

IADA Conference 2025

Bologna, Italy
16-19 July 2025



Language and Lifeworlds

The dialogic constitution of “what is”,
“what can be”, and “what ought to be”



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION STUDIES
“GIOVANNI MARIA BERTIN”

Book of Abstracts

The conference focuses on the role of dialogue in constructing, displaying, maintaining, and transforming the crucial dimensions of the worlds we inhabit, addressing the role of human dialogic practices in the everyday negotiation and re-construction of a common and shared social world.

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Belmeloro Complex (Rooms A, C, D, G), Via B. Andreatta 8, Bologna

OVERARCHING TOPICS

- Dialogue And Agency In Healthcare
- Theories Of Dialogue
- Dialogue, Social Identities, And Positionality
- Dialogue In Public Digital Spaces
- Socializing Dialogues For Community-Building
- Dialogue And Governance In Challenging Times

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KEYNOTE: Karen Tracy

Professor Emerita, Department of Communication, University of Colorado Boulder, USA

Individual and Institutional Goals Accomplished by Life Story Narratives: Case Study of a Judicial Archive

An institutional practice that has become increasingly common in the 21st century is the construction of oral history archives foregrounding an organization or profession's key people. Selected people, typically an organization's elite, are asked to tell the story of their individual lives, focusing particularly on their professional activities and accomplishments. This paper will analyze an archive of life story interviews of late career US federal judges told to ex-law clerks who served as interviewers. My aim is to show how the discourse of these dialogically created life stories serves multiple goals, including presenting portraits of judges on multiple dimensions including as judicial actors, as mentors of young attorneys, and as persons of a particular gender, race and social class. In addition, while the archive's life stories foreground judges' actions and thoughts, important work is also being accomplished for the legal and personal character of interviewers, as well as developing a portrait of the American justice system, and the particular university that created the archive. Narratives, as Linde (2009, p 3) notes, are an "important way that institutions construct their presentation of who they are and what they have done in the past." The data are from an archive created by the Institute of Judicial Administration sponsored by New York University (Oral History of Distinguished American Judges, 2023) to help train future judges. Materials for this study are 16 interviews carried out with high visibility American judges, including five US Supreme Court justices, justices from different federal appeals courts, and two chief justices in state supreme courts. The purpose of the oral history project, as described on the Judicial Institute website is: to memorialize the thoughts and contributions of the men and women who make the US judiciary the bulwark of freedom.... the body of interviews will serve as a valuable and definitive resource on the American judiciary... provid[ing] a unique resource for the study of judges of extraordinary ability and impact on our system. A previous study on a judicial archive created by one US city (Tracy, 2023) compared how Black and white, male and female judges managed the dilemma of demographic characteristics both mattering and being irrelevant to the doing of justice. In this study I analyze this relatively new genre of discourse, unpacking how identities and institutional worlds are constructed through a host of discourse moves that my paper will describe.

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Panel organizers and moderators: **Piera Margutti, Vittoria Colla**

Panel rationale

Owing to the life-threatening character of cancer as well as the length, complexity, and impact of the treatments, oncology consultations constitute a setting where patient's participation is crucial. For oncology patients, being treated entails meeting physicians in different specialties (e.g., radiotherapy, surgery, cardiology), getting acquainted with complex biomedical processes, sometimes receiving uncertain or unfavourable diagnoses and prognoses, having to make complex decisions on treatments, and coping with radical changes in their own and their caregivers' lives. Involving the patient in decision-making about treatments, ensuring their understanding of their own conditions, and allowing them to express fears, hopes, and doubts is therefore paramount. However, the organization of oncology consultations, which typically lack the 'problem presentation' and similar slots dedicated to discussing concerns, can often hinder the patient's (and their companions') participation, as well as their understanding and awareness of the disease and its consequences.

Paradoxically, against the growing emphasis within policies on patients' 'centredness' and active participation in medical encounters (Mead and Bower, 2000), patient involvement in information-sharing and decision-making in oncology consultations is still underinvestigated: few studies analyse the impact of doctors' conduct on patient participation (e.g., Tate, 2019; Fatigante et al., 2020; Pino et al., 2021) and even fewer works focus on patients' initiatives (e.g., Beach and Dozier, 2015; Colla et al., 2024).

This panel intends to bring together studies investigating the conducts of doctors, patients or companions that display an orientation to the patients' voice, i.e., to their concerns, their understanding and awareness of the issues being discussed, their involvement in decision-making, their perspectives on the disease and treatment, as well as their resistance, uneasiness, doubts or worries.

Therefore, we invite contributions on the following main areas of interest:

- Patients' (or companions') initiatives aiming at presenting concerns, doubts, treatment acceptance or resistance, as well as their perspectives on the disease;
- Doctors' conducts that display an orientation to the role of the patients' voice in the medical encounter and aim at facilitating their participation.

We also welcome contributions that analyse the patients' voice and participation in oncology-related settings, i.e., settings that are contiguous and complementary to the oncology diagnosis and treatment (e.g., screening test consultations, self-help groups, onco-psychological consultations, hospice and end-of-life interactions).

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Piera Margutti

Patient questions in oncological consultations: a conversational study on patients' questioning during consultations

Within the patient-centered care approach, the way in which doctors and patients provide and require medical information has assumed paramount importance (Nordfalk et al. 2022). This is especially true in oncology consultations, where clinicians and patients aim at achieving a clear understanding of patients' conditions and a shared decision on treatment (Bruch et al. 2024).

As evidenced in previous research, the patients' ability to satisfy their need for information through questioning has been recognized as an indication of effective communication (Keinki et al. 2021). Furthermore, there has been an effort in healthcare policies to encourage this behaviour in patients through the implementation of question prompt lists (Amundsen et al. 2018). However, studies on how patients naturally ask questions in oncology settings are indeed rare (but see Schellenberger et al. 2022). This study aims at contributing to this domain.

Based on a corpus of 106 oncology consultations videorecorded in five hospitals in Northern Italy and regarding different cancer treatment specialties, this study uses conversation analysis to investigate patient questions and identify common features as regards where they occur in interaction, what triggers them, how they are designed, and for which purposes. The study identifies two main types of patient questions, based on their sequential position. The first type includes questions that patients raise in overlap with the doctor's turn or in close vicinity with its end: they are occasioned by the relevance of the topic being treated in previous talk and are quite direct. The second type includes questions that are produced at the end of a specific activity. These are designed as relatively independent from previous talk and are often accompanied by apologies. Both question types provide evidence of the patients' agenda and their orientation to presenting and discussing their concerns during the consultations.

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Valeria Barbieri

What patients ought to know: patients searching for words in oncological consultations

Dialogue and shared understanding are two essential features that underpin the realization of doctor-patient relationship. There are cases, though, where these properties apparently and momentarily disappear, and both interactants try to restore the interaction's effectiveness and coherence. Word searching is one such case, an interactional practice which involves a temporary blocking of the interaction due to a missing term and followed by a cooperative work to find that term and resume the conversation. The searching task may encompass many types of words, more commonly drugs and other doctors' names. The collection under analysis precisely illustrates the occurrence of this interactional phenomenon, especially initiated by patients, who have to recall and designate technical and medical terminologies, mainly concerning illnesses and therapies denominations, or person references, such as proper names of other clinicians.

Based on a corpus of 106 video-recorded oncological consultations – collected in five different hospitals of the Emilia Romagna region (Italy) – and through the use of Conversation Analysis, the paper shows that, in this specific setting, the way in which patients accomplish the search and recruit the doctors' assistance is differently performed, according to the two main types of trouble source, and to whom has first access or primary knowledge of the missing information.

Data shows that, when searching for technical and specialized terms, patients usually solicit assistance from the doctors, displaying their orientation to them as having primary access to the word searched for. On the other hand, when patients have to recollect information belonging to their personal knowledge, such as other doctors' names, they stage the searching as their own responsibility. Through these different behaviors, in particular the latter, doctors manifest their orientation to leave space for the patients' voice, who are therefore allowed to provide some specific pieces of information as their own and main duty.

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Vittoria Colla

“As far as you can remember”: Doctors’ practices orienting to patients’ incomplete knowledge in oncology history taking

In recent years, growing emphasis within policies has been put on patients’ active participation in their healthcare pathway. Consistently with the so-called “patient-centered approach”, listening to the patient’s ‘voice’ in the medical encounter has come to be viewed not only as an ethical imperative, but also and primarily as a means to maximize patients’ trust, satisfaction, therapeutic compliance, and chances of healing. Characterized by a series of doctor’s questions addressed to the patient (Boyd and Heritage 2006), the history taking phase of consultation is a key moment where patients’ voice can be heard, and their participation promoted. In addition, through history taking questions, physicians convey their own expectations concerning the patient’s identity and state of knowledge. For example, an apparently simple question like “how old was your father when he died?” presupposes and conveys a series of assumptions about the patient, projecting rights and duties to personal knowledge (Heritage, 2010).

In oncology consultations, doctors gather information about the patient’s lifestyle, overall health, preexisting conditions, and therapies to assess the patient’s condition and calibrate treatments. However, unlike in other settings (e.g., general practice), history taking in oncology is often characterized by patients’ uncertainty, as many questions revolve around long past events (e.g., diseases dating back to childhood), or which the patient knows secondhand (e.g., family cancer history), or else which requires a high degree of precision (e.g., allergies, medication doses). A patient’s inability to answer such questions can impact their level of participation as well as the perceived reliability of their voice. How do physicians promote patient participation in this challenging context?

Drawing on a corpus of 106 video-recorded oncology consultations collected in five Italian hospitals, and adopting conversation analysis, the present study illustrates a recurrent practice: while asking history taking questions, the physician orients to the patient’s possible lack of knowledge by downgrading their epistemic duties. This occurs especially in questions concerning long past events or involving the patient only indirectly, and it is done through phrases such as “as far as you can remember” or expressions like “approximately”. Through such mitigation devices, the physician orients to the relative significance of the requested information and legitimizes the patient’s difficulty in recalling it. In this way, patient participation is promoted and their voice is legitimized despite their often incomplete knowledge.

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Daniele Urlotti

Some sequential uses of empathetic utterances in oncology consultations: the case of “non si preoccupi” / “don’t worry”

During oncology consultations the likelihood of patients expressing their fears, worries and doubts is strong (Beach & Doziers 2015), and patients have been shown to orient to their own agenda, finding strategies to raise their concerns (Colla et al. 2024). In response to these conducts, and in line with the ‘patient-centred approach’, clinicians address the concerns patients raise through explanations, displays of acknowledgment and of understanding (Beach 1995), or of support and empathy (Frankel 2009).

In our data one recurrent formulaic utterance that doctors use when patients express their concerns is, along with other synonymic expressions, “Non si preoccupi” / “Don’t worry”, whose semantics apparently accomplishes an expression of empathy. However, in line with the interactional and conversationalist approach to the study of grammar adopted here (Schegloff et al. 1996, Clift 2001), the use and meaning of any utterance in interaction requires to be investigated as linked to its sequential position in the activity that is thus accomplished, and to the speaker’s orientation to the ongoing action.

Based on a corpus of 106 video-recorded consultations, gathered in the oncology wards of five different hospitals in Northern Italy, this study applies Conversation Analysis to investigate the functions of formulaic expressions of the type “Non si preoccupi” / “Don’t worry”. Our study shows that these utterances, on the one hand, are semantically aimed at easing worries and allaying fears, while, on the other, they may be pragmatically used by clinicians to achieve other purposes linked to the progressivity of the interaction, so as to limit diversions from their institutional agenda, especially when the concerns raised by patients may hinder or delay the achievement of the consultation purposes. Our analysis shows that resorting to these formulaic expressions can be an effective way for clinicians to keep their control over the progressivity of the consultation, while safeguarding their alignment and affiliation with the concerns raised by the patients.

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Alessia Davolio, Piera Margutti, Elisa Rossi

How oncology patients report past traumatizing interactions about cancer: the use of figurative expressions in self-help groups

Event description is an interactionally-occasioned activity, commonly enacted both in institutional and ordinary conversational settings (Edwards 1994; Drew 2003; 2005). This situated character of event formulation is determined by speakers' orientation to designing accounts (and, more generally, their turns at-talk) in accordance with the interactional context in which they are produced, and the communicative task at-hand (Drew 2003; 2005). In other words, how participants construct event descriptions is systematically linked to the way they want them to be understood by other parties (Drew 2003; 2005; Jefferson 1988; Pomerantz 1986), to which elements they select as worthy of being provided, and to how they deliver them lexically; thus, making their accounts relevant to the interactional purpose (Edwards 1994; Drew 2003; 2005; Pomerantz 1986). This presentation discusses a collection of cases in which participants in oncology self-help groups produce situated descriptions of interactions (about their cancer) that they have experienced as troublesome (problematic at the best, traumatic at the worst), using exaggerated and figurative expressions to represent these events. The aim of this study is to explore the design of these narratives and how recipients respond to them.

Based on a corpus of 12 video-recorded meetings– collected in 4 different towns in the Emilia Romagna region (Italy) – and by means of Conversation Analysis as main analytical tool, this study examines sequences in which participants report emotionally upsetting or even shocking interactions that they have personally experienced in the course of their oncological treatment. Data have shown that in remembering and reporting conversations about such delicate issues, all participants appear to give particular prominence to detailing their emotional perception of the traumatic occurrence through figurative, exaggerated expressions. In doing so, and consequentially, the communicative conduct of the co-participants in the reported interactions are depicted as reprehensible; thus, soliciting sometimes the other members' affiliation.

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KEYNOTE: Davide Zoletto

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Migrants' situated learning and intersectionality in educational research within diverse urban areas

In this talk I focus on the importance - in the field of educational research about migrants and migrations - of analysing how situated processes of migrants' learning are embedded in everyday webs of power relationships, with special reference to spatial construction of «intersectionality». In educational research on migrants and migrations, the concept of «intersectionality» implies the effort to describe not only how cultural or ethnic differences affect educational settings and processes, but also - and at the same time - the role played by dimensions such as social class, gender, biographical and migration backgrounds. From an educational point of view, one could say that for the majority of migrant background learners becoming a participant in the host community has to do less with formal lectures, than with on-going processes of experiential learning. These processes of experiential learning could be seen as embedded in the participation in a huge range of everyday settings and practices ranging from welfare services to workplaces to leisure places, from family to neighbourhood involvement. Drawing on some examples from previous research carried out in urban spaces such as neighbourhood schools, or leisure spaces such as public parks and playgrounds, I will suggest that these spaces are marked by a multiplicity of differences and the intersection of these territorialized differences concur to assign migrants and post-migrants to a multiplicity of subordinate positions, that educational research has to deal with in order to concur to promote more inclusive and equal learning environments.



Karen Hagan

The application of Critical Discursive Psychology to the development and analysis of an antibullying intervention in a post-primary school

Antibullying programmes that focus on dynamic social group practices and discourses have been relatively successful but are less effective during adolescence when peer relationships are crucial for identity, belonging and wellbeing (Salmivalli et al., 2021). To explore this limitation, a 'Critical Discursive Psychology' (CDP) approach was embedded theoretically and methodologically throughout the development and delivery of an intervention. CDP focuses on applied topics and the synthesis of macro and micro level discourses in the process of meaning-making. Ontologically and epistemologically, it aligns with the aims of antibullying programmes to address power relations, social exclusion, and practices of affect such as shaming.

The dialogic intervention, of 6 interactive small group-based sessions lasting one hour per session, was delivered to thirty-eight 17–18-year-old pupils and three members of teaching staff in one school. Theoretically integrating CDP, Session 1 introduced participants to basic CDP concepts and provided opportunities to work with examples of power, meaning-making and positioning in relation to bullying. In sessions 2–5 participants applied the CDP concepts to explore the impacts of bullying, why and how it works, and to analyse examples of interventions and practices of resisting bullying. In session 6, participants created antibullying-related activities, practices, campaigns, or resources. The intervention was approved by The British Psychological Society.

Text-based data - notes, role plays and even songs – were collected from group activities in all sessions. A CDP analysis was carried out. Themes identified within each session and across the 6 sessions revealed dynamic discursive patterns and devices, a rich range of interpretative repertoires, positioning, and troubled talk around the mechanisms of bullying, power relations, permissions, and blame/responsibility.

The data revealed highly sophisticated fascinations and concerns regarding bullying. By identifying varying forms of subtle manipulation and coercion, as well as discursive violence, participants developed complex understanding of bullying. They produced nuanced discursive strategies and social practices to enhance empathy and dignity, generously negotiating understandings of shifting subject positions of perpetrator, target and forms of 'bystanding' with compassion.

Conversely, participants also produced two main interconnected intervention-resistant practices that relied respectively on persistent internal and hegemonic social discourses. Each contributes new insights into the limitations in the efficacy of antibullying interventions in general. Firstly, discursive defensive strategies such as denial and avoidance, strategies that are theoretically considered to be unconscious processes, were operationalised. This finding opens a debate about the extent to which applied discursive research should engage with psychoanalytic theory and whether complex internal and unconscious discourses have been neglected in favour of the discursive space between people. Future antibullying interventions may find success in a more integrated theoretical position (Billig, 2011). Secondly, there was evidence of a strong commitment to draw on dominant discourses of individual characteristics and personal experiences of perpetrators and targets. Such explanatory frameworks to understand bullying prioritised macro-level dominant discourses of individualism, personal responsibility, and self-monitoring. These frameworks undermine evidence-based interventions that aim to address bullying as socially situated compound discursive practices and suggest that interventions need to invest more theoretical effort to challenge tenacious misconstructions.



Carmen Lucia Moccia, Fausta Sabatano

Thinking About Disability: Implicit Knowledge in Disadvantaged Contexts

The study examines how implicit knowledge (Bruner, 1996) and folk theories of parents of subjects with disabilities may influence their educational relationship. The research will be carried out in a specific area of Naples (Italy) characterized by social, cultural and environmental critical issues. The families in the study face multiple challenges where disabilities overlap with social, cultural, and environmental barriers specific to their setting.

The hypothesis is that parents' implicit knowledge affects their children's "degree of freedom" (Sibilio, 2016), as well as agency (Aiello, 2016) and self-determination (Wehmeyer, M. L. 2005) processes.

According to these premises, the first aim of the research is to identify patterns and linguistic qualities of parents' narratives while describing their experience; the second aim is to analyze these elements; the third one is to develop a training course based on research results, to bring out the implicit knowledge and foster the change of perspective-taking (Sibilio et al. 2020).

The research follows a qualitative design with consecutive phases: in the first phase, semi-structured interviews will be analyzed through a deductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) to reveal caregivers' implicit knowledge. Results from this phase will inform the second one, where emerging themes will be explored through reflective focus groups (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013), aimed at promoting "epistemological vigilance" (Caronia, 2011) in participants, making them more aware of their knowledge construction processes, in an emancipatory perspective (Freire, 1971).

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Faustino Rizzo, Paola Milani

Exploring Mafia Vulnerability Through Children's Voices: Dialogues on Identity, Transition, and Institutional Interactions

This paper examines the role of dialogue in shaping the lifeworlds of children transitioning out of mafia-affiliated contexts, focusing on their interactions with institutional and familial actors. The study aims to explore how these dialogues construct the ontological and epistemological dimensions of children's experiences (Schütz, 1967; Habermas, 1981), with a specific focus on moments of vulnerability, resilience, and agency within high-conflict contexts.

The research is guided by the question: How do institutional and familial dialogues influence children's processes of identity reconstruction and adaptation when transitioning out of mafia-affiliated environments? To address this, the study draws on a comparative analysis of three semi-structured interviews conducted as part of a doctoral research project (Rizzo, 2024) on protective measures implemented by the Juvenile Court of Reggio Calabria (Di Bella, Surace, 2019). The participants include two children under protective measures at the time of the interviews and a third participant who had completed the program upon reaching adulthood. All were born into families connected to organized crime. The semi-structured interview format enabled participants to narrate their lived experiences, reflecting on relationships, transitions, and evolving self-perceptions. A thematic coding approach was employed to analyze these interviews, identifying recurring patterns in the articulation of vulnerability, resilience, and agency. The analysis reveals that children's narratives are anchored in vivid memories of past places and relationships, which serve as critical components of their identities. However, institutional interventions designed to sever ties with criminal networks often disrupt this ontological continuity, forcing children to renegotiate their sense of belonging and self-understanding.

Dialogue emerges as a pivotal medium for navigating these transitions, often catalyzing moments of epistemic rupture. For example, revelations about familial involvement in criminal activities compel children to confront hidden truths, reinterpret personal histories, and adapt to unfamiliar realities. While such moments can foster agency and self-awareness, findings suggest that institutional dialogues frequently marginalize children's perspectives, reinforcing feelings of invisibility and neglect rather than empowerment (Freire, 1970; Bakhtin, 1981).

By examining these dynamics, the study provides deeper insights into how children navigate transitions in contexts marked by mafia vulnerability (Rizzo, Milani, 2024). It underscores the importance of dialogic practices that combine protective measures with participatory frameworks, fostering the co-construction of identity, agency, and values. Ultimately, this work raises critical questions about how institutional and familial dialogues can more effectively align with children's rights and lived experiences, underscoring the urgent need to center their voices in fostering resilience and addressing vulnerability in high-conflict contexts.

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Adrienne Viramontes, Jaquelyn Arcy

Dialoguing with AI: Effects, Consequences, and Changes to Husserl's Lifeworld and the Classroom Dialogue

In *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (1970), Edmund Husserl examines the disconnection between scientific method and the lifeworld. At the root of the disconnection was the sterile dismissal of “the things themselves” (1970). The lifeworld consists of things seen and perceived by humans. It describes how we see things and what things we see. According to Husserl, “The lifeworld is a realm of original self-evidences. That which is self-evidently given is, in perception, experienced as ‘the thing itself,’” (p. 128) in which the “things themselves” are the everyday world of lived experience.

In the theoretical part of this presentation, we examine how the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) chatbots is affecting our perception of the “lifeworld” (Husserl, 1970). In particular, we explore how interacting with non-sentient tools such as Chat-GPT (OpenAI) and CoPilot (Microsoft) requires a rethinking of intersubjectivity, or what Heidegger, in *Being and Time* (1927) would describe as “being-with” other people, objects, etc. Heidegger considered the quality of “being-with” as an essential component of the human condition. Drawing on Per Linell’s claim that “language originates and lives in interactivities between sense-making people” (171), we explore how AI chatbots reproduce interactivity and complicate the collaborative process of creating meaning. Though large-language models (LLMs) are made up of vast amounts of human text, there is no shared “lifeworld” between users and AI-models.

In the second part of this presentation, we explore how dialogue can help combat some of the challenges AI presents to higher education, including academic dishonesty, misinformation, biases, and privacy concerns. We will share our experiences with two types of class activities: 1) student-to-student dialogue and 2) student-to-AI chatbot dialogue, and reflect on how these two dialogic exercises affect learning, connection, meaning-making, and relationship to the “lifeworld.”

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Sara Amadasi

Exploring how Digital Tools foster Dialogue with Children and Young People in educational contexts

This presentation concerns a study that explores children's and young people's agency and their narratives about places that are important to them. In this research digital tools were adopted to enhance dialogue around young people's personal stories.

Children and adolescents are often experienced and comfortable with digital technology; however, there is a lack of studies exploring the potential of digital tools in promoting the participation of children and how these tools can be integrated into field research to enhance dialogue. This gap is even more evident in research involving children and teenagers with migrant backgrounds.

In this research, children and adolescents were asked to choose a picture of a place they had a story to share about, taken from their mobile phones or the internet. These stories were then presented, recorded, and compiled into an amateur podcast, along with songs that were also chosen by these young people.

The research was conducted with three groups: kindergarten children, unaccompanied young migrants living in a reception centre, and pre-adolescents and adolescents attending an afterschool education centre.

In the kindergarten and education centre groups, most of the children were born in Italy and spoke fluent Italian, while when working with unaccompanied young migrants, the use of other languages was also encouraged.

The researcher employed digital tools and facilitation of dialogue to promote dialogic negotiations and create a space for young people's personal stories.

The aim was to change the distribution of epistemic authority (Heritage and Raymond 2005) in adult-child interactions and to explore how children exercise their epistemic authority regarding places they know and they feel attached to.

This presentation is based on video recordings of the various phases of the research and aims to discuss how the young people involved construct their identity not based on belonging to a physical nation, but rather on the significance of experiences shaped by movement and change. Far from presenting themselves as victims, these young people exercise their epistemic authority by sharing stories that challenge the generational order (Alanen 2009), and the hierarchies deriving both from the researcher's adulthood and her privileged position as a white Western researcher.

The findings also highlight how music and pictures contributed to the intertwining of narratives about different places. This demonstrates how digital tools can support dialogue, also in multilingual contexts, leading to rich personal narratives that derive from children's positioning as experts

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Ornella Mich, Tiziana Ceol, Camilla Monaco, Alessandra Potrich

“The robots work by themselves, driven by a man”: training dialogues on coding and robotics to promote children’s competences and participation

This paper concerns an Action-Research started in 2020 to design and implement a training program for introducing coding and educational robotics in the preschools (3-to-6-year-old children). We consider Digital Technologies as tools to promote kids’ social learning processes (e.g. collaboration, participation, narratives co-construction, etc.), without never managing them as interesting topics by themselves (Kranzberg, 1986). The training we designed is a practice-based (Little, 1992) and dialogic (Weigand, 2010) process “built” together with the participants. The teachers learn to use new technologies to support social and discursive interaction among children within small group situations (mixed by age, gender, and competences) for improving and increasing their knowledge co-construction (Vygotskij, 1934).

The premises of the research – that involved 22 Italian preschools – can be found in a previous study (Robobimbi) about preschool children’s representations of robots (Monaco et al., 2020). The researchers collaborated with some expert teachers (belonging to 3 Robobimbi preschools) to design the first edition of the training program (2020/2021), that involved 11 preschools. The participants could use different tools (BeeBot, Cubetto, and Lego WeDo 2.0) for transforming their educational and discursive actions with children.

Moving from the results of this edition, the research group defined a second training program (2023/2025), including the use of i-Code, a new tool for Digital Programming Storytelling. This edition is ongoing and involves 3 preschools that had never used coding or robotics tools before. The third edition of the program (three years) has just started and involves single teachers belonging to 5 different preschools.

The Action-Research is based on two methodological foundations:

- a conception of the training as a process centered on the collective reflection about real school practices (documented by video, field notes, etc.);
- the small group methodology as the crucial choice not only concerning the experiences with children but also concerning the adults’ learning processes (Pontecorvo et al., 1991).

We are going to show, throughout some concrete school experiences developed within small group situations, some initial results:

- coding and robotics are effective tools to increase and enrich children’s forms and levels of participation, which is true also for those who have some special needs;
- within a well-planned educational framework, coding and robotics help teachers to organize learning contexts where children can act and improve several intelligences.

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Giorgia Pellegrino, Renata Galatolo, Letizia Caronia

Building upon the parent's stance: pursuing parents' "perspective display" as an interactional practice in parents-teachers conferences

The main purpose of parent-teacher conferences (PTC) is to update the parents on the child's overall school performance and to discuss any concerns on it. Conferences also represent one of the arenas in which family-school partnership (Davies, 1997) can be achieved or, potentially, mined. The negotiation of epistemic rights (who knows (better) what, Heritage, 2012), although not explicit, remains a key issue during conferences, as both parents and teachers have first-hand knowledge of the child behavior, at home and at school respectively, and can therefore have different perspectives. The epistemic landscape of PTC (Caronia, Dalledonne Vandini, 2019; Caronia, 2023) is further complex as teachers are institutionally granted with expert knowledge, the one at play when it comes to pedagogically assess the child's behavior.

Previous studies of parent-teacher conferences have identified a recurring overall structure (Pillet-Shore, 2001) – according to which teachers begin the conference by delivering their evaluation of the child. In our corpus of video-recorded naturally occurring conferences in Italian primary schools, we observed that the opening of the conferences may be realized by the teachers' asking for parents' displaying their perspective (perspective display sequence, Maynard 1991) on the child's evaluation they received at home before the encounter. In those cases, teachers make sure that parents express their opinion, then proceed by building upon their stance.

In response to teachers' perspective display invitation, parents may align or may disalign (Stivers 2022) and resist. Our analysis focuses on these last cases as far as they represent occasions of epistemic and deontic interactional negotiation.

The study draws on a corpus of 95 video-recorded parent-teacher conferences, collected in 4 different Italian primary schools.

The analysis is conducted with the Conversation Analytic (Sidnell & Stivers, 2012) approach and extends to the multimodal aspects of the interaction (Mondada, 2014).

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Francesca Maci, Marco Ius, Anna Salvò, Paola Milani

Collaborating with Children and Parents as Experts by Experience to Train Professionals and Promote Family Participation in Social Services

Within the Italian national program P.I.P.P.I. (Program of Intervention to Prevent Institutionalization), participatory processes serve as a cornerstone for social work across various domains, including assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, training, and research. This paper arises from the intention to enhance family participation within their living contexts, drawing inspiration from the Reference Framework for a Participatory Approach in Child Protection (Lacharité, Balsells, Milani, Ius, Boutanquoi, Chamberland, 2022). This framework emphasizes the voices of children and parents as central and transformative, alongside the importance of training professionals in participatory practices. Parents and children, beyond being participants in support pathways addressing their specific situations, are also recognized as citizens and “experts by experience” (Rocelli, Aquili, Giovanazzi, Puecher, Goglio & Faccio). Through their lived experiences and knowledge, they contribute not only to the analysis and design of their intervention plans but also in two significant ways: collaborating with social workers in professional training settings and sharing their care experiences with other families in intervention settings. This contribution specifically focuses on the “Families and Professionals Together” project, an initiative strongly supported by the Tuscany Region in collaboration with the scientific coordination team of the P.I.P.P.I. program. The project aims to co-design actions to involve families in professional training activities and in intervention settings. From October 2023 to October 2024, this action-research project engages approximately 30 participants, including children, adolescents, parents as “experts by experience” of the P.I.P.P.I. program, professionals from Local Authorities who have worked with these families, and University researchers.

The presentation will first outline the conceptual framework and methodology used to structure the project meetings, highlighting the diverse composition of participants to underscore the significance of their involvement within their journeys in the Program. Subsequently, it will detail the methods and activities employed to foster collaboration between families and professionals, creating a “collective research” dynamic. Together, participants explored key research questions:

- What does a child need to grow up well?
- What would we like to see happen during meetings between families and professionals?
- What topics would families like to address and contribute to, and in which contexts?
- What actions are families willing to undertake with professionals to impact their communities?

The presentation will analyse recordings of conversations among families, children, adolescents, practitioners, and researchers, focusing on three main aspects:

- Identifying content and relational/communicative elements that families believe should be emphasized in professional training.
- Highlighting contexts where the voices and participation of children and parents can be amplified to support other families.
- Understanding the discursive forms and relational dynamics that foster a positive atmosphere, build trust, and enable all participants to express themselves and co-create actionable knowledge in family social work.

This research highlights how dialogic processes contribute to the co-construction of “what is,” “what can be,” and “what ought to be,” aligning with the conference theme by showcasing how language and lifeworlds intersect to create meaningful and transformative participatory practices in child protection and social work.

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Letizia Caronia, Vittoria Colla

“Eat properly with your mouth closed”: Socialization to good manners in parent-child mealtime dialogues

The family meal has been extensively studied as a site for children’s acquisition of eating-related behaviors and attitudes, as well as culture-specific rules and assumptions. However, little is known about children’s socialization to a constitutive dimension of commensality and even social life: good manners concerning bodily conduct. Drawing on 20th century scholarship on body governmentality and good manners, and building on recent studies on family meal as a socialization site, the presentation focuses on this overlooked dimension of family commensality. Based on a corpus of 18 videorecorded family dinners collected in Italy, and relying on a conversation analytic approach, the presentation shows that family mealtime constitutes an arena where parents control their children’s conduct through the micro-politics of good manners. By participating in mealtime interactions, children witness and have the chance to acquire the specific cultural principles governing bodily conduct at the table, such as “sitting properly”, “eating with cutlery”, and “chewing with mouth closed”. Yet, they are also socialized to a foundational principle of human sociality: one’s own behavior must be self-monitored according to the perspective of the generalized Other. Noticing that forms and contents of contemporary family mealtime talk about good manners are surprisingly similar to those described by Elias in his seminal work on the social history of good manners, the presentation documents that mealtime still constitutes a privileged cultural site where children are multimodally introduced to morality concerning not only specific table manners, but also more general and overarching assumptions, namely the conception of the body as an entity that should be self-monitored and shaped according to moral standards.



Federica Ranzani

Communicating with elderly patients in primary care. Achieving shared understanding and promoting agency through dialogue

Over the last decades, primary care settings have been significantly affected by the rapid aging of the population. Since older adults often experience chronic conditions, multimorbidity as well as emotional and relational distress, a “good” relationship with care professionals is considered essential for taking care of the complex bio-psycho-social needs of this population (Luppi, 2015). Particularly, effective communication between the general practitioner (GP) and elderly patients is widely acknowledged as pivotal for promoting patients’ participation in the visit, which, in turn, can increase adherence to therapies (Williams et al., 2007).

However, given the epistemic asymmetry at stake in healthcare interactions (Pilnick & Dingwall, 2011) exacerbated by older patients’ often fragile health status, limited health literacy and communicative difficulties, engaging them as active participants and ensuring their understanding can be a challenging goal for GPs. Explanation practices whereby the GP clarifies and elucidates medical information constitute a perspicuous discursive environment for investigating whether and how physicians navigate the challenge of achieving patient understanding and engagement in the visit.

Drawing on a corpus of video-recorded primary care visits of older adults (aged 73-92), this exploratory study investigates the interactional resources whereby the GP explains health-related issues to elderly patients (e.g., diagnostic tests procedures and goals, drug side effects, or the rationale of lifestyle advice and vaccinations). The analysis relies on conversation analysis theoretical and analytical constructs (Sidnell & Stivers, 2013). Instances of doctors’ explanations have been singled out and distinguished according to their sequential position: unsolicited explanations (i.e., volunteered by the GP in first position) and solicited explanations (i.e., initiated in second position following the patient’s request). As for the turn design, different multimodal resources are mobilized by the GP, including formulations from technical into lay language, metaphors, iconic gestures, pointing, and the use of material artifacts like documents or pens.

Expanding previous findings on doctor-elderly patient interactions (e.g., Ekberg et al., 2014), results of this study show that, in this dataset, (a) unsolicited explanations are more frequent than solicited, and (b) the GP deploys recipient-designed multimodal explanation practices oriented to making accessible the biomedical content of the information while avoiding treating the patient as an incompetent interlocutor. In this way, the GP engages in fostering shared understanding between the participants and, at the same time, promotes patient agency.

Insights from this study can inform video-based medical education programs for GPs working with elderly patients aimed at fostering professionals’ reflexivity and awareness of the educational work enacted through dialogue.

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Sarah Bigi, Eleonora Borelli, Mario Luppi, Elena Bandieri, Leonardo Potenza **Transitioning to prognostic awareness by discussing goals of care**

Early palliative care (EPC) treatment for advanced cancer patients involves attending to five main objectives: symptoms management, building rapport, coping, deepening prognostic awareness (DPA) and acknowledging end of life (AEL) (Potenza et al. 2024). Of these, DPA and AEL can only be achieved conversationally: “what could be” (remission) needs to change to “what is” (uncurable cancer) and “what ought to be” when death will be near (goals of care).

The challenging nature of these conversations has been addressed and strategies have been devised to support clinicians in leading such conversations (e.g., Childers et al 2017). However, fewer studies rely on the literature on spoken language, in particular on intentional vagueness (Channel 1994; Jucker et al 2003; Bazzanella 2011; Voghera 2012; 2017). Indeed, while vague language is a well-researched topic in healthcare communication, it is usually observed in professionals’ discourse (e.g., He & Smit 2021; Lewis 2022; Sullivan & Rosenberg 2023), less frequently when used by patients.

We hypothesize that intentional vagueness used by patients when referring to the progression of illness or to the prognosis can be considered as an interactional strategy to avoid difficult conversations when prognostic awareness is still low. Thus, transitions to a less vague language use in these cases could be considered as markers of shifts towards DPA.

To test our hypothesis, we rely on the analysis of transcriptions of consultations from an EPC setting. A purposive sample of conversations will be selected, including conversations with the same patients recorded at different moments of the patient journey. The conversations will be analyzed along the following steps: 1) identification of the main phases in the conversation (Dall & Sarangi 2018); 2) description of the main topics addressed during the conversation (Linell 1998; Dall & Sarangi 2018); 3) identification of vague language uses by patients when referring to the progression of illness or to the prognosis.

We argue that such vague language uses can be considered useful indicators marking transition points to DPA.

We expect to achieve a clearer understanding of how participants in EPC conversations interactionally achieve the transition to the phase of DPA. These results can be relevant for studies on spoken discourse and have implications for clinicians’ communication training.

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Renata Galatolo, Monica Simone, Elwys De Stefani

“How did it happen?”: the narrative construction of workplace accidents in between institutional purposes and patients’ lifeworlds

The rehabilitation pathway of patients who underwent limb amputations following a workplace accident typically entails the provision of a prosthetic limb. To this aim, new amputees go to specialized clinics where they meet specialists (doctors and technicians) who evaluate the healing of their residual limb(s) and plan the rehabilitation accordingly. Usually, at the earliest stages of these first clinical consultations, prosthetic specialists ask new amputees to talk about the accident which resulted in the amputation, and this telling is then reported in the patient’s file.

Drawing on a corpus of 77 visits at a prosthetic clinic in Northern Italy, this study employs a Conversation Analytic (Sidnell & Stivers, 2012), multimodal (Mondada, 2014) approach to investigate question-answer sequences organized as *interrogative series* (Drew & Walker, 2010; Heritage & Sorjonen, 1994), which are aimed at reconstructing the workplace accident and record it in the patient’s file. The study focuses on how interactional practices of the prosthetic specialists (and the material contingencies related to filling in the clinical record) structure the interview and constrain patients’ responses (Boyd & Heritage, 2006; Sacks, 1972, 1989), making relevant specific aspects of the accident experienced by patients and prioritizing them over others. Also, the study analyzes the practices through which patients exhibit a normative orientation to the institutional (tacit) constraints related to *tellability* (Norrick, 2021, Ochs & Capps 2002), which locally organize and shape the history-taking activity.

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Claudio Baraldi, Laura Gavioli

On transformative relaying: a reflection on dialogue-interpreting mediating practices in healthcare

The notion of “mediation” has been used in dialogue interpreting research to address those features of the interpreting work which were not easily explainable in terms of translation proper, including adaptation of linguistic features and cultural perspectives. The word “mediation” comes from studies on conflict mediation and includes the idea of managing disputes, an activity that is not considered to be part of dialogue interpreting (Pöchhacker 2008). The choice made by some public services, particularly in Italian health care, to employ “intercultural mediators” for their interpreting activities has further contributed to give extra meaning to the notion of mediation in interpreting, increasingly suggesting that mediation involves addressing different, and potentially conflictive, cultural features and perspectives.

In this paper we get back to the idea of mediation, as intended in conflict mediation, and compare mediation practices found in interactional studies of dispute resolutions (Garcia 2019) with practices used by intercultural mediators providing interpreting service in Italian healthcare institutions. While conflict is not a characterizing feature of talk involving public service interpreting, it is apparently not a characterizing feature of dispute resolutions either. Indeed what the two have in common is that both intercultural and conflict mediators re-present one participant’s position either in the language of the other participant or taking their perspective. In relation to dispute resolution, the “re-presentation” process has been addressed to, by Heritage & Clayman (2010: 209), as “transformative relaying”, a relaying based on conversational moves that transform the speech exchange by facilitating access to interlocutors’ positions, so as to invite a responsive concession.

Our study is based on the analysis of a selection of 400 mediator-interpreted encounters in women’s health care, with North and West African women speaking respectively Maghrebin Arabic and English as a lingua franca. In our data, mediators sometimes use transformative relaying practices to render what may have a hard or ambiguous impact on their interlocutors. Particularly when rendering the professional’s contribution, mediators “re-present” (and modify) utterances not only as to make them more easily understandable or acceptable by the migrant patient, but also to invite a relevant response from the migrant as a receiver. In this case, relaying is “transformative” since it invites a response based on personal experience – unlike conflict mediation in which what is pursued is a responsive concession. Our analysis is oriented to a thought-provoking conclusion discussing what is involved in such transformative forms, how far these practices may be considered forms of rendition, and finally what are the threats involved in using them in healthcare interpreting.

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Frédéric Matte

Making the professionalization of volunteers in healthcare speak through figures of excellence of care, listening and presence

Professionalization is one of the marked trends in contemporary volunteering, the latter being conceived in terms of skills, performance and career (Bernardeau, 2018). This posture has also led to an increase of privatization from the public sector, and more specifically, in health organizations (Troisoeufs, 2020). In this context of professionalization/privatization of the public sector, and consequently of volunteer practices, our work aims to explore this trend through an ethnographic field study carried out in a university hospital in Quebec, Canada. More specifically, we wish to highlight how volunteers make this professionalization speak daily and how it helps to co-construct their involvement within the healthcare system. To account for the complexity of the professionalizing orientation of volunteer practices, we have opted for a ventriloquial approach to communication (Cooren, 2013; 2023)

Indeed, a ventriloquial approach to communication enables a detailed analysis of discourse and dialogue by highlighting how organizational actors—both human and non-human—express their values, practices, ideas, people, things, and experiences, by revealing what matters to them. By doing so, they make these “aspects” speak implicitly or explicitly through the process of evocation or invocation (Cooren, 2013). With this decentered and dislocated view of discourse and dialogue, an individual or a non-human expresses himself/itself not only in his own name, but also in the name of several figures, that is, what seems to drive, animate and concern them. Organizational actors thus evoke these figures, through their speeches and ways of doing by cultivating them (Bencherki et al., 2020) daily. More specifically, a ventriloquial approach offers an original reading on the apparent ambiguity that seems to exist between a more professionalizing approach to volunteering and a vision of care that would be more intuitive and guided by senses.

