# MiCREATE

## Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

**Reflecting on art-based techniques to support children's narrations about themselves in a multicultural primary school**

Laura Malinverni, Paula Lozano, Judit Onsès, Miguel Stuardo

MiCREATE
Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# The research group

- We are part of the Esbrina research group at the University of Barcelona.

- We are 4 researchers in charge of the field work at the Kaleidoscope School (fictitious name) in Barcelona.

- We are an international team: Laura, was born in Italy, Judit and Paula, in Catalonia, Miguel, in Chile.
-

- Paula is developing her doctoral research; Judit, Laura and Miguel are doing post-doctoral work on the project.

# The MiCreate project

- Micreate project aims to stimulate inclusion of migrant children and youth by adopting a child-centered approach to migrant children integration on educational and policy level.

- The project involves schools from several European countries, including Spain.

- This communication builds on part of the fieldwork developed in one primary school of Barcelona, Spain, during the 2019-2020 academic year.

MiCREATE

Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# Theoretical Framework

- Schools play an important role in promoting migrant children integration and meeting students' needs (Eurydice, 2019).

- Following a child-centered approach (Due, Riggs and Augoustinos, 2014). This means research with children, it implies a research design that enables them to express on their own terms and to participate in the research process.

- We explore different art-based techniques to facilitate children's involvement.

**MiCREATE**

Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# Theoretical Framework

- Several studies have used visual methods and artistic approaches when carrying out research with migrant children and youth (Kirova & Emme, 2008; Guruge et al., 2015; Vecchio, Dhillon & Ulmer, 2017; Moskal, 2017; Zhang-Yu et al., 2020).

- Visual methods and artistic approaches may include: drawings, photographs, videos, mental maps, performance, poems, photovoice, quilting, digital storytelling, etc. (Vecchio, Dhillon & Ulmer, 2017; Moskal, 2017).

MICREATE

Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# The fieldwork

- Our main goal was to investigate four main aspects of children's experiences in and out of the school: educational system, migration experiences, perceptions about their present and future and family and wider community.

- The neighborhood:  53,4 % are "extranjeros" (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2020).

- The Kaleidoscope School: primary level, 225 students, 50% of whom are migrants or come from families with migrant backgrounds and trajectories.

**MiCREATE**
Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# The fieldwork

- The participants: 22 pupils (aged 10-11 years), 1 teacher, 6 researchers  (our team, plus 2 Master Students.)

- A four-session workshop design was applied.

- We recorded in video and audio. We transcribed the session in text documents. We made evaluation-comments meetings after each session.

# Art-Based Methods: Concepts



HOOK (Get children interest)

HANDS-ON (Get engaged by doing things)

HEADS-IN (Reflect on what you are doing)

SHARE (Explain to others)

MiCREATE

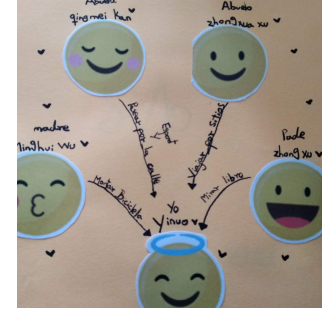Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# Art-Based Methods: Topics



**Educational environment**



**Migration experience**



**Well–being and life satisfaction**



**Family and Local Environment**

MiCREATE
Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# Art-Based Methods: Educational environment



Interactive storytelling: welcoming the newcomer

The places of the school (bests and worst)



Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# Art-Based Methods: Migration experience



The backpack of experiences and emotions:
- Things we have left behind.
- Things we have found here.
- Negative things that we have liked to leave behind.
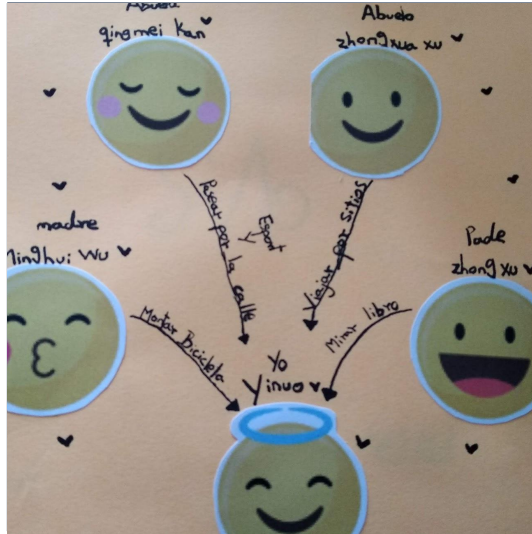- Things that we would have liked to bring

# Art-Based Methods: Well–being and life satisfaction



Puppets creation:

- The present "I/self"
- The future "I/self"

# Art-Based Methods: Family and Local Environment

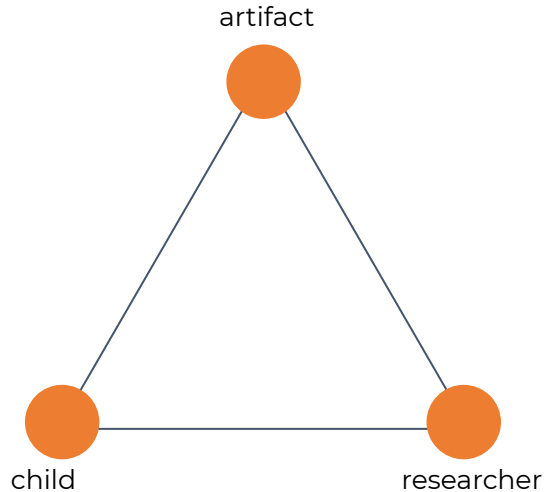

Visual representation of the family members through emoticons

What do you like to do with them?

Where do you spend your free time?

# Reflecting on Art-Based Methods: opportunities

artifact

child        researcher

- Go beyond verbal and written language
- Role of artifacts and materiality in creating a triangle to facilitate dialogue
- Importance of doing it together
- Opportunity to delve into complex topics without being too invasive
- Opportunity for self-narration at one's own pace
- Opportunity to know better your peers

Mi CREATE
Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# Reflecting on Art-Based Methods: limitations

child

researcher

- Time constraints
- Power relations
- Building a trust environment
- Complexity of the analysis of the multimodal materials

**MiCREATE**
Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

# Open questions

- Ethical considerations on self-narration in educational contexts

- How art-based approaches can be thought and be employed more broadly in multicultural educational contexts?

MiCREATE

Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe