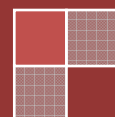# Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology

Special Issue for INTE 2017
October 2017

Prof. Dr. Aytekin İşman
Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Dr. Jerry WILLIS - ST John Fisher University in Rochester, USA
Prof. Dr. J. Ana Donaldson - AECT President
Editors

Assist.Prof.Dr. Fahme DABAJ - Eastern Mediterranean University, TRNC
Associate Editor

Children's Ethical Thinking: The "Melarete" Project

Luigina MORTARI
Department of Human Sciences
University of Verona
Italy
Italy
luigina.mortari@univr.it

Marco UBBIALI
Department of Human Sciences
University of Verona
Italy
marco.ubbiali@univr.it

Federica VALBUSA
Department of Human Sciences
University of Verona
federica.valbusa@univr.it

ABSTRACT
MelArete is an educative and research project promoted by the Center of Educational and Didactic Research of the University of Verona in Italy. The project is aimed at educating children to virtue ethics and exploring their ethical thinking. The theoretical background is grounded in the Socratic and Aristotelian ethical visions. Important references are also found in the philosophy of care and in Ricoeur's definition of ethics. The project involves children attending kindergarten (5-6 y.o.) and primary school (9-10 y.o.). The experience is aimed at encouraging children to reflect about the concepts of good and care, about the general idea of virtue and about some specific virtues, such as courage, generosity, respect and justice. The activities designed to reach these educative aims and collect data for the research are the following: Socratic conversations, stories, vignettes, games. Another important activity is the diary of virtues, a journal where children reflect on their ethical experience. The qualitative data analysis is still in progress. However, we can already present some specific examples that show the richness of children's ethical thinking.

INTRODUCTION
Authentic educational research in schools develops new educative experiences and investigates their effectiveness to foster the flourishing of children. On the basis of this presupposition, that concerns the politics of research, the Center of Educational and Didactic Research at the University of Verona, Italy, proposed MelArete, an educative and research project designed to promote and study activities aimed at encouraging the development of children's ethical thinking (Mortari and Mazzoni, 2014). During 2016-2017, the project involved children attending kindergarten (5–6 years old) and primary school (9–10 years old). In this paper, we present MelArete by highlighting the theoretical background and the epistemological framework in which it is rooted. We describe the general structure of the educative path we proposed for the children by clarifying the educative and heuristic valences of the activities we organised and the instruments we used. In order to demonstrate the effectiveness of the MelArete project to promote children's ethical thinking, we present data that show the richness of the children's reflections. Furthermore, we quote some of the teachers we interviewed who highlighted in their opinion the strong points of the project.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
In order to present the theoretical background, it is appropriate to start with the title of the project. The word MelArete originates from the union of the Greek terms *meléte* (which means care) and *areté* (which means virtue); the ethics of care and the ethics of virtue are the fundamental theoretical references of the project.
First, it is necessary to highlight that we define MelArete as a project for ethical education because we embrace the definition of ethics given by Ricoeur (1992), who describes it as 'aiming at a good life lived with and for others in just institutions' (p. 172). Additionally, we agree with Ricoeur (1990) by maintaining that the concept of aiming is too generic and it should be substituted with the concept of care, so that ethics becomes a discourse that deals with the care for oneself, for others and for institutions. Starting from this vision of ethics, it is therefore legitimate to state that ethics is caring.
Human being is not self-subsistent and, for this reason, he experiences to be vulnerable. Vulnerability of the other contains an appeal to responsibility (Pulcini, 2009), and the necessity to act for the other in a responsible way is the generative root of ethics. A human is a constitutively relational being (Heidegger, 1996), and for this

reason, experiences a need for others: care is the answer to this ontological need. Co-existing with others makes it necessary to take care of them.

According to the ethics of care (Mayeroff, 1990; Noddings, 1984; Held, 2006; Tronto, 1993; Mortari, 2015), to care for others means to search for the good. Since the core of caring is made of virtues (Mortari, 2006a; Mortari & Saiani, 2014), an education in ethics in the light of care is an education in virtue.

MelArete is grounded in the Socratic view of moral development. Indeed, for Socrates, what is particularly important is to reason on virtue because to know the essence of a thing is the condition for the right action. For example, in the *Charmides*, Socrates tells his interlocutor, 'say what, in your opinion, temperance is' (159a).

Another important reference is the Aristotelian ethics, according to which virtues are learned by doing them. Indeed, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle specifies, 'We become just by doing just actions, temperate by doing temperate actions, brave by doing brave actions' (Book II, 1103b, 1–2).

The philosophy of the MelArete project is in dialogue with the two main approaches of ethical education: *character education* and *moral reasoning*. In order to highlight the major similarities and differences with the philosophical conception at the basis of our project, here we present a simplified vision of character education and moral reasoning even if we know that there are many authors who present a more complex position where the two approaches can dialogue (Mortari & Ubbiali, 2017). Similar to the *character education* position (Lickona, 1978, 1993, 1997; Howard et al., 2004; Watson et al., 1989; Battistich et al., 1991; Solomon et al., 1992), MelArete considers virtue to be a key concept for ethical education; however, we do not confuse ethics with mere socialisation. Aligned with *moral reasoning* (Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Turiel, 1998, 2002, 2010; Smetana, 1995, 2006; Nucci, 1981; Nucci & Narvaez, 2008; Killen & Smetana, 2010), MelArete gives importance to the development of reasoning and cultivation of analytical, critical and deliberative thinking; however, we are careful to avoid abstractionism and rationalism.

In MelArete, the acquisition of virtues does not follow an adaptive-passivating model, but passes through a radical critical analysis of every aspect of the experience. In its educative valence, the project had two purposes: cultivating in children passion for research of the good and developing in them the capability to examine ethical questions analytically and critically.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

As research, MelArete assumes the epistemological background of 'naturalistic inquiry' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), according to which, the phenomenon under study should be investigated in the context of where it appears. Therefore, this study was conducted in the primary school and kindergarten classes.

Setting the research in a naturalistic context requires the capability to design the research method on the basis of the specific characteristics and necessities of the context that hosts the research. Since the educative context is unpredictable, because each classroom is unique and original, it is useful to avoid a formulistic and aprioristic conception of the method in favour of an emerging and evolutive one. This entails deciding in advance some key epistemological tenets, and then rethinking and redesigning the method by considering what occurs in the field (Mortari, 2006b, 2007, 2009a).

In pedagogy, it is possible to find two typologies of empirical research: the recognitive-constatative one, which aims to increase scientific knowledge by investigating not yet explored aspects of a phenomenon; and the experiential-transformative one, which promotes and investigates new experiences in order to enhance people flourishing and improve the educative contexts (Mortari, 2007, 2009b). MelArete can be described as experiential-transformative research because it aims to design new activities for ethical education and then to investigate their educative effectiveness in schools. Furthermore, the project can also be defined as 'research *for* children' (Mortari, 2009b) and not merely as 'research *with* children', because it is designed to offer positive and significant experiences to the children involved. This purpose arises from the application of the care ethics to the research: the core principle is the necessity to promote the good of the participants.

Coherent with the characterisation of educative research, MelArete has both educative and heuristic aims by encouraging and exploring children's ethical thinking. For this reason, instruments are designed to have an educative and a heuristic valence: promoting children's ethical reflection and collecting data about their ethical ideas. All the data we collected through the different instruments were of a qualitative-type.

THE EDUCATIVE EXPERIENCE

The project was implemented for the first time eight years ago. Since this time, several different classes in Italian primary schools were involved, and the educative path was progressively developed with new activities. In the last year (2016–2017), the project involved six fourth-grade primary school classes (106 nine- to ten-year-old children) and eight kindergarten classes (57 five- to six-year-old children) in two cities in the north and centre of Italy. The educative experience was aimed to encourage children to reflect on the concepts of good and care, about the general idea of virtue and about some specific virtues (in particular courage, generosity, respect and justice). The educative path was designed with a structure of twelve meetings between the researcher and the children. In the kindergartens and primary schools, the project had the same general structure: the activities had

the same educative and heuristic aims, even if they were implemented in different manners on the basis of the age of the children involved. We present below the different typologies of the main activities we promoted in the classes by highlighting their educative and heuristic valences.

Socratic Conversations

Conversations in class were promoted to facilitate the children to reflect on some ethical concepts. This activity started from an eidetic question, which is a question about the essence of a phenomenon. These conversations are defined as Socratic because they find their main reference in the maieutic method exemplified in the Platonic dialogues. Like in the Socratic Circles (Copeland, 2005), this activity stimulates intersubjective thinking. The researcher guided the conversation in a non-directive manner, helping the children to examine in depth their thoughts about phenomena that are relevant from an ethical point of view.

An example of this type of activity is a conversation about good and care that was promoted during the first meeting of the project. In both the kindergartens and primary schools, the conversations were introduced by the presentation of a story concerning the idea of acting with care in order to search for what is good. After the presentation of the story, some questions were proposed to the children; two of these questions were:

- The word 'good' is a beautiful word. What comes to your mind when you hear this word?
- The word 'care' is another beautiful word. What comes to your mind when you hear this word?

These questions functioned as the stimulus to activate Socratic conversations on the concepts of good and care. In the kindergartens, after the conversations, the children were also invited to draw the moment of the story that they liked most and then explain to the researcher what they drew and what the word good meant according to them.

The educative valence of these conversations about good and care is to facilitate the children to reflect on some important ethical concepts that are at the core of the entire educative project. From the heuristic point of view, the activity allows us to collect data about what good and care are according to the children involved.

Stories

Another typology of the activities is the presentation of stories concerning the following virtues: courage, generosity, respect and justice. For each virtue, we invented two stories, focusing on two possible declinations of the same virtue, as represented in the table below.

Virtue	First declination of virtue	Second declination of virtue
Courage	Defending the other	Being able to express one's own thoughts
Generosity	Giving time to the other	Giving something to the other who needs it
Respect	Respecting those who are different	Respecting the nature/respecting the effort and the work of another
Justice	Giving to each one according to his/her own needs	Repairing the damage

We asked the teachers from the classes involved in the project to choose for each virtue, which one of the two stories was more adequate from an educative point of view for their children.

Stories were set in the *Wood of virtues*, a place where animals act and reflect about ethical choices and behaviours. In the kindergartens, the stories were told and presented using puppets, while in the primary schools the stories were illustrated, given to the children and read by the researcher in class.

After the presentation of the stories, the children were asked to answer some questions we highlight in the following table:

Questions in kindergarten	Questions in primary school
- What did [name of the animal who acted virtuously] do? - If you were [name of the animal who received the virtue action], what would you think? - If you were [name of the animal who acted virtuously], what would you do? - Why?	- What is the virtuous action of [name of the animal who acted virtuously]? (In the case of the first story on justice, where two characters make different choices based on their different conceptions of justice, in the first question we asked the children to say which of the two characters they thought was right). - In your opinion, what thought guided the protagonist?

(In the case of the first story on justice, where two characters make different choices based on their different conceptions of justice, at the end of the conversation we asked the children to say which of the two solutions they thought was better).	- What effects did the protagonist's action produce? - What did the protagonist feel inside him/herself after having acted?

In the kindergartens, the children were asked to answer these questions orally, while in the primary schools, the children were asked to answer these questions in written form.

After answering the questions, the primary school children were also asked to produce a narrative on the basis of the story they had listened to; they carried out this task either individually, in pairs or in a group. They could narrate an episode of their real life or invent a fantasy story.

The educative reason for this activity is to lead the children's attention to a specific virtue (in particular courage, generosity, respect and justice) and to begin constructing the meaning of it. The heuristic reason for the activity is to understand the children's thoughts about that specific virtue.

Vignettes

Another activity was the vignettes. We showed the children three different situations representing three different particular behavioural answers to a same general context or experience that functioned as a starting point for reflection. Then we asked them to describe the three situations, to choose which one in their opinion realised a particular virtue and to explain their choices. The kindergarten children performed this activity in oral form, while the primary school children performed this activity in written form. We designed the vignettes for the virtues of courage, generosity, respect and justice.

Below, we present as examples, the vignettes about generosity (see Figure 1).

In kindergarten	In primary school
Start point	*Start point*
	'If the classmate does not have a pen…'
Three different situations	*Three different situations*

Figure 1

After the children had completed the activity, they were involved in a conversation about their choices. After the conversation, they were required to draw a situation representing the specific virtue, which was the object of the activity (they could invent a new situation or draw one of the vignettes).

The educative valence of this activity is to offer the children an experience through which they can reflect again on the concept of a specific virtue (courage, generosity, respect and justice), thereby deepening its meaning and having the opportunity to learn other possible interpretations of it. The heuristic valence of the vignettes is represented by the possibility to collect data that allows us to understand:

- the reasoning that children develop to identify and define virtuous situations (in particular situations of courage, generosity, respect and justice);
- the ideas about a specific virtue (courage, generosity, respect and justice) that exist in the children's thinking.

Games

We also organised some games, aimed to encourage the children to reflect on the virtues of courage, generosity, respect and justice. The games were activities that stimulated thought and/or move actions. Their structures and the related educative reasons were different, based on the specific virtue that was the object of the activity.

As examples, we present below the game on courage organised in the kindergartens and the game on courage organised in the primary schools.

The game on courage in kindergarten

The game about courage, organised in the kindergartens (see Figure 2) was titled 'Courageous cards-actions for the squirrel Theaetetus'. The researcher provided two typologies of cards: the S-cards (in which some problematic situation was represented) and the O-cards (in which some objects were represented). Each child was asked to blind-select an S-card and an O-card, and invent a courageous action that the squirrel, Theaetetus, could carry out in order to solve the problematic situation represented in the S-card by using the object represented in the O-card.

The educative reason for this activity is to stimulate the children's reflection on courage by engaging them in the construction of micro-stories, while the heuristic reason is to collect data about what type of actions the children considered as courageous.

Figure 2

The game on courage in primary school

The game about courage organised in the primary schools (see Figure 3) was titled 'The pathway in the wood of courage'. Two concentric circles were represented on a game board: the outer circle contained the locations of the wood and the inner circle the animals. For the first turn, each child was required to throw a die, advance in the outer circle with a pine cone, and write on a leaf the location represented in the box that the pine cone stopped on. For the second turn, each child was required to throw the die again, advance in the inner circle with the pine cone, and write on the leaf, under the location, the animals represented in the box that the pine cone stopped on.

Then, the children were asked to invent a story about courage by setting it in the location and with the animals written on their leaves.

The educative reason for this activity is to stimulate the children to reflect on the virtue of courage, while the heuristic reason is to collect data about what experiences the children considered as courageous.

Figure 3

An Experiential Diary

Another activity was the *diary of virtues* where children narrated virtuous actions (in particular actions of courage, generosity, respect and justice) they carried out or saw carried out by others. In the primary schools, the children were required to write the virtuous actions in a normal notebook, while in the kindergartens, the children were required to draw the virtuous actions in a notebook with leaf-shaped pages (a leaf-diary). In the kindergartens, the teachers were invited to write the explanations given by the children about their drawings.

The children were required to do this activity at least once a week (in the primary schools after the third meeting of the educative path and in the kindergartens after the second meeting).

In the primary schools, whenever the children wrote in their diary of a virtuous action, they were also invited to attach a leaf on the *tree of virtues* (see Figure 4) that was drawn at the beginning of their copybooks. The leaves had different colours based on the different virtues they represented (yellow for courage, red for generosity, blue for respect and purple for justice). Furthermore, whenever the children narrated a virtuous action in their diary and attached the leaf of the relative virtue to the tree in their copybook, they also attached another leaf, identical to the first one, to the *tree of the trees* (see Figure 5) in the classroom.