To do so, we mobilized an ethnographic lens that allowed us to identify two key figures that are evoked in discourses, namely: 1) the figure of excellence and 2) the figure of listening and presence. As we will see, the figure of excellence is embodied through the valorization of past professional experiences, the standardization of practices, and the ambiguity surrounding volunteer roles. In turn, the figure of listening and presence shows how this activity of supporting patients also makes the role ambiguous between a more professional approach and one that would be more intuitive and experiential. Overall, we explore the question of how this professionalization promotes skills benchmarks - and in turn constitutes an added value to the health system -, albeit by remaining with a certain inflexibility associated with management that appears to overshadow an involvement that would be more humanizing (André, 2015).

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Maria Cherba, Mathieu Giroux

Using Medical Simulation and Interaction Analysis to Support Inclusive Healthcare for Autistic Patients

Autistic people experience challenges in accessing healthcare and report unmet care needs.^{1,2} Studies have documented negative and stigmatizing healthcare experiences, lack of recognition of patient expertise, and exclusion of patients from care decisions.³⁻⁵ The quality of patient-provider interactions is an important determinant of the quality of care,^{6,7} and healthcare providers, patients, and families report the need to enhance healthcare providers' training on inclusive communication strategies adapted to the needs of autistic patients.⁸⁻¹¹ In particular, guidance focused on patient-provider interactions is needed.¹²⁻¹⁵ Our project aims to document clinical interactions in autism and their implications for accessing care, in order to develop a communication training program for healthcare providers.

Our study integrates the patient partnership model, focused on recognizing patients' expertise and strengthening their engagement in care,^{16,17} with an interactional approach to patient-provider communication,^{18,19} examining patient engagement in care as co-constructed in clinical interactions. The project is conducted at a tertiary pediatric hospital in Canada. Our research team includes autistic individuals, parents, and healthcare providers. We video-recorded 16 simulated consultations with an autistic adolescent (played by an autistic young adult) and his father. A simulation-based approach was selected to observe behaviours of healthcare providers from various fields and compare practices. The simulation scenario was applicable to several professionals, including physicians, nurses, social workers, and psychologists. Immediately following each simulation, participants engaged in a debriefing interview to describe and reflect on their communication strategies during the scenario. We then used multimodal interaction analysis – paying attention to language, gestures, body postures, and movements²⁰ – to analyze simulation recordings, and thematic analysis²¹ to analyze the debriefing interviews. All team members participated in the analysis, which allowed us to integrate the experiential knowledge of autistic individuals and healthcare providers.

Our analyses show how patient-, parent-, and provider-initiated actions offer opportunities for patient engagement^{22,23} that can be pursued in various ways (or not, enabling or constraining the patient's participation) during the consultation, as the patient, the parent, and the provider react and respond to each other's actions. In particular, we highlight how clinicians identify and respond to the patient's and the parent's verbal and non-verbal cues that present opportunities to adapt the consultation to the patient's sensitivity to certain stimuli (such as light, touch or the use of objects like blood pressure monitors during the physical examination) and specific communication needs. We also highlight the clinician- and the patient/parent-initiated actions that offer opportunities to evaluate the patient's comfort level throughout the consultation and to involve the patient in the development of the care plan.

Our study contributes to our understanding of triadic patient-parent-provider interactions and child participation in pediatric care.^{24,25} Patient participation has been identified as a priority for improving care for autistic patients and other groups of population who may experience stigmatization,^{6,26} and our study helps identify specific communication practices to better understand this approach and support healthcare professionals who wish to integrate it into their practice. We will discuss how our findings can be used to develop a training program for healthcare providers, which is the next step in our broader project.

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Alessandra Fasulo, Vienna Kemp, Sybille Janert

Dialogue with autistic children following non lexical vocalisations

There is increasing recognition that autism studies and assessment tools, with their focus on spoken language as a diagnostic index, risks to underestimate communication impairments in this population. Studies adopting a whole-body communication approach, including non verbal vocalisation, have on the other hand revealed that interactional partners, of which one or more are autistic, can develop effective alternatives to the verbal modality, especially in the first years of life.

This study focuses on interactional sequences including non lexical vocalisations (NLVs) uttered by 3-6 old autistic children, at the presence of their caregivers. The data is taken from a corpus of longitudinal videorecordings filmed by the home therapist as part of her own habitual practice. The families were seen in London, UK but are of diverse cultural backgrounds, with parents often being bilingual.

The study shows that NLVs are mostly effective as initiating turns, and that responses discriminate between different sound & movement configurations. Our analysis will focus on different sequential trajectories of children's NLVs and implications for theory and interventions.



Laura Gavioli, Daniele Urlotti

“Holding space for dialogue” – The dialogic potential of multi-part renditions in mediator interpreted interactions with migrants during medical consultation

Although the term Public Service Interpreting has become the internationally agreed-upon definition for linguistic mediation taking place in institutional settings, and aimed at allowing communication between service providers and users speaking different languages (Gavioli & Wadensjö 2023), another widely accepted definition for the same type of practice has for long been that of Dialogue Interpreting (Pöchhacker 2004) which, instead of the setting, foregrounds the format of the verbal exchange taking place between the participants to this kind of interaction.

As a matter of fact, research has shown that public service interpreting takes the form of a dialogue between the primary speakers and the linguistic mediator (Wadensjö 1998) and that such dialogic format is not only fundamental for the creation of common ground between the participants (Davidson 2002), but it allows linguistic mediators to act not only as translators, but also as coordinators of the exchange itself (Baraldi & Gavioli, 2012). Nevertheless, studies in linguistic mediation have often examined it from a textual point of view, by comparing the source texts uttered by primary speakers and the translations provided by linguistic mediators (Pokorn 2020), while overlooking the necessity to also take into consideration all the spontaneous phenomena which naturally take place in conversation.

Based on a dataset taken from the AIM Corpus (Corradini et al. 2024) and applying the principals of Conversation Analysis (Sidnell & Stivers 2013), this study examines in detail interactions in which migrant patients from sub-Saharan African countries access the public healthcare services of two provinces in Northern Italy. The dialogic practice here investigated is a specific type or rendition, called multi-part rendition, in which the translated propositional content is distributed by mediators over the course of different turns-at-talk. The results show the mediators' general orientation to the natural flow of conversation in interaction, and that multi-part rendition are the locus of a series of conversational phenomena, such as repetitions and/or requests for confirmation or clarification, which allow mediators to monitor mutual understanding and therefore contribute to the successfully fulfilment of their institutional task.

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Marilena Fatigante

Dialogue, Mind, and the Constitution of Consciousness: Narratives about Pathways of Self-Knowledge

Since the very inception of life, dialogue, mind, and consciousness have been inextricably interwoven realities. In psychology, Vygotsky (1934) posited that interaction is not merely a medium for thought but its very condition of possibility. Thought does not arise in isolation; rather, it is dialectically shaped within relational dynamics. This principle has deep historical roots in the Socratic tradition, where dialogue functions as both method and ontological premise for self-exploration. The presence of a skilled interlocutor, who can stimulate deeper awareness through strategic questioning, is essential.

Plato, in turn, advanced this principle beyond the pedagogical function of Socratic dialogue, elevating it to an ontological structure of the soul's engagement with truth. In this view, the constitution of selfhood is neither monologic nor autonomous but emerges through participation in dialogic structures that extend beyond the individual subject.

This premise—of dialogue as a constitutive force in the emergence of subjectivity—has found various theoretical elaborations in contemporary scholarship. However, within the ethnomethodological paradigm (Garfinkel, 1967), the focus on intersubjectivity as a locally and sequentially constructed phenomenon, structured through turn-by-turn interaction (Schegloff, 1992), has largely eclipsed any broader interrogation into the formative power of dialogue in shaping the subjectivities of those engaged in it. In this respect, alternative perspectives—such as those of Martin Buber and Mikhail Bakhtin—offer a richer conceptual framework, foregrounding the existential and ethical dimensions of dialogic encounter.

This study, inspired by an autobiographical perspective, investigates dialogue as a fundamental site of self-construction and transformation. It draws upon a corpus of twelve in-depth interviews with individuals who have undertaken, and continue to pursue, a path of self-awareness under the guidance of an informal yet highly skilled interlocutor, with thirty-five years of experience in psychology and multidisciplinary fields, as well as extensive knowledge of both Eastern and Western philosophical traditions and psychoanalysis.

Employing Discourse Analysis (Edwards & Potter, 1992), this study examines how interviewees articulate discursive repertoires related to consciousness, subjectivity, dependence and autonomy, agency, and spirituality. Particular attention is devoted to the interview setting itself—not merely as a retrospective site where biographical narratives are recounted, but as a performative space in which interviewees re-enact and reflexively embody the dialogical structures they have internalized through their engagement with the guide.

The findings indicate that, what emerges from the guidance process is not merely a refined sense of self, but a qualitatively transformed perception of Life—a heightened mode of being that transcends the conventional egoic framework. Interviewees describe an expanded sense of interconnectedness with the external world, a reconfiguration of the very boundaries between self and reality that renders the latter perceptually, psychologically, and existentially distinct from the taken-for-granted world of everyday cognition.

Ultimately, this paper explores whether the study of such personal narratives—still largely underrepresented in scientific literature—can serve as a valuable epistemic resource for analysing dialogic non-conventional pathways of self-knowledge and their transformative potential. It aims to contribute to a broader understanding of how dialogic engagement, far from being a mere communicative practice, operates as a profound mechanism of existential renewal, fostering modes of subjectivity that defy conventional psychological paradigms.

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Avishay Gerczuk

Dialogic Concession in Journalistic Discourse as a Supportive Strategy for Verbal Irony

Op-ed columns are often written with a deliberate persuasive intention, to influence readers and public opinion (Firmstone, 2019), using different linguistic patterns as argumentative means. A dialogue between the writer and their readers does not necessarily manifest itself explicitly, however “writers and readers interact everytime the readers understand a written text” (Nystrand, 1986: 40). In this context, journalists frequently use verbal irony to convey criticism and convince readers in their line of argument. Nevertheless, verbal irony is inherently indirect, and thus, when a writer chooses to utilize it, they face a discursive risk – the potential for misinterpretation that could undermine the writer’s persuasive intent. To mitigate this risk, journalists may employ supportive strategies, to ensure the interpreting of an utterance as ironic. Supportive strategies are different discursive strategies pertaining to different aspects of language, i.e., semantic, syntactic and paralinguistic, which support and enhance the interpretation of the ironic speaker’s meaning and the effectiveness of discourse and communicative interactions. This talk focuses on one such strategy: the use of concession structures. Through an analysis of op-eds published in Ha’aretz, an online Israeli daily, this talk demonstrates how concession structures contribute to readers’ interpretation of ironic utterances. At its core, concession expresses the opposite of an expected causal relationship (Azar, 1997) and, through its inherently dialogic nature, acknowledges potential counter-arguments while ultimately rejecting them, creating a space for writer-reader interaction (Livnat, 2012). This dialogic function can be employed to construct paradoxes that highlight the contradiction between expectations and reality (Shukrun-Nagar, 2014). By examining how concession’s dialogic properties aid readers’ interpretation of ironic utterances, this talk aims at making a twofold contribution: it expands on the concept of supportive strategies in ironic discourse, and it demonstrates how the dialogic nature of concession specifically functions to support ironic interpretation in journalistic writing. In other words, this talk seeks to illuminate the intricate relationship between dialogism and irony in journalistic discourse and contributes to our understanding of how indirect communication strategies function within the op-ed genre to create dialogical writer-reader interactions.

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Olesia Liubashenko

Frontline Dialogue Between First Aid Personnel and Combatants: Developing a communication Training Program

Personnel from various services engage in professional dialogic interaction in frontline conditions to provide pre-hospital care (Quinn et al., 2023) and spiritual support (Ishchuk & Sagan, 2020). This study, which is part of a broader research project, focuses on accurately interpreting emotional language in professional frontline dialogues to avoid misinterpretations of verbally expressed emotions. The concepts of communication as dialogue (Baxter, 2006) and dialogue as a practice (Létourneau et al., 2023) provide a framework for exploring the communicative practices of different First Aid Services in these contexts.

The effectiveness of a servicemember engaging in dialogue with a traumatized combatant depends on their communication competence and practical experience (Craig, 2006). This includes the ability to anticipate, recognize, interpret, and respond appropriately to emotional cues and the combatant's needs (Lindquist & Gendron, 2013). Furthermore, it is essential to have the communication skills to regulate the combatant's emotions, minimizing or preventing the potentially harmful effects of intense emotional states.

The study draws on data collected from 14 combatants who served in active combat zones during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine (March 2022–March 2024). Combined with earlier findings from 2015 (Liubashenko, 2024a; Liubashenko, 2024b), the results highlight the critical role of accurately reading the interlocutor's emotional state and responding appropriately.

The study identifies key emotional states commonly experienced by combatants during traumatic moments and categorizes primary approaches to initial professional dialogue. To support these methods, a communication training program was developed, focusing on stages such as analyzing communicative situations, recognizing emotional cues, selecting appropriate linguistic tools, constructing effective responses, practicing dialogues, and engaging in reflective evaluation. The communication training framework is designed to meet the needs of educational institutions preparing personnel for work in the challenging conditions of armed conflict.

Keywords: professional dialogue, frontline, First Aid Services, combatants, communication training, emotional language.

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Ayelet Kohn, David Yellin

The Day Everything Changed: Dialogues in Comics in a Time of Crisis

Comics artists have a rich lexicon for expressing personal and national trauma, and for conveying anxiety or abrupt muteness, as well as personal and political demands that such situations might generate (Adler & Kohn, 2022; Achino-Loeb, 2016). Since words are incorporated in comics in both their graphic and auditory visualization, they can expand the boundaries of language when speakers “have no words” to express their feelings or share them with others. Comics works might thus offer a meta-linguistic discussion about the limits of language during times of crisis.

