Combining speech and images: the case of the SHARMED archive

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This presentation regards the archive created as output of the European Erasmus + project SHARMED (Shared Memories and Dialogues) (www.sharmed.eu). This project was realised in 48 classrooms in Italy, Germany and United Kingdom and aimed at promoting innovative experiences of teaching and learning in the classroom, with specific consideration for respect of differences and promotion of dialogue, and empowering children's contributions to classroom interaction. The SHARMED activities in the classroom enhanced: (1) the production of children's stories about their personal memories, and (2) the facilitation of comparison and sharing of these stories through dialogic communication. The production and negotiation of children's stories was based on the use of private photographs, representing children's memories.

The SHARMED archive includes 300 children's photographs, 424 children's short written texts about these photographs, 100 videos of children presenting photographs and 39 videos recorded during the classroom activities. It has been provided for both innovative activities in the classroom and research. The SHARMED archive combines speech with images, in the double form of photographs and video-recordings: this presentation regards this combination of speech and images.

Before analysing this combination, it is important to understand the limitations and problems of "completeness" of the SHARMED archive, which depend on three factors: ethical issues, structural complexity and problems of translation. Ethical problems are particularly relevant when speech and images of children are combined, as this combination requires a complex procedure of information and request for consent, which limits the possibility of using the images, in particular the video-recorded images. Structural complexity regards the quantity and quality of the combinations between video-recordings of activities and photographs. The high quantity of video-recordings and their quality requirements, together with the ethical issue, determine the necessity to select them and therefore to elaborate criteria for this selection. Finally, the subtitling of Italian and German video-recordings in English was made necessary by the European level of dissemination of the archive. While subtitling may be effective in rendering speech in another language, it is not only a long and time-consuming process, but it may also be a factor of discouragement for many teachers and educators with a limited competence in understanding English.

This presentation highlights the advantages of facing these relevant problems in order to combine speech and images, also explaining the way in which this type of archive works. The combination of speech and images is relevant for three reasons.

1. Speech is enhanced through the use of images (photographs). In social research, the use of images to stimulate speech is primarily based on photo-elicitation techniques that include photographs into research interviews (e.g., Harper, 2002). In these interviews, the images are expected to generate insights that do not necessarily or exclusively correspond to those obtained through a verbal inquiry. Photo-elicitation is expected to enhance new attribution of meanings, expression of emotions, and elicitation of relevant information. While these aspects are also included in the use of photographs during the SHARMED activities, this use differs significantly from photo-elicitation for three aspects (Baraldi & Iervese, 2017). First, only children have access to the knowledge of photographs, therefore they can talk about them without external elicitation. Children are the responsible and competent agents for talking about the photographs. Second, photographs are used as a medium to convey children's stories of personal memories, rather than an interview. Third, photographs are used as a medium to facilitate the interactional production of stories, rather than individual meanings or feelings. Images are not only used elicit children's attribution of meanings, but also to stimulate dialogue between children, including questions and comments about the photographs and the stories about them, and the interlacement of different stories.

2. The analysis of speech is improved through the use of images (video-recording). Video-recordings add meaning to speech for three aspects. First, in the classroom, the production of speech

in the interaction involves a great number of participants, video-recordings can support the identification of the speakers, thus enhancing the possibility of analysing the interactional production of stories. Second, video-recordings make possible the identification of non-verbal actions produced in the interaction, which can either support the explanation of turns of speech, or complete the analysis of the organized sequence of turns by analysing the combination of turns of talk and non-verbal turns. Third, video-recordings can allow the analysis of the environment surrounding speech, i.e. the way in which the room is filled with people and things, including the spatial disposition of people. Thus, video-recordings can support the explanation of the distribution of the opportunities of speaking.

3. Speech can explain images (photographs and video-recordings), thus allowing the linguistic and sociological analysis of the interaction.

3.1. Speech gives meaning to photographs in narrative formats (Norrick, 2012). **3.1.1** Narrative formats provide the description of photographs, giving meaning to what they represent. Thus, the medium "photograph" takes a form: the loose connection between unknown internal elements becomes a tight connection based on meaning (Luhmann, 2012). **3.1.2.** Narrative formats produce knowledge about what is behind the frame of the photograph, such as its story, the situation in which it was taken, the wider context of its production. This production of knowledge can regard either facts, data or events (declarative narratives), or general knowledge of ideas, meanings and concepts (semantic narratives) (Berntsen & Rubin, 2012). It also provides the opportunity for comments and different stories.

3.2. Speech gives meanings to video-recordings of interactions. **3.2.1** Types and modes of narrative production in interactions: (a) range of themes and children's preferences in narrating them; (b) children's competence in active negotiation of their identity (Bamberg, 2011); (c) children's ways of negotiating the rights to tell a story (Baraldi & Iervese, 2017). **3.2.2** Facilitation of narrative production in interactions: (a) invitations to tell and questions that support children's narratives; (b) types of feedback that support and recognise children's stories; (c) personal contributions that enrich narratives; (d) ways of dealing with children's unpredictable initiatives (Baraldi, 2014).

In the SHARMED archive, the combination between production of speech and use of images has two relevant effects. First, it provides an integrated analysis: speech explains what images cannot show, while images show what the words cannot say. Second, it expands the possibility of exploiting both of them: the use of images can enhance different stories, while the telling of stories can refer to different images.

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