Figure 4

Figure 5

The theoretical background of this activity was to integrate the Aristotelian theoretical-theory and the Socratic *paideia*: the resulting idea was that virtues are learned both by practicing and examining them. The engagement of keeping a diary finds its educative reason by offering the children a space to reflect on their experience. The heuristic valence of this activity is that it allows us to understand:
- what actions children identify as virtuous;
- what meaning children attribute to these actions and
- if over the course of time the type of the narrated experience changes.

Introduction and Concluding Activities
At the beginning of the educative path (during the second meeting in the kindergartens and during the second and the third meetings in the primary schools) we organised introduction activities, designed to collect data to understand what virtues are according to children and how children define courage, generosity, respect and justice (i.e. the specific virtues on which the entire path focuses). In the primary schools, we also asked them how it is possible to learn virtues in their opinion.
At the end of the project, during the last meeting, we organised concluding activities, through which we proposed the same questions as for the introductory activities, in order to understand if and how the children's thinking had changed.

COLLECTED DATA
From a preliminary analysis, and after a deep dialogue with the teachers involved, we can state that the project helped the children understand the concept of virtue as a framework they assumed in order to reflect on actions and looking for the good. The children were able to recognise the different components of a virtuous action (thoughts, emotions and consequences) and to recognise the ethical call inside dilemmas of everyday life.
The capacity of analysis and reflection was so increased that the children became able not only to name a specific virtue and choose a coherent action in critical situations but also to understand the complexity of some situations and actions, so that they could identify different nuances in the same situation and different virtues in a single action.
The analysis process, with reference to the specific heuristic valence of the different activities, is still ongoing. However, we can already say that the data we collected show the richness of children's ethical thinking. If adequately stimulated through activities aimed to give them a possibility to reflect, children can also surprise adults with their reasoning and statements about ethical concepts and issues. The reading of our data confirms what we had already discovered through precedent research, that is, children are capable of deep reflection on ethical themes.
As examples, we present in the table below some of the children's thoughts we collected through the MelArete project.

Typology of data	Kindergarten	Primary school
Children's thoughts about good	- 'Playing in a good way… when nobody hurts himself'. - 'The good is to be friends, giving embraces and kisses each other'. - 'The good is when somebody loves you and embraces you'. - 'The good is when you feel good at the seaside'.	- 'For me, the word "good" means also [that] when someone feels bad or needs help, you help him'. - 'The word "good" means when we all feel good and not only one feels good'. - 'According to me, it means to feel good with others and share our friendship'. - 'According to me, the word "good" is not only love, a kiss, a caress, brotherhood, but it is also feeling good with our heart, with others'.
Children's thoughts about care	- 'Giving a kiss on the bump of my pregnant mommy is a gesture of care, even if she is not ill'. - '[The word "care" means] to kiss, to smile at, and to caress [someone]'. - '[The word "care" means] to give happiness'. - 'To care for plants: giving them water…'. - 'To help a child'.	- 'According to me, the word "care" means taking care of the city, people, animals and other things'. - 'When someone hurts himself, someone comes to console him'. - 'According to me, "care" means also to take care of people by medical doctors, but it doesn't mean only that. Also mums, teachers, all people take care of us, by giving us food and making us learn new things. To care means many things'. - 'According to me, the word care means also taking care of plants, do not tear off leaves, branches…'.
Children's thoughts about courage	- 'The [word] courage means that you are not afraid of anything'. - 'If you are on a tree and you are afraid of falling, you must tell to yourself: «it is nothing! You are not a baby!»'. - '[To have] courage means that when you are afraid of something, you wait for a while; after the fear has passed you can start again'.	- 'Not to be afraid of something'. - 'Facing the difficult moments of life'. - '[Courage is] a quality that serves to overcome obstacles, such as: saying something personal; telling a truth'.
Children's thoughts about generosity	- '[Generosity is] when you give a caress to somebody'. - '[Generosity is] when a tall person helps somebody that cannot reach something because it is posed in a high position and takes it for him'.	- 'Generosity is, for example, if a child hurts himself I help and embrace him; [generosity is] also to love a mum, a sister, a brother'. - 'When someone has no snack and you share yours with him'. - 'Helping others and lending them the things they need'.
Children's thoughts about respect	- '[To have respect for somebody means that] you have to listen to	- 'Caring for someone; also for your own things and for others'

	him'. - '[To have] respect means that you have to wait for your turn for talking: when the others have finished talking then you can talk'. - '[To have] respect means to respect the rules: for example the rules of the games'. - '[To have] respect is when I listen to the teacher'.	things'. - 'Listening to teachers, parents, grandfathers and grandmothers, older brothers'. - 'Having respect for a person means treating that person well and not excluding her'.
Children's thoughts about justice	- 'For example, you have to attend your swimming course but you don't want to: you have to attend it anyway because it is your duty. That's because duty and justice are the same thing'. - 'When you are tired and you would like to relax, somebody tells you to do something, you say: «there is no justice!»'.	- 'Finding a solution to problems in a right way'. - 'Protecting world, poor people, ourselves, animals...'. - 'Doing the right thing for the good of everyone'.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROJECT IN THE TEACHER'S VOICES
The teachers we interviewed at the end of the project were enthusiastic not only about what had happened during the activities but also in everyday class life. Some of them said that the children had internalised virtue ethics and they had become able and confident to analyse everyday life through the lens of virtue.
The effectiveness of the educative path emerged in the teacher's reflections. A kindergarten teacher said, 'it was an interesting experience' and 'certainly the children had benefited from this path'. Another teacher demonstrated that she already knew the potentialities of children: 'The path carried out did nothing but reinforce the certainty that children can do really a lot and always amaze us', and she added, 'we must not limit ourselves in offering them new opportunities, above all, when these [opportunities] are tailored for them, respectful of them and strongly formative, exactly like the MelArete project'. The reflections of these teachers confirmed for us that the project design really represented a research *for* (and not merely *with*) children.
In addition, the primary school teachers expressed enthusiasm for the project. One of them said that the path 'led the children to grow a lot interiorly' and specified that they had become 'much more reflective'. Another teacher pointed out that 'the path was very positive for the children, they had a moment of particular growth'. In particular she specified that 'it is a project that helps children to have a different vision of themselves, and only when you know yourself in a little bit more depth, you can also relate yourself with others'. Another teacher highlighted that the project helped the children to learn the language of virtue; in this regard, she said MelArete is a path 'connected to the knowledge of new words for children'.

CONCLUSION
The richness of our data demonstrates the effectiveness of the project to promote children's ethical thinking. Furthermore, the enthusiastic feedback from the teachers confirmed to us that our project can be authentically perceived as 'service research' (Mortari, 2009b), that is, research that can promote something good in the context that hosts it.
Coherent with the inspired approach of the 'research *for* children', the activities we promoted were designed to have both educative and heuristic relevance as we have explained and exemplified in this paper.
From an educational point of view, the results we collected through interviews with teachers show that teachers who are interested in promoting ethical education can find effective suggestions in the project activities and its instruments. Furthermore, the data make evident that this project can really contribute to increasing knowledge about children's ways of reasoning on ethical issues. Indeed, when it is completed, the analysis process will allow us to understand in depth the qualification of children's ethical thoughts with reference to the different research questions connected to the different activities we organised during the MelArete path project.

REFERENCES
- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by T. Irwin. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1999.

- Battistich, V. , Watson, M., Solomon, D., Schaps, E., & Solomon, J. (1991). The Child Development Project: A comprehensive program for the development of prosocial character. In W. M. Kurtines & J. L. Gewirtz (Eds.), *Handbook of moral behavior and development: Vol 3. Application* (pp. 1-34). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Copeland, M. (2005). *Socratic Circles*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Held, V. (2006). *The Ethics of Care*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1996). *Being and time*. Translated by J. Stambaugh. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Howard, R. W., Berkowitz, M. W., & Schaeffer, E. (2004). Politics of character education. *Educational* Policy, *18*(1), 188-215.
- Killen, M., & Smetana, J. (2010). Future directions: social development in the context of social justice. *Social Development*, *19*, 642–657.
- Kohlberg, L. (1981). *Essays on moral development, Vol. I: The philosophy of moral development*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Kohlberg, L. (1984) *Essays in moral development*, Vol. II, *The psychology of moral development*. San Francisco: Harper and Row.
- Lickona, T. (1978). Helping teachers become moral educators. *Theory into practice*, *17*(3), 258-266.
- Lickona, T. (1993). The return of character education. *Educational leadership*, *51*(3), 6-11.
- Lickona, T. (1997). The teacher's role in character education. *The Journal of Education*, *179*(2), pp. 63-80.
- Lincoln, Y.S. and Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park (CA): Sage.
- Mayeroff, M. (1990). *On Caring*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Mortari, L. (2006a). *La pratica dell'aver cura*. Milano: Bruno Mondadori.
- Mortari, L. (2006b). *Un metodo a-metodico. La pratica della ricerca in María Zambrano*, Napoli: Liguori.
- Mortari, L. (2007). *Cultura della ricerca e pedagogia. Prospettive epistemologiche*. Roma: Carocci.
- Mortari, L. (2009a). *Ricercare e riflettere. La formazione del docente professionista*. Roma: Carocci.
- Mortari, L. (Ed.) (2009b). *La ricerca per i bambini*. Milano: Mondadori.
- Mortari, L. (2015). *Filosofia della cura*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore.
- Mortari, L., & Mazzoni V. (2014). *Le virtù a scuola. Questioni e pratiche di educazione etica*. Verona: Cortina.
- Mortari, L., & Saiani, L. (Eds.) (2014). *Gestures and thoughts of caring*. New York-Boston: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Mortari, L. & Ubbiali, M. (2017). The "MelArete" Project: Educating children to the Ethics of Virtue and of Care. *European Journal of Educational Research*, *6*(3), 269-278.
- Noddings, N. (1984). *Caring. A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Nucci, L. (1981). The development of personal concepts: a domain distinct from moral and social concepts. *Child Development, 52*, 114–121.
- Nucci, L., & Narvaez, D. (Eds.) (2008). *Handbook of moral development and character education*. Oxford, UK: Routledge.
- Plato. *Complete work*s. Edited by J. M. Cooper. Associate editor D. S. Hutchinson. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997.
- Pulcini, E. (2009). *La cura del mondo*. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri.
- Ricoeur, P. (1990). Ethique et morale. *Revue de l'Institut catholique de Paris*, *34*, avril-juin, 131-142.
- Ricoeur, P. (1992). *Oneself as Another*. Translated by K. Blamey. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Smetana, J. (1995). Morality in context: abstractions, ambiguities, and applications. In R. Vasta (Ed.), *Annals of child development* (Vol. 10; pp. 83–139). London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Smetana, J. (2006). Social-cognitive domain theory: consistencies and variations in children's moral and social judgments. In M. Killen, & J. Smetana (Eds.), *Handbook of moral development* (pp. 119–153). Mahwah, NJ: Erbaum.
- Solomon, D. , Watson, M., Battistich, V., Schaps, E., & Delucchi, K. (1992). Creating a caring community: Educational practices that promote children's prosocial development. In F K. Oser, A. Disk, & J.-L. Patry (Eds.), *Effective and responsible teaching: The new synthesis*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Tronto, J. (1993). *Moral boundaries: a political argument for an ethic of care*. New York: Routledge.
- Turiel, E. (1998). The development of morality. In W. Damon (Series Ed.) & N. Eisenberg (Vol. Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology. Vol. 3: Social, emotional, and personality development* (pp. 863–932). New York: John Wiley.
- Turiel, E. (2002). *The culture of morality: Social development, context, and conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Turiel, E. (2010). Domain specificity in social interactions, social thought, and social development. *Child Development, 81*, 720–726.

- Watson, M. , Solomon, D., Battistich, V., Schaps, E., & Solomon, J. (1989). The Child Development Project: Combining traditional and developmental approaches to values education. In L. Nucci (Ed.), *Moral development and character education: A dialogue* (pp. 51-92). Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.