The test case consists of two works from *The Day Everything Changed* (Gurevitch and Hanukah, 2024), a comics anthology of works that portray ten stories of Israeli citizens during the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

The paper explores how comic artists use their medium’s unique lexicon to communicate profound emotions that words alone cannot express. This attempt is communicated in the artists’ interpretation of two dialogic genres:

- An alleged dialogue that simultaneously addresses multiple audiences, helps the speakers call for solidarity, present demands, and raise questions regarding their identity (Weigand, 2015, 2010).
- A dialogue that takes place between a therapist and an individual during a life-threatening situation (Levitt, Butler, & Hill, 2006). While the dialogue may help individuals to cope with the threat, words spoken aloud put them at constant risk.

Dialogic aspects will also be analyzed in two video segments that offer interpretation of the events described in the works: a testimonial video in which an Israeli-Bedouin citizen, who saved many, describes the events of that day. The video incorporates footage from the terrorists’ cameras and a recording of a radio conversation between one of the terrorists and his mother, that the speaker heard while driving his car to the massacre arena. The second video is a segment from an Israeli documentary television program, in which a social worker describes her conversation with two children, who hid in a closet in a shelter for 12 hours until rescuers arrived. The segment includes audio clips from their phone conversation. The videos’ analysis expands the discussion on dialogues in multimodal texts in times of distress.

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Lars Hallgren, Hanna Bergea

Management of doubt of intersubjectivity in collaboration about complex and contested nature: Reindeer and wolverine

In this case study, we investigate how a group, which meets to have conversations and make decisions about a complex, contested and future-oriented natural resource management issue, develops, expresses and manages successively increasing doubt of intersubjectivity. Doubt of intersubjectivity refers to actors' mutual uncertainty about dialogical conditions. In natural resource management literature, conflict has been conceptualized in terms of actors' interests, attitudes, and disagreements as fixed positions. While the same literature often emphasizes the importance of trust to constructive conflict management, the connection between dialogical management of disagreements on validity claims and trust remains uninvestigated. In this study, we use Harold Garfinkel's concepts 'constitutive expectancies' and 'doubts of intersubjectivity' to conceptualize trust and to describe how management of disagreement on validity claims is managed in dialogues.

In this article, we analyze the sequence organization of talk-in-interaction in a longer episode, which illustrates the intricate dynamic between ambiguities about the management of conditions and relations outside as well as inside the conversation situation. The episode has been identified in a corpus consisting of meetings in which representatives from Swedish environmental protection agencies and representatives of Sami reindeer herding communities talk with the purpose of managing conflicting goals between domestic reindeer herding and nature conservation of predators. Based on state of the art descriptions and future scenarios of reindeer and predator populations, the explicit aim of the conversation was to identify and agree on measures to protect reindeer from predators while also maintaining and strengthening viable populations of endangered big predators. Ultimately, the conversations are of importance for what can be, and what ought to be.

The analyzed episode is initiated when uncertainty arises whether a question asked by one participant concerns the meaning of a word, or if it is an articulation of disagreement about the working procedure. In the two-hour-long conversation that follows, the participants display to each other that there are problems with intersubjectivity and different attempts are made to detect and solve these problems as well as articulating disagreements on validity and legitimacy claims. At multiple times, participants ask each other if they agree and assertions are given that they do. Thereby the participants mutually establish, what we think is the inaccurate interpretation, that the source of the intersubjectivity problems is the difference of perspectives, and that further investigation of state of the art and future oriented measures demands consensus. This paradoxically hampers the investigation of differences in perspectives and hence the doubt of intersubjectivity remains and is aggravated. The attempts to detect and clarify intersubjectivity problems are treated with suspicion and as threats against intersubjectivity in themselves. The analysis of this case contributes to literature on disagreement by proposing that doubts of intersubjectivity are generated by ambiguities in the method for articulating and managing disagreements, and not by the difference in perspectives as such. It demonstrates that doubts of intersubjectivity develop as an interactive and emergent social process, which is decisive for collaboration in natural resource management conflict.



Elda Weizman

Negotiating ironic criticism through dialogicity in political op-eds

This talk addresses dialogic negotiations of ironic criticism in online opinion political articles (op-eds). Specifically, I analyze the use of explicit, pretended dialogues constructed by the columnist with reference to ironic uses of quotation marks which convey implicit dialogism. The study relies on op-eds in the online version of the daily Ha'aretz, a liberal highbrow daily, an outspoken opponent of the right-wing government in Israel.

Dialogism is conceptualized as a scalar discursive phenomenon, which ranges from implicit to explicit dialogues. The apparently monologic op-eds under study are necessarily dialogic not only in the Bakhtinian sense of “active responsiveness”, whereby human communication is inherently dialogic as it takes into account potential addresses (Bakhtin 1981), but also due to their marked argumentative nature (Perelman & Olbrecht-Tyteca, 1969). An additional layer of dialogism is created through the use of irony, viewed as double-voiced, and hence as internally dialogical (Bakhtin, 1981: 324).

The talk will focus on the forms and functions of dialogism specifically employed to convey ironic criticism. The implicit end features ironic utterances, either textually unmarked or marked by quotation marks, involving at least two voices – the ironist's and the implied target's (Weizman, 2015; Shukrun-Nagar, 2020; Weizman and Kohn, 2022). In irony conveyed through mixed quotations, an additional layer of dialogue is added between the quoter and the quoted. The corpus at hand further presents the use of explicit constructed dialogues (Tannen, 1989) which enhance and sometimes explicate the implicit negotiations of ironic criticism.

The following is a case in point: ‘He said he would work to establish a committee to examine the location of the gas rig, and until its conclusions are reached, “we will stop the works being carried out 10 km from the shore”. How will we stop it? The rig has already been placed this week. How will we move it? It's a rig designed for this specific location, costing about a billion dollars’.

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Vanessa Piccoli

Spreading a Neoliberal Vision of Society Through Podcast Interviews: A Conversational Analysis of Collaborative Sequences

This contribution is based on the analysis of a corpus of 20 interviews with French entrepreneurs taken from a native podcast. These interviews were broadcast on all major platforms between 2016 and 2017 — that is, during the election campaign of (future) President Macron and the beginning of his government. During this time, the start-up model was booming in France, partly due to Macron's political project, which announced his intention to turn France into a “start-up nation.”

The stated aim of the podcast is to inspire the audience through the testimonials of the interviewees (mainly young entrepreneurs belonging to the Parisian start-up scene) and to encourage the search for professional and personal fulfillment. Through the interviews, the participants recurrently express their vision of today's society and of society as it ought to be — a vision in line with neoliberal and libertarian values typical of Silicon Valley culture (Jimenez 2020).

Research on podcasts has shown that, unlike traditional radio, this medium can be considered a ‘narrowcast’ (Glevarec 2024), aimed at a specialized audience, that it creates an illusion of intimacy (Todeschini 2019) and that it can be a powerful means of persuasion (Jacobson 2021), conveying ideas and influencing public perception on a variety of subjects. We therefore consider that this podcast can contribute to reinforcing and legitimizing the participants' vision of society and, consequently, to spreading a neoliberal ideology.

Using conversation analysis methodology (Sacks 1992), this contribution proposes a fine-grained analysis of some practices that allow participants (the interviewer and the interviewees) to shape a consensual representation of society as it ought to be. In particular, the analysis will focus on collaborative sequences — i.e., sequences where at least one turn construction unit initiated by one speaker is completed by another (Sacks 1992, Jeanneret 1999 among others). The analysis will show that collaborative sequences in the podcast allow participants to display a strong affiliation (Stivers 2008) to each other and to construct a shared lifeworld.

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Liran Peretz, Oren Livio

Graffiti As Palimpsestic Dialogue: Debating the War in Israeli Public Space

Graffiti is an act of public expression that uses visual and verbal means to convey messages in the public sphere (Hanauer, 2011). Characterized by its ephemeral nature, graffiti functions as an arena for struggle between divergent political views, as well as a competition over the right to be seen (Hanauer, 2011; Shep, 2015). Since this competition occurs over limited public visible space, graffiti artists often engage in dialogue with other artists – overwriting, erasing, or commenting on previous texts. In this study, we focus on such practices, conceptualizing them as *palimpsestic dialogue* – spatialized performative interactions in which texts become layered in different ways, with traces of earlier texts remaining intentionally observable to passersby (Myllylä, 2018).

Our case study involves verbal graffiti in Israel during the ongoing Gaza War, which broke out in October 2023 and has led to widespread political debate. Through an examination of local graffiti inscriptions, we identify three dialogical practices interlocutors engage in, encompassing a broad spectrum of dialogicity.

First, *partial erasure* refers to spraying over an existing inscription using a different color than that originally used. While seemingly anti-dialogical in that it seeks to nullify the initial political statement, in practice the overlapping of colors renders that statement concurrently absent and present, drawing attention to the dialogical nature of the response. Thus, for example, one writer responded to an inscription calling to “erase Gaza” by painting over – but leaving partially visible – the word “Gaza,” simultaneously protesting the call and leaving evidence of its genocidal nature.

Second, *supplementary resistance* refers to the adding of words or phrases to the initial text to overturn or resist its meaning. In one such example, a critical inscription about Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, “Bibi is the destroyer of Israel,” was first partially erased, then rewritten anew above the original location, thus enacting a dialogical chain of resistant counter-responses. Supplementary resistance may also involve minor alterations to the original text that subvert its meaning, as in the transformation of one letter in the slogan *beyaxad nenatzeax* (“together we will win”) to make it *beyaxad nirtzax* (“together we will murder”).

Third, *supplemental negotiation* refers to additions made to inscriptions as a form of dialogical interpretation or commentary on the initial text. In another inscription criticizing Netanyahu, his name was first replaced by that of his opponents to render them the target of criticism; to this existing palimpsest, someone added the inscription “everything is toxic,” thus metadiscursively commenting on the characteristics of Israeli political debate as illustrated in the graffiti war.

We consider the ways in which such dialogical practices construct public discourse and political debate in Israel, and examine how they more broadly reflect Israeli speech culture.

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Panel organizers and moderators: **Mariaelena Bartesaghi**

Panel rationale

In a now classic text, Elliott Mishler (1997) writes of the two disparate voices of every medical encounter: “the voice of medicine” and the “voice of the lifeworld.” The contention that the voice of medicine will always be loudest leads Mishler to conclude that dialogue, as a reciprocal attunement of voices and a recognition of the experience of the other, is all but impossible in medical exchanges.

Communication “skills,” are now part of medical board exams and increasingly popular initiatives in the medical humanities and narrative medicine encourage providers’ engagement with the humanistic, aesthetic, and poetic aspects of the medical experience. In this context, where dialogue is at once necessary to fulfill the Hippocratic Oath and an institutional requirement of a well-rounded professionalization, the panel considers the tensions, dilemmas, and difficulties of clinical dialogues.

As a communication skill, dialogue is different from the ideal communicative situation intended by Mishler, or the ethical imagination of Levinas, Socrates, or Buber, for that matter. As goal-driven communication, dialogue “skills” are designed to obtain an accurate patient history or relevant diagnostic information, avoid medical error, or lessen the likelihood of a medical malpractice claim through an established rapport.

The presenters in this panel look and listen beyond the dynamics of spoken discourse to encompass multimodal and multigeneric practices, attending to dialogue as communication between various and diverse professional and patient voices, across channels and contexts.

Elisa Rossi

Patients' narratives in oncological consultation: how doctors can facilitate dialogue and active participation

Healthcare systems favor a patient-centered approach, enhanced by medical dialogue. Accordingly, patients are not merely persons in standardized roles, but rather individuals with personal needs and fears, able to express their own ideas, to tell their stories, to ask questions, and to suggest options about treatment when interacting with practitioners. In general, dialogue is treated in the literature as a particular form of communication, based on specific dialogic actions and presuppositions: (i) a fair distribution of active participation (equity); (ii) sensitivity toward the interlocutors' feelings and viewpoints (empathy); (iii) acknowledgment, understanding and encouragement of multiple perspectives (empowerment). By presenting research data collected in the last two years, I focus on patients' narratives during medical consultations in the oncological field. Research took place at a regional level in five health structures that deal with oncology, surgery, and radiology care. The corpus of data includes about 85 video-recorded consultations (first visits and follow up visits). My principal aim is to analyze in which ways physicians facilitate and dialogically co-construct patients' narratives on the discovery of the problem, their identity, and emotions within the interaction.

Laura Sterponi, Marilena Fatigante, Cristina Zuccheromaglio, Francesca Alby
Intersubjectivity and dialogue in oncology visits

Rather than treating dialogue and intersubjectivity as interchangeable terms, we advocate for their distinct consideration, suggesting that this conceptual differentiation makes analytically possible to examine how participants ascertain, formulate and negotiate what is going on, as the medical encounter unfolds, in order to sustain the exchange of information relevant to the visit's objectives. In this sense, intersubjectivity is the condition of possibility for dialogue. Drawing on Goffman's insights, we suggest that the interactional work that goes into reaching a mutual understanding of what is it that's going on here in the medical encounter is a foundational dimension of intersubjectivity and a necessary prerequisite for a felicitous doctor-patient communicative exchange. Our dataset consists of 60 video recorded first-time visits in oncology from two Italian hospitals. Our analysis reveals two primary practices employed by participants to ensure intersubjectivity: (i) metapragmatic formulations and (ii) literacy actions, including reading and writing, as well as the handling of documents. These practices play a pivotal role in mediating transitions between phases and are especially valuable during moments of misunderstanding or misalignment. The study sheds light on the intricate interplay between dialogue and intersubjectivity in oncology visits, providing insights into how participants collaboratively navigate the complex terrain of medical communication.

Gonen Dori-Hacohen, Bracha Nir

Is dialogue a possibility in speech-language therapy? Perspectives from one Hebrew therapy session

The declared goal of Speech-and-language therapy is to engage in an inclusive, supportive interaction with clients, to enrich their communication and language abilities and promote their participation in dialogues. This goal highlights elements central to dialogue, including free will, autonomy, and creativity. Our work shows that the emphasis pathologists place on therapeutic aspects of interaction can not only prevent in-situ dialogic moments but even undermine other opportunities for accomplishing dialogue.

We analyze two sessions in Hebrew with a pathologist and a seven-year-old child-client and show how the focus on the mechanics of pronunciation is detrimental to dialogicity within the session itself and across the sessions. For creating Dialogue, we often assume sharedness of mechanics, and in the rare situations the mechanics are not shared, as in our data, we examine how the difficulties of reaching dialogue become almost insurmountable.

Vivien Heller

Cooperative practices in play activities between L2 novices and their German-speaking peers in an informal educational setting

In language socialisation research, peer interactions are seen as an important context for both negotiating social orders and developing communicative competence in the first and second language (Blum-Kulka; Hamo & Habib, 2010; Cekaite & Björk-Willén 2013). The presentation uses video recordings of peer interactions in an informal school setting to explore how adolescents who grew up in Germany and immigrant children and adolescents enrolled in a Welcome Class co-organise play activities and game explanations (Heller, Luginbühl & Arendt 2020) during their first encounters in the German school.

Methodologically, the study draws on perspectives from language socialisation (Duff 2014) and multimodal interaction analysis (Goodwin 2017). Starting from the assumption that the acquisition of a new language is always embedded in social activities and interactive practices of peer communities within the school, the analysis focuses on the participation frameworks (Goodwin & Goodwin 2004) that the newcomers and their German-speaking peers establish for their activities. The focus is on the epistemic and semiotic ecologies and the identities that they evoke and display (Bucholtz & Hall 2005).

Based on different peer constellations it is shown how children and adolescents create a participatory, dialogic framework for collaborative game explanations by downgrading their epistemic status and establishing a multimodal semiotic ecology that facilitates the use of German as a lingua franca. Multimodal rule demonstrations, chances for the L2 novices to actively demonstrate (non-)understanding are as well as code-switching into the L2 novices' heritage language are used to support mutual understanding and provide authentic language learning opportunities. The self-organised play activities in the informal setting thus have the potential to function as a language socialisation context that enables newcomers to construct an identity as a member of their new school and provides language learning opportunities through participation in multimodal and multilingual social activities.

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Asta Cekaite

Linguistic and embodied strategies for socializing children's negative emotions and conflict management in peer group interactions

The present study examines longitudinal trajectories of young children's (from 1,5 – 2 y. olds to 3,5 y. olds) emotion socialization, focusing on the expression, interpretation, and alleviation of negative emotions during children's peer group conflicts. Everyday activities in the early childhood educational setting, including play (in Swedish), were video-recorded in a regular preschool in Sweden for 18 months. The study takes a point of departure in language socialization perspective according to which language and social socialization are inextricably intertwined (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2012). The study is also informed by Multimodal Conversation Analysis (Goodwin, 2018) that examines meaning making by taking into account talk and embodied features of social interaction.

Children's peer conflicts that resulted in distress (e.g., crying, whining, screaming) and educators' responses constituting conflict management were analysed. The analysis focused on: (1) children's affective stances (the form and intensity of distress) and (2) adults' socializing strategies: social actions (admonishment, rule statements), linguistic formats (open-ended interrogatives, polar questions, directives) and embodied actions (comforting touch, controlling touch, gaze orientation) (Cekaite & Burdelski, 2021). The longitudinal analysis shows that as children spent more time in the preschool, their displays of distress in conflicts decrease in intensity. Across time, adults transformed their conflict management of children's distress. Initially they responded to children as novices who needed to be informed about institutional and social rules; they scaffolded children's awareness of peer's distress as a social concern caused by certain actions. Later, educators used less explicit socialization strategies: they posed open-ended questions, used less controlling touch, and invited children to resolve conflicts by themselves. The study contributes to language socialization research by demonstrating how children's emotion socialization across time changes both in linguistic, and embodied ways, and by highlighting ways in which embodied socialization is linked to culturally relevant notions of moral and affective personhood.

Nicola Nasi

The dialogic management of group work. Children's multimodal negotiation of roles and responsibilities for a shared task

The study investigates children's dialogic negotiation of their respective roles and responsibilities for task completion during group work. The video-recorded data were collected within a European H2020 project (NEW ABC) and involve 8- to 11-year-old children in a primary school in Italy. In this context, the children worked in small groups of 3 to 4 peers to create multimedia stories on a digital device.

The study focuses on their multiparty peer interactions, which are analyzed with the analytical tools of multimodal conversation analysis (Goodwin 2000, Mondada 2019) and with a focus on children's co-operative work towards the completion of the task. Specifically, the analysis builds upon previous research on children's dialogic management of group work (Thornborrow 2003, Herder et al. 2020, Heller 2023, Kääntä & Piirainen-Marsh 2013) and illustrates the multiple resources that children mobilize to locally negotiate their roles and responsibilities for the shared project. For example, the analysis shows that children ingeniously use the material affordances of the digital device to claim a leading role in the process of completing the task. It is argued that the socio-material ecology of group work provides children with resources to pursue specific social goals in the peer group: through verbal, embodied, and material resources, children locally reconstruct their peer relationships and a hierarchical social organization. The analysis has implications for teachers' professional practice, as it illustrates the concrete unfolding of children's group work with the digital device, highlighting possible risks and opportunities of its unsupervised use in the peer group.

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Friederike Kern, Amanda Bateman

Children's multimodal category-bound-activities: Cross cultural insights from Germany and New Zealand

Research in the area of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis has demonstrated how Goffman's notion of full or part members can be applied to children's multimodal actions (Kern, 2018) and their participation in interactions with others (Bateman, 2022). Drawing on Sacks' membership category analysis work (e.g. 1992), these authors now join together to explore cross-cultural insights in Germany and New Zealand early childhood pretend play to explore how children co-produce category-bound activities in situ. In pretend play, the children relate to the world that is known to them by reproducing and making sense of it (Danby, Davidson & Theobald 2017), thereby showing their orientation to local cultural norms and values. However, they also creatively challenge such norms and values and transform them to their wishes (e.g., Paugh 2005; Kyratzis 2007).

In our presentation, we will explore cross-culturally how children use category-bound activities to evoke adult worlds and identities, focussing on how children make sense of it. The New Zealand data include video footage of toddler age children (2 years) engaging in pretend play that involves 'cooking' in the sandpit, where buckets and spades are employed to co-construct the cooking activity. The German video data stem from a kindergarten session in which children – among them children with special needs – use toy screwdrivers and other toy tools to set up a 'repair shop' in which other children can bring their toy cars to get them fixed.

This presentation will discuss emerging findings regarding how children's participation in moments of play with others demonstrates category-bound activities that make them visible members of a particular group of players and also show their relation to and interpretation of the world around them. A particular focus will be on how category-bound activities can be practically demonstrated in multimodal ways that are tied to environmental resources, as a way of extending work that has traditionally explored verbal reference to category membership.

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Daniela Veronesi, Monica Simone

Mitigation vs. directness: the modulation of deontic rights in children's peer-interaction in the classroom

Drawing upon a Conversation Analysis (CA) perspective of interaction as the locus where the deontic dimension of the lifeworld is interactionally constituted (Stevanovic & Peräkylä 2012; Stevanovic 2018; Thompson et al. 2021), this explorative study addresses the ways in which primary school children display and negotiate their deontic rights in peerinteraction; specifically, we aim at providing a preliminary outline of how children modulate requesting actions, and (non-)complying responses, while jointly accomplishing didactic tasks.

Findings on interactional competence suggest that, as compared to adults, in designing their turns children employ more direct and simpler forms, also when disagreeing, thereby displaying to be less aware of mitigation practices characterizing actions not aligned with the interlocutor's expectations and with social norms related to dimensions like "face", "politeness", "register" (e.g. Ervin Tripp & Mitchell-Kernan 1977, Axia e Baroni 1985, Wootton 2005, Stivers et al. 2018). On the other hand, CA literature on "directives" (actions designed to get someone else to do something, i.e. requests and proposals, Goodwin 1990; Stevanovic & Svennevig 2015; Sorjonen et al. 2017) shows that, besides considering generic "politeness" issues, participants design both directives and their responses according to interactional contingencies (such as individual/joint commitment to ongoing activity or the relevance and beneficiary of the requested action). Against this background, our analysis - based on a collection of 15 episodes (ca 4 hrs) from a corpus of audio-videorecorded classroom interactions in Italian primary schools (3rd grade, age 8-9) within a CA-informed project on children's interactional competence - specifically investigates when and to what extent children mitigate their deontic rights by selecting a specific format in first actions (proposals vs. imperative requests), as well as in second disagreeing actions (softened vs. bold refusals); the study thus offers a glimpse into the ongoing development of interactional practices underlying the deontic dimension of social life.

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Bryndis Gunnarsdottir

Embodied participation in the toddler peer group

This research aims to examine the embodied strategies toddlers use to participate in play and interactions with their peers in order to investigate the social world of toddlers within ECEC.

Examining toddler participation in play through studying embodied interactions in the toddler peer group can give us insights into the competent ways toddlers engage with each other, showing us that they are 'mature' enough to be listened to and have their voice heard (Bae, 2010; Gunnarsdottir & Bateman, 2022; Pálmadóttir, 2017; UNCRC, 1989).

This study is an ethnomethodological (EM) (Garfinkel, 1967) study using conversation analysis (CA) (Sacks et al., 1974) to examine interactions in the toddler peer group.

Through an inductive EM paradigm, video data was collected over a nine-month period in an ECEC setting in Iceland, transcribed, and analysed using a CA approach.

Ethical approval was gained through the University of Waikato, New Zealand, and the University of Iceland, including informed consent from relevant gatekeepers and assent/dissent from participating toddlers. The findings suggest that toddlers use embodied strategies to participate and access social play with their peers, often from afar and in a delayed manner, and that those strategies indicate that toddlers are competent in navigating the complex social world of ECEC.

The findings have important implications for ECEC practice as it offers knowledge about what is happening in the toddler peer group and stresses the importance of teachers who understand when and how to intervene and assist toddlers as they co-construct their peer culture within the settings.

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Raising the neoliberal child: Socializing to emotional intelligence

We live in the era of neoliberalism, a political and economic system that tends to be conceptualized as in flux, rapidly changing, unpredictable, and global. While the term neoliberalism is challenging, it is often understood as an economic and governmental logic that structures society around market rationality and that is closely linked to the knowledge (immaterial) economy, where production relies heavily on intellectual capital and advanced technology rather than on physical resources. In order for neoliberal governance to work, individuals must embody neoliberal selfhood, or at least view this subject as an aspirational and normalized. Neoliberal subjects are understood to be active subjects who construct themselves through processes of self-work (Foucault's technologies of the self), who are enterprising, autonomous, resilient and strategic in their choice-making. To become a neoliberal subject, certain soft skills are deemed essential traits and dispositions as they support adaptability, flexibility, and optimism. One such skill is emotional intelligence, viewed as essential for adaptation, the successful response to change, novelty, and uncertainty in a situation, all common realities in the neoliberal era. Often, the value of these soft skills extends beyond economic instrumentalism to include a range of ethical, social, and personal benefits. In this talk I examine the socialization of children to becoming neoliberal subject through the development of emotional intelligence as it unfolds in everyday interactions at home when parents assist children in navigating uncomfortable and hurtful social situations. Drawing on video recordings of family dinners in the homes of 32 dual-earner, middle-class US families in the Los Angeles area, I analyze talk around the dinner table and typologize patterns of socialization to neoliberal selfhood. I conclude the talk considering the benefits of raising an emotionally competent child against the problematic socializing, monitoring, and evaluating a child's ability for emotion regulation as a form neoliberal governance.



Federica Ceccoli, Greta Zanoni

Collaborative translation from Italian to English: A Practice to Promote Inclusive Learning and Discussion at School

This paper examines collaborative translation as a space for interactional negotiation in which students co-construct meaning, draw on different metalinguistic and interactional resources, and enhance their learning process. Studies on translation in language teaching have highlighted its significant role in various contexts, including language acquisition (González Davies, 2017) and student engagement (Barnes, 2018). However, the role of translation has shifted over time and has only recently regained visibility in the field of translanguaging and plurilingual education as an activity that fosters the ability to navigate between languages, supports the development of a multilingual identity, promotes plurilingual practices and creative multilingualism (Ardizzone & Holmes, 2020). Building on this body of research, the present work illustrates a case study carried out in two multilingual classrooms of a junior high school in Italy as part of the activities of a pilot action implemented within the H2020 NEW ABC project whose main objective is to develop effective practices for the use and valorization of pupil's plurilingual repertoires (Andorno et al., 2023). Our study aims to investigate the skills and strategies that collaborative translation fosters in pupils, with a specific focus on a collaborative peer-to-peer classroom activity involving the translation of a recipe from Italian into English to be included in a multilingual digital cookbook representing the full range of the classroom's linguistic repertoire. Through a sequential and multimodal conversation analysis approach, and based on video recorded and transcribed data collected as part of specifically co-designed lesson cycles carried out during school time, we show how, far from being linear, the translation process emerges as a complex, dialogic activity where learners engage in continuous negotiation, leveraging shared knowledge and scaffolding each other's contributions. The extracts analysed highlight how, in collaborative translation tasks, humour, peer support and epistemic issues play a crucial role in overcoming linguistic challenges and fostering a deeper understanding of both source and target languages. These interactive practices not only enhance linguistic competence but also foster metalinguistic awareness as students claim their knowledge - or insufficient knowledge (Sert, 2015) -- which is often conveyed or reinforced through humour.

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Camilla Monaco, Ilaria Mancini, Norma Bevilacqua, Veronica Chilovi, Marta Framba **Discussing and co-constructing written texts in the preschool: when teachers act as “scribes” for a small group of children**

As Ferreiro and Teberosky stated in 1979, we can consider the written language as an interesting object of knowledge for “the youngest members of our society” (Bruner, 1996): they are able to co-construct hypotheses and theories also about this complex system.

Ferreiro, in particular, taught us that “los niños tienen la mala costumbre de no pedir permiso para empezar a aprender” (children have the bad habit of not asking permission to start learning).

For each child the “immersion” into social and material contexts full of written language (e.g. stores signs, newspapers, books, food boxes, digital technologies, etc.) is the beginning of a reflexive process that leads him/her to complex and rich reasonings about the specific system that characterized his/her specific culture. All these processes start to be present much before the beginning of the official literacy learning process (usually in the primary school): all the children – also under 3 years – are absolutely able to write “as they can do”, without any correct model to watch and copy.

This approach implies that preschool teachers learn to:

- know and understand children’s processes of written learning acquisition;
- plan educational contexts oriented to support and promote those processes (literacy before schooling).

A specific training program started in 2015 and involved 82 preschools in all. During the third year of work, teachers are supported to plan and propose small group situations (mixed by age, gender and competences) where children can collaboratively reason about the written language. For instance, they can co-construct a written text where the adult acts as a “scribe”. It is interesting to see how preschool children collectively construct a text – in a dialogical way (Weigand, 2010) – and only after dictate it to the teacher/scribe. Since they have not to be engaged into the writing practices, children can concentrate on the text, on its linguistic structures, on several meta-linguistic dimensions.

We are going to show, through concrete examples of small group discursive interaction, how preschool children learn “to compose” written texts much before their official literacy process starts. They are able to identify and to face – together – some specific “problems” concerning the written language. Within this process the teacher’s discursive positioning is crucial: she has to support the collective reasoning among children without giving answers or solutions. These competences require a complex training work based on the preschools’ real practices (Little, 2012).

Children are competent apprentices also concerning the written language system: the added value of this “literacy apprenticeship” is related to challenging and rich educational contexts that are, above all, planned by competent teachers who are always in a “research position”.

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Iulia Mihalache

Learning from Nature: Integrating Biomimicry Education in Translation Pedagogy

In an era where rapid technological advancements drive the multi-billion-dollar translation industry, universities often lag behind in updating their curricula, leaving the younger generation disillusioned with outdated academic offerings or deeply pessimistic about the future of the profession (Pym and Torres Simón 2016:1). Despite curriculum design being one of the eight most researched themes in translation studies between 1955 and 2022 (Li 2024), academic programs frequently fail to captivate students or retain institutional support, as exemplified by the indefinite suspension of translation programs at the University of Ottawa (Canada) in 2023.

Marczak and Bondarenko (2022) echo this concern, highlighting the persistent gap between academic training and the translation industry, with programs that often neglect employability-focused training. They also highlight existing measures such as internships, mentorships, and simulated professional environments, which have the potential to bridge this gap.

The industry, however, tends to operate with motivations predominantly shaped by profitability and utilitarian objectives, often reinforcing anthropocentric narratives that prioritize human-centric needs above broader ecological or nonhuman considerations. To counter this trend, integrating biomimicry—a discipline that draws inspiration from nature to address human challenges—could offer a fresh perspective in translator education. Biomimicry fosters innovation by teaching students to emulate natural processes, making it a powerful tool for addressing sustainability and creativity in translation. It also promotes the adoption of “xenodesign” (Schmeer 2021) that encourages integration of and dialogue with nonhumans, repositioning the human among other entities and “using ‘othering’ as a form of knowledge production” (Schmeer 2021:22). Students could not only study concrete examples that challenge conventional perspectives, stepping out of their comfort zone and “viewing the world from nonhuman life forms” (Hupkes 2020:4). Additionally, they could be introduced to forward-thinking methodologies to experience the world in alternative ways.

As Persano Adorno et al. (2021) point out, fields like bioengineering, bioscience, and biotechnology have successfully integrated academic and societal growth, proving that interdisciplinary approaches resonate with younger generations. Drawing from this model, introducing biomimicry into translation studies could stimulate creativity, particularly in technologically saturated contexts, while helping align educational practices with modern realities.

This paper explores how biomimicry can serve as a transformative approach to redesign translation courses and make them more engaging and approachable for students. By analyzing the structure and objectives of existing biomimicry programs and drawing on non-anthropocentric methodologies used in diverse disciplines across the humanities and sciences, we aim to adapt these insights for translation studies. Specifically, we propose incorporating elements that reflect the temporal rhythms and dimensions of nonhuman entities and alternative systems of knowledge. This approach could not only enrich the curriculum but also foster a deeper, interdisciplinary understanding of translation in relation to ecological and technological contexts.

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Irene Papa

Keeping the Search for Meaning Alive. Some Examples of Educational Experiences in Upper Secondary Schools

This contribution proposes some reflections on the design and the implementation of an educational experience for upper secondary schools characterised by a distinctly heterogeneous context in terms of cultural and linguistic diversity. Adopting a phenomenological-existential perspective that conceives education as a human lived experience (Bertolini, 2021), the talk explores how shared reflexive practices focused on the “objects of language and their experience” (Erбетта, 2010, p. 19) can constitute an experience of re-appropriation of the subjective and intersubjective forms (Madrussan, 2010). The presentation will begin by outlining the theoretical framework underpinning classroom practice, highlighting how the researcher attempted to situate the educational work between the lived experience and the words to ‘tell’ it, with the aim of raising awareness of one’s presence in intersubjective relationships (Caronia, 2011; Howard et al., 2021; Biesta, 2022). The school activity unfolds within the realm of classroom communication, particularly through “conversation”, a true “place of relationship attendance” (Ronchi, 2003). Within this space, students navigate between the unreflective reproduction of stereotypes and the possibility of revealing – and interrogating – operative, often unexamined, unthought-of assumptions (Jedlowski, 2018). The second part of the talk will describe the classroom activity in practice, offering concrete examples of discussions. Lastly, reflections on the experience will be shared, with a focus on the adolescents’ engagement and their participation in the activities.

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Alice Galli

Discussing in class: fostering inclusive practices during collaborative writing at school

During the implementation of teaching paths based on processual and collaborative approaches, whole-class discussion - an externalised collective reasoning (Pontecorvo et al., 2004) - constitutes a key tool for the development of thought and language organisation. Indeed, discussion fosters not only the decision-making processes typical of writing, but it also promotes the development of metalinguistic skills that underpin the ability to write clear and coherent texts (Storch, 2005; Pallotti et al, 2020; Ferrari, Zanoni, 2022). Nevertheless, despite the undoubted advantages of this way of proceeding, large-group discussions are often considered problematic by teachers and consequently episodic and often satellite to the lessons development.

In this contribution we intend to analyse the collaborative writing process of a newspaper article, carried out during 7 lessons (2 hours each) by a III class of a middle school in the province of Forlì Cesena. The path, during which whole-class and small-group activities have taken turns, started with the writing of an individual text and led to the production of a collective newspaper article for a local newspaper. While many contributions have so far focused on the conversational strategies adopted by the teacher to manage the communicative dynamics occurring during classroom discussions (Bertolini et al., 2022), this contribution intends to focus on peer interaction and in particular on pupil's meta-reflection regarding writing strategies.

Data were collected at the beginning of the school year 2024-25 and consist of 8 hours of audio recordings, the preparatory lists of the individual and collective texts, the individual texts of the pupils and the intermediate and final versions of the collective article. Adopting a sequential conversational analysis, we intend to illustrate some discursive sequences about negotiating the writer's position and finding lexical and rhetorical strategies to achieve communicative goals in relation to the addressee (Galbraith 2009).

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Davide Cino, Laura Formenti

Dialogues on intergenerational care: (de-)constructing gendered family scripts through online social interaction

In the ageing society, care of the older is a main social concern calling into play the role of both formal and informal networks of supports, with families playing a pivotal role. Within the domestic politics of care, women have historically been positioned as primary caregivers, with their roles being shaped by cultural discourses and lived experiences underpinned by stereotypical family scripts (Charenkova, 2023). This is especially relevant in Italy, due to its familistic culture, high life expectancy, and unequal distribution of social welfare services (Petrini et al., 2019).

Drawing on conversational data from an Italian online forum, this presentation explores how women articulate, contest, and navigate these expectations through shared narratives, reflections, and emotions about caring for an older member of the family. As an epistemic arena, we contend this digital milieu presents several relevant features to research (Formenti, Cino, 2023): since the subjects of the enunciation are women, whose epistemic authority lies in their perspectives as insiders of the experience of care, their conversations revolve around contents deemed relevant and meaningful by the interacting parts; the affordances of the platform allow for a bottom-up process of collective meaning-making which is an indicator of informal learning (Zittoun and Brinkmann, 2012); the narrative agency, i.e. the ability of originating meaning, is distributed among parts contributing to framing care as an epistemic object (Goffman, 1974). Informed by socio-constructionism, these interactions are scrutinized through discourse analysis (Phillips & Hardy, 2002), situating discussions around caregiving within broader cultural and moral orders, and examining whether and how these discussions reflect and challenge the taken-for-grantedness (Schütz, 1944) of intergenerational care.

Findings unpack the dialogic constitution of “good” and “bad” caregiving illustrating how, in a hermeneutic circle (Gadamer, 1975), stories, experiences, and worldviews shared on the forum ratify or question gendered family scripts through the epistemic and moral work performed in the conversations (Caronia, 2022).

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Zohar Livnat, Pnina Shukrun-Nagar, Leon Shor

Co-Construction of Another's Utterance in Facebook Comments: A Strategy of Support and Challenge

This talk examines how commenters on politicians' Facebook pages expand the claims or positions of others—whether previous commenters or the politicians themselves—as a rhetorical, dialogic strategy of support or challenge. Specifically, we focus on cases where such co-construction occurs through the use of initial, freestanding Hebrew *ki* 'because'-clauses. These clauses, which lack an accompanying matrix clause, effectively continue a prior discourse turn of another speaker and are syntactically, semantically, pragmatically, and rhetorically tied to it (e.g., Couper-Kuhlen, 2011).

The analysis draws on 100 instances collected from the Facebook pages of eight party leaders during 2020–2021. Politicians as well as commenters on politicians' posts seek to bolster support for their own positions while simultaneously undermining support for their political rivals. As such, commenters' political affiliations are pivotal and significantly shape interactions. Commenters often express solidarity and alignment with those from the same political camp, while interactions with opposing camps are marked by distance, hostility, confrontation, and condescension (Shukrun-Nagar, 2020; Shukrun-Nagar & Livnat forthcoming). Interestingly, some pragmatic strategies, such as initial freestanding *ki*-clauses, are employed for both purposes.

We argue that *ki*-clauses function as tools for either supporting or challenging prior positions, whether sincerely or ironically. Sincere *ki*-clauses perform the conventional role of causal clauses—explaining or justifying the explicit or implicit stance of a prior speaker (e.g., Livnat & Yatziv, 2002). By contrast, ironic *ki*-clauses feign support by ostensibly helping the previous speaker articulate their position, sometimes echoing their thought process, while actually subverting and mocking it. This dual function highlights the dynamic and strategic nature of these constructions in online political discourse.

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Martina Gnerre, Federica Biassoni

Is ChatGPT a Dynamic Conversational Partner in Healthcare Interactions? A focus on Active Listening and Linguistic Accommodation

Objectives: This study explores whether ChatGPT adapts its communicative behavior in healthcare interactions based on (1) the psychological nature of the inquiry (physical vs. psychological conditions) and (2) the user's communication style (neutral vs. expressing concern). Specifically, it examines ChatGPT's ability to actively listen, modulate its emotional tone, and adjust lexical choices to enhance engagement.

Method: Structured interactions were conducted with ChatGPT 3.5, simulating inquiries about the diagnosis of two conditions—arthritis (physical) and anxiety (psychological)—while varying the user's communication style (neutral vs. expressing concern). The language used was English. ChatGPT's responses were analyzed using different Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques. First, we assessed active listening markers through a custom dictionary with Python (version 3.12.4.). This included: Micro-affirmations (e.g., “I understand,” “right,” “exactly,” “mh-mh”) signaling attentiveness and engagement, empathic expressions and emotional validation (e.g., “That must be difficult,” “I can see why you feel that way”); the presence of follow-up questions. Moreover, we used a linguistic accommodation index to evaluate ChatGPT's stylistic adaptation to the user's communication style, focusing on lexical similarity. Jaccard Similarity coefficient, implemented in Python, was used to quantify structural alignment in ChatGPT's responses. Moreover, ChatGPT's responses were analyzed using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) to identify linguistic markers of the agent's adjustment to different inquiries and interaction modes. Statistical analyses, including repeated measures ANOVA and k-means cluster analysis, identified patterns in ChatGPT's responses.

Results: ChatGPT demonstrated greater active listening when users expressed concern, regardless of the type of disease condition. Lexical adaptation was more pronounced in psychological inquiries, particularly in concern-expressing interactions. The analysis with LIWC showed that ChatGPT used more engaging language in psychological inquiries. It exhibited more analytical thinking in neutral contexts while demonstrating higher levels of empathy in psychological conditions and when the user expressed concern. Wellness-related language was more prevalent in psychological contexts, whereas illness-related language was more common in diagnostic interactions for physical conditions. Cluster analysis revealed two distinct patterns: high empathy and engagement in psychological/expressing-concern scenarios and lower empathy and engagement in neutral/physical disease contexts.

Conclusions: ChatGPT adapts its communicative behavior by enhancing active listening and lexical accommodation, particularly in psychological and concern-expressing interactions.

Through context and user-concern language adaptation, ChatGPT can enhance patient engagement.



Eugen Istodor

On Bullshit. Analyzing the Discourse of Romania's Presidential Candidate Călin Georgescu

November-December 2024 marked the Romanian public sphere with the surprising rise of Călin Georgescu to the top of the presidential candidate hierarchy. His speech was considered “magical.” His method of gaining votes was typical of the “deus ex machina” approach, descending from the TikTok streaming platform directly into the Romanian political reality. Călin Georgescu bewildered both left-wing and right-wing political consciousness, leading to the cancellation of the second round of the presidential election.

After a few moments of awakening to reality, the candidate's speech proved to be a mixture of fake news, public lies, and promises that were difficult to fulfill. This discursive amalgam contained numerous references to the anthropological structures of the imaginary and the powerful calls of Eastern Orthodoxy.

In our analysis, we aim to deconstruct every detail of this winning discourse. We will also demonstrate how this amalgam becomes “bullshit,” in the sense described by Harry Frankfurt (2005):

“The bullshitter is neither on the side of the true or the side of the false. His eye is not on the facts at all. He does not reject the authority of the truth, as the liar does, and oppose himself to it. He pays no attention to it at all. By virtue of this, bullshit is a greater enemy of the truth than lies are.”

The research methods were: interview, mainstream media monitoring, and monitoring of Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Tik Tok channels.

We will describe the way the candidate imposed himself through TikTok, his particularities, and his “commercial” method of presentation. The video effects of TikTok and the candidate's public presentation style will be analyzed. We will also explore the economic and social contexts that led to the formation of Călin Georgescu's “bubble,” which resulted in his electoral success.

We will question why such a story is appealing and why it resonates. What is the nature of this extremist, autarkic discourse, and how does it seduce? Umberto Eco shows that totalitarian discourse has an important characteristic: it does not offer a clear position that could give rise to an external contradictory discourse. Totalitarian discourse, with its fascist or communist variations (since extremes meet), already proposes internal contradiction. Georgescu's bullshit can support one thing and its opposite simultaneously. In the same interview, the candidate declares that he has never supported and will never support the Legionary Movement, only to three minutes later say that it is the only deeply and legitimately Romanian movement. Georgescu is both against NATO and with NATO. Against the EU but with the EU. He is at once Christian and pagan, messianic and druidic. Only when it comes to Russia is he no longer ambivalent, positioning it under the sign of peace and “understanding with neighbors.”

We aim to not only catalog the fake news, public lies, and elements of the imaginary but also investigate the reasons behind his public success.

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Federico Corradini

Negotiating Knowledge Through Dialogue: Epistemics in Cooperative Gaming

Conversation analytic (CA) studies on epistemics (e.g. Heritage, 2013) have pointed out that participants assume different epistemic positions relative to their co-participants in the here and now of the interaction, exhibiting varying levels of informational as well as practical knowledge – what is often referred to as knowing-that and knowing-how (Arminen & Simonen, 2021) – which are mutually recognized and negotiated through dialogic practices.

In online gaming, intended here as a type of digital social interaction between physically distant players, ways of knowing are key to efficient gameplay, as players take up different epistemic positions while relying on known in common procedures and game mechanics to determine the team's course of action. While much of the research on gaming interactions focuses on expert-novice dynamics (e.g. Brincher & Moutinho, 2021; Laurier & Reeves, 2014), this study examines the dialogic negotiation of epistemics in cooperative gaming interactions between peer expert gamers, focusing on how players in online video games display and orient to different qualities of knowledge to play together collaboratively.

The analysis is drawn from a corpus of video recorded interactions between three North-American gamers playing as a team in the battle royale video game Fortnite. The recordings include the game screens and voice chat of each of the three players. Using CA, the analysis focuses on sequences where upgraded and downgraded epistemic positionings are made manifest in the interaction, in relation to access to more recent or in-depth informational content. Two points emerge in such sequences: first, that despite the differences in knowing-that, players still demonstrate a shared understanding of core game mechanics and procedures, which serve as a common ground for collaborative decision-making, and second, that the dialogic negotiation of epistemics is vital for cooperation within a competitive context such as that of online gaming. Instead, the data suggest that the local distribution and recognition of knowledge and expertise supports teamwork, enabling the players to coordinate their actions and enhance team performance by using shared knowledge as a resource.

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Mariia Erofeeva, Nils Klowait

Inhabiting Different Temporal Lifeworlds: Virtual Reality, AI, and the Challenge of Shared Time

We present findings from a multimodal investigation of sign language (SL) classes on the VRChat social virtual reality (SVR) platform; these classes were established by Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in SVR as grassroots SL learning communities. The environment is doubly asymmetrical: first, it involves sensorial asymmetries between diverse participants which include Deaf and hearing students. Second, it involves communicative asymmetries related to language proficiency and technical specificities of VR equipment. Yet, participants seem to get by through the procedural management of an idealized imperfect intersubjectivity, where a mutuality of perspectives is sustained selectively, for practical purposes.

Embedded in this ecology is a more fundamental problem: that of (un) shared time. VR participants do not only need to build an idealized shared space but need to constitute a shared idealized situational biography: diverse participants using communication modalities with varying ‘speeds’ (talk, SL, writing) can result in participant-divergent event horizons, where different VR users experience the social events in a different interactional time from their co-participants. Drawing on multimodal interaction analysis and the co-operative action framework (Goodwin, 2017), this talk will highlight this temporal-ecological fracture. We examine cases in our collection of videorecordings of French SL classes when participants resort to a modality unavailable to some of the co-present interactants and show how it affects the divergence of temporal horizons. Thus we trace the situational dynamics of inclusion/exclusion brought about by participants enacting language ideologies – the set of beliefs about normative language use (Woolard, 2020; Kusters, 2020) – through teaching.

To open a general discussion relating to temporality and its connection with communicative modalities, we juxtapose the data from VR with a collection of real-life user interactions with a conversational artificial intelligence chatbot (Klowait et al., 2024). We show that communication with a non-human participant exemplifies analogous interactional dynamics when the agent’s contributions are included into the conversational flow at particular moments, and this temporal placement is connected to the points of temporal convergence of two asynchronous time horizons. This will allow for a transition to a discussion of ways to address analytical hurdles in interaction research, such as the emerging tension between sequential and simultaneous action, and the temporalities imposed by linearized transcription conventions.

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Enrico Caniglia

The Reason of Global Justice and the Problem of the Supernatural

According to the French historian Marc Bloch, “historians and judges are colleagues” because their work consists of finding out “what really happened”. But the similarity between scientific research and the investigative work of judges is even closer. Like scientific research, the criminal process is based on a rationalist view of the world. Indeed, procedural action seeks to establish the facts “beyond reasonable doubt” in order to ensure a fair verdict. Witnesses and evidence are subjected to the “test of reason”, and anything that does not conform to the “natural order of things” is rejected. These rationalist assumptions informed the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC) during the trial of Dominic Ongwen, a former brigade commander of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), a military organisation involved in violence in northern Uganda, who was charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity. During the trial, which ended in February 2021, judges and prosecutors had to deal with the role of irrational elements such as spirits, ghosts and spells within the LRA. Indeed, according to the defence attorney, Ongwen was intimidated by powerful spirits controlling his mind.

In my paper, I am interested in how the judges and other participants in the trial handled the supernatural issue raised by Ongwen’s defence attorney. Using ethnomethodology and conversation analysis, I examine the transcripts and video footage of the Ongwen trial available on the ICC website. My aim is to detail the interactional resources and practical reasoning used by judges and prosecutors to address the issue of the supernatural and the challenges it poses to the rationalist assumptions of Western judiciary system. Particularly, I analyse and critically discuss two interactional tools used by judges and prosecutors during the cross-examination of witnesses and experts (anthropologists and psychologists) called to mediate the issue of supernatural beliefs during the Ongwen trial: The “question in agreement” and the “no question at all”. My analysis is not intended to be a criticism of the ICC, but a way for helping legal professionals to focus on the problems raised by their rationalist assumptions and to reflect in new ways when dealing with supernatural beliefs in international trials.



Melina De Dijn, Dorien Van De Mieroop, Almut Koester

The rhetorical potential of hypothetical reported speech in the job interview

Hypothetical reported speech (HRS), which references imagined or potential future utterances, remains underexplored in workplace interactions (Koester & Handford, 2018). Only a limited number of studies highlight its rhetorical, identity, and interpersonal functions (Koester, 2014; Koester & Handford, 2018). So far, the emphasis in workplace language research has been on direct reported speech (DRS), especially for its role in narratives. This also applies to job interview research, which has shown that DRS is used by job interview candidates in rhetorical ways (Roberts & Campbell, 2005). Our research shifts the focus from DRS to HRS and from candidates only to both interlocutors, with a specific focus on recruiters' use of HRS, particularly in the new recruitment context of the War for Talent, now waging in many Western countries (Beechler & Woodward, 2009).

A Belgian Dutch job interview corpus (510,000 words – 67 interviews) was analyzed using corpus-based discourse analysis. We identified 917 instances containing the Dutch quotative “van” (“like”) which were coded by two independent coders as HRS or non-HRS, and subsequently a selection of about 30 % of the concordances containing HRS (i.e. 100 items) was coded with regard to HRS functions. Next, a selection of those items was scrutinized in greater detail.

Our dataset shows that the quotative “van” is used fairly frequently to introduce HRS (in line with Mazeland, 2006) and this in relatively equal measure by both recruiters and candidates. HRS is inserted by both parties to construct tangible-yet-imaginary scenarios that enable them to collaboratively explore potential joint work-related futures. Also, we show that the identity and rhetorical functions of HRS often align, as convincingly constructing ‘the right identity’ is crucial in job interviews. Notably, this applies to both candidates and recruiters, as the latter must not only evaluate candidates but also attract skilled workers in competitive contexts (De Dijn & Van De Mieroop, 2024). In our qualitative analysis, we further explore excerpts where recruiters use HRS as a rhetorical tool to ‘reel in’ candidates.

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Stacey Caceus

The dialogic constitution of resistance : The use of semantic negotiation to name racial oppression during everyday interaction in an organizational context

This proposal is based on my PhD thesis: an intervention-research focusing on communication practices for raising awareness of white supremacy in a Canadian financial institution. In this doctoral project, I mobilize the concept of conscientization which, as suggested by Freire (2017), brings about an objective transformation of reality and enables the humanization of both the oppressed and the oppressor.

I propose in this communication to focus on the semantic negotiation around discursive formulas relating to racial discrimination by the employees who actively participate in diversity promotion initiatives. The term semantic negotiation is a concept that my supervisor and I coined in a recently published article (Caceus & Vásquez, 2024, p.7) to address the negotiation of the intervention-research mandate between the researcher and the partner organization. We defined semantic negotiation as a “transactional process of relating a signifier to a signified, generating varied and often contradictory meanings, with the aim of influencing interpretations and courses of action in a desired direction.” In this article, we highlight the power of words and language in the reproduction and transformation of power relations. Furthermore, although the financial institution framed the terms used, I was able, as a researcher-intervenor, to have my say. The study of these interactions enabled me to position myself as a tempered radical who questioned the incongruence and dissonance between their personal and organizational identities as presented by Meyerson and Scully (1995). While the focus in that article was the research-partner relationship, I would like to explore in this communication the ways in which employees between them and their supervisors engage in semantic negotiation when addressing racial oppressions in the workplace.

In fact, the choice of words to describe racial oppression and to denounce the realities that result from it is a well-documented debate in literature. Critical Race Studies have well documented the emergence of so-called racial discursive formulas, such as systemic racism and white supremacy, and their implications for raising awareness and denouncing racial injustices and inequalities (Delgado and Stefancic, 2017; Roediger, 2019; Anderson, 2016/2017). Cida Bento (2022/2023) who focuses on whiteness and the impact of its invisibility in maintaining the racial oppressions of black people in Brazil, denounces the trap of inserting anti-racist struggles under the banner of promoting diversity, for while it is important to combat all forms of discrimination, she finds it crucial to differentiate with : «those whose violence feeds a veritable genocide» (Bento, 2023, p.116, free translation). Although there is no agreement on the “best formula,” it emerges that the use of these expressions -systemic racism or white supremacy- is crucial for naming these injustices and opening a space for dialogue to bring about transformation (Livingston, 2021;

Simpson, 2008; Stokke, 2021; hook, 1997; Bento, 2022/2023). However, we must question whether the way we name reality serves to reinforce the oppressive system by exacerbating resistance, or whether, on the contrary, it truly allows for its deconstruction. We have found that this question has accompanied those involved in the anti-racist movement in organizational settings in a variety of ways.

The case study took place from March 2022 to March 2023, during which I interned with the EDI team of a Canadian financial institution (FI). My goal was to develop a communication strategy to support an intervention aimed at raising awareness of systemic racism and changing the practices that sustain this discrimination. More specifically, I was interested in creating dialogic spaces that allow awareness of the discrimination experienced and perceived by racialized people and perpetuated by the norms, practices and institutional structures of the organization, in the case of staff recruitment processes. I took a multi-faceted approach by blending observation, coaching, training, and a diagnostic phase that integrated interviews, collaborative work and archival research. By analyzing the discourse in the interviews with key stakeholders in the organization, I uncovered complex dynamics around how racial issues are handled. It showed that even racialized individuals and other employees engaged in deconstructing racial oppressions used semantic negotiation in their everyday interaction when dealing with racial issues.

Starting from the 6 diagnostics interviews, I will look at how these committed people name oppressions and exercise semantic negotiation. Instead of categorizing the non-use of certain terms as automatically linked to a colorblind ideology and therefore inconsistent in an anti-racist perspective, I'll start by focusing, understanding and valuing the words and expressions that are significant for those actors in their resistance to identify their communicative practices of conscientization. As the literature tried to draw the line about what is meaningful in the fight for racial equity, we will try to extract ourselves to see what else it can be, in the subjectivity of interactions. To accomplish this, I will utilize the theoretical framework of Todres et al.

(2009), which employs a lifeworld approach to identify the dimensions of humanization and dehumanization in healthcare. By analyzing the participants' discourse through the lens of Todres et al.'s eight philosophical dimensions, I will be able to assess whether their semantic negotiations contribute to humanization or, conversely, to dehumanization.

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Selena Mariano

The Legal Rationality of Secondary Victimisation

This work investigates how the legal language used in court decisions, pertaining to cases of male-perpetrated violence against women, can shape and enable gender inequalities, therefore reinforcing societal biases. Specifically, the analysis centres on the way judicial reasonings often employ descriptions that invoke rape myths (Thornton, 2002) and gendered stereotypes (Smith, 2018). These narratives contribute in shifting the perception of the parties, implying that the victims bear responsibility for the crimes suffered. Such phenomenon, also known as victim blaming or secondary victimisation (Condry, 2010), is thus excused by giving it a legal probative value, entrenching a discriminatory social framework that disadvantages those who already are victims.

To explore this phenomenon, Membership Categorisation Analysis is employed (MCA; Sacks, 1972), which allows for a nuanced understanding of how the choice of categories reflects implicit moral judgements and societal values (Jayyusi, 1984, 1991).

The analysis is applied to a sample of five Italian court rulings, covering a range of judicial levels, all dealing with cases of male violence against women.

The findings demonstrate that legal language, if not appropriately employed, can function as an instrument of discrimination and oppression, perpetