is a learning acquisition process; if it becomes bidirectional and circular it enables the acquisition of social rules, technical-professional language and also all "vernacular knowledge"[25] which would otherwise remain incorporated in daily social practices, but if made clear can create a place of opportunities and experiential discussion.

4.   The beneficiary's orientation process: a possible model

The orientation process must take various aspects into consideration. The operators' activity in this phase in the SPRARs I have visited is not isolated, but it is a step in the help process supporting the beneficiary for the entire period of the project. Considering the operational manuals intended for the professional workers it is clear that this action is a linchpin, together with housing inclusion, around which to construct "emancipating reception"[26].

4.1 The structure of the orientation process

In the SRARs taken into consideration by the research there is a social operator engaged in job orientation. The beneficiary is usually interviewed once or more supported by a cultural mediator and in some cases other professionals such as social assistance workers. The interview constructs a balance of competences by gathering the person's past experiences (degrees, professional activities) and also through his or her wishes and plans. These interviews are specific moments[27] in which the operators prepare a welcoming setting and a trustwor-

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[24]   Strati A. (2000). *Estetica, conoscenza tacita e apprendimento organizzativo*. In «Studi organizzativi». 2. pp. 157-177.

[25]   Cappa F. (2017). *Cosa c'è da apprendere dall'esperienza accumulata nei mondi dei makers?*. In «Animazione Sociale», 309. pp. 23-35.

[26]   Servizio centrale del Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati (2018). *Manuale operativo per l'attivazione e la gestione di servizi di accoglienza integrate in favore di richiedenti titolari di protezione internazionale e umanitaria*. Roma. p. 6

[27]   Tarsia T. (2018c). *La seconda accoglienza come spazio conflittuale e le competenze degli operatori*. In «Educazione interculturale». 2. pp. 66-85.

thy atmosphere in the attempt of capturing, as much as possible, the person's motivations and interests. The beneficiary, as easily imagined, may be strongly influenced by the surrounding situation (he or she is a guest in an unknown nation, a beneficiary of a governmental service in an unknown area, without any contacts if not marginally, and sometimes may be accompanied by his or her family for which he or she feels responsible). The operators often try to take responsibility for this uncertainty which can lead to anxiousness and worry and can be expressed by passive behaviour and depression but also anger and dissatisfaction.

Below, according to each micro passage, various strategies and experiences have been pointed out; they refer to the SPRARs joining the project.

The description[28] takes into account what we consider as the most interesting aspects of an "ideal-type" path: social actors (beneficiaries, operators, shop owners, other citizens), fields of knowledge (language acquisition, rule socialization, interaction with colleagues, managing one's home life), and the specific characteristics of the environment and territory (job vacancies; need of specialized workers or not; the territory's infrastructures in which the project is set).

4.2 The interview with the beneficiary

The beneficiary's job orientation begins with one or more interviews supported by a specific operator[29]. During the interviews I assisted as an external observer there was also a cultural mediator and another professional. The presence of a mediator helped to construct a climate of trust and also to translate the beneficiary's words and explain part of the information linked to the person's background (for example, the educational system may be different from the Italian one and a certain work activity might seem the same but is actually different). The interview takes place in a specific place and dedicated time. It is not an easy moment for the person. The beneficiary might even recall difficult situations besides not being able to express himself or herself in his or her mother tongue. In one of my field notes I annotated a feeling of sadness which fell after what seemed to be a simple question regarding the possession or not of a title of study certificate; the beneficiary said that everything had been burnt when his house had caught fire, including that document (Author, 2018c). It is a difficult moment to handle, emotionally demanding even for the operators

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[28] Tarsia T. (2020). *Strategie di intervento degli operatori nelle pratiche sociali dei progetti di accoglienza*. In A. Biagiotti, T. Tarsia (a cura di). «Traiettorie dell'inclusione. Esperienze e strategie di lavoro sociale con le persone straniere». Carocci: Roma. pp. 89-102.

[29] Tarsia T. (2018a). *Saperi degli operatori…op. cit.*

who, on the contrary of what usually happens during the interviews, are not able to communicate directly with the person because their words are always mediated by an interpreter. The social assistants, just like the other operators find themselves having to adapt their professional tools[30] like the interview and use their own intercultural sensitivity[31] to deconstruct prejudices and cultural-istic perspectives which are always lurking. The presence of various profession-als (the previously mentioned triad) help the operators face the tense situation and share doubts and perplexities which may arise. This leads to the choices made by some work teams to discuss, during èquipe meetings, the outcome of the balance of competences and a possible job offer for the beneficiary. This discussion space is meant to build circular communication, where feedback is constant and reciprocal, and to support the specific operator taking action and to make all the professionals involved in the choice co-responsible. In addition, the work team is also a space where the operator shares potential difficulties connected to a possible job for the beneficiary. For example, the possibility to stay in the place where the training will take place because of a night shift or the difficulty of finding a particular job.

4.3 Work in the territory

The operator involved in dealing with job orientation searches for train-ing or apprenticeship opportunities for the beneficiaries. This means building a range of possibilities, which is constantly enriched and which will be used at the right moment. To this point, the experts who have been interviewed suggest several strategies which have been refined over time. In these cases, professional knowledge is operational knowledge[32] which comes from trial and error experimentation. All the people who have been interviewed underline that their aim is not to place the person in a working place but to create the ba-sis of a good apprenticeship and socialization experience in the working world in which the person is set. One of the operators says that he tries to enrich the list of businesses or potential employers in order to give at least one possibility for the person to receive a job contract. If the same business is always called on for availability to hire, the possibility of actually getting a job becomes less

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[30] Tarsia T. (2018e). *Gli assistenti sociali nello spazio relazionale della seconda accoglienza*. In «La rivista di servizio sociale».2.pp. 44-49.

[31] Bennett MJ. (2003). *Principi di comunicazione interculturale. Paradigmi e pratiche*. Franco Angeli: Milano.

[32] Sanfelici M. (2018). *I modelli del servizio sociale. Dalla teoria all'intervento*. Carocci: Roma. pp.17-20.

concrete. Another operator thinks that it is fundamental to involve the person actively to search for a job; it is a way of getting the beneficiaries to explore the territory and make them become aware of the real difficulties in the various contexts. Other operators try to start, initially, from shops particularly sensitive to reception matters such as those linked to associations like "Libera". These networks also fulfil another operator's need: they offer a secure experience in terms of working conditions and respect of their rights. Other operators point out that searching for a training experience is sometimes the result of negotiating with the authority head of the project. It may occur that a Council, for example, offers to accept beneficiaries temporarily in their staff as garbage collectors or pruners. It is unlikely that the migrant will be hired in these cases, so the operators suggest strategies such as diversifying the training experiences (for example, partly at the Council and partly in a business). The operators involved continually search for new opportunities: they feel the importance of their role in relation to helping the beneficiaries to find their life pathways with the community and their potential employers. They maintain constant relations with the institutions in the territory such as the employment centres. Finally, they help to mediate conflictual situations linked to misunderstandings, behaviour considered as inappropriate or cultural choices which may lead to dilemmas on behalf of the migrants.

4.4 Mediation and negotiation in job inclusion

The last interesting aspect I would like to point out is linked to a skill which crosses all the operators working in second reception: the ability of facilitating communication and construction of spaces full of potentiality where the beneficiaries can directly experiment the construction and implementation not only of strong relations but also weak ones, more informal, extemporary[33]. Not only do the experts challenge their personal and professional knowledge but they support the beneficiaries in the attempt to meet other people and create new relations. The operators dealing with job orientation, particularly, spend much time explaining the importance of what the apprenticeship experience means to the beneficiary, to the potential employers without forgetting to mention the advantages that come from welcoming that specific person in the work team. In some cases, the operators inform the employer but are not able to place the person. When the apprenticeship does take place operators support the

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[33] Granovetter M. (1991). *Action and Social Structure: The problem of Embeddedness.* «American Journal of Sociology».3. pp. 481-510.

company's tutor, the beneficiaries and the employers during situations of tension and misunderstandings or reciprocal fatigue. Finally, the operators move in order to certify the new trainings and convey other possibilities in view of the project's end. Similarly, the operators spend part of their time decoding the migrant's colleagues' or employer's behaviour, contextualizing and situating behaviour, deconstructing stereotypes which the beneficiaries themselves have and which in some occasions influence the frame through which attitudes and words are understood.

5. *Brief final reflections*

In conclusion, a few lines to point out the interviewees' opinions about the strategies and useful actions in order to set up a righteous job orientation processes. First of all, it seems that great importance has been given to the beneficiary as actually being in the condition to be in control of his or her life plan; as we have seen, this depends on personal factors (the guest's history, title of study, capacity of being resilient) but also on structural factors (the area where the project is set, the community's context). The operators, who have been interviewed, seem to be projected toward a limitation of what has been defined as an "infantilization"[34] process of the beneficiary: the migrants have to be supported but at the same time it is important to provide them, from the very start, with tools so that they can find their way in the territory. Another interesting threshold seems to be the rising awareness and mediation with the potential employers and the local community: a personal network is co-built around the beneficiary and managed directly by the refugee without external mediation at the end of the project. Supporting the beneficiary means that he or she will become acquainted with the rules of the place, the laws and with the meaning of certain behaviours belonging to informal communication. Finally, the setting, in which the interviews take place, is of great importance. They are reserved areas where one may be emotionally moved and where it is possible to tell one's life story. This type of work questions those professionals who, having to work as a junction of relations, need to work on their biases, on their personal limitations, searching for the right balance between being an operator and belonging to that specific country or place in which the project is set. In conclusion, it is

[34]   Riccio B. (2018*). Dilemmi, mediazioni e opportunità nel lavoro di accoglienza rivolto a rifugiati e richiedenti asilo: un'introduzione*. In «Educazione interculturale». 16. pp. 1-9.; Tarsia T. (2015*). Inventare i servizi Sprar nellarea dello Stretto: una ricognizione*. In M. Colombo (a cura di). «Annuario CIRMiB 2015». Milano- Brescia.

exactly in the acknowledgement of how complex it is to carry out this role that I have decided, in this contribution, to reflect on and clarify certain actions and strategies used by professionals to face the problems encountered in refugees' job inclusion paths.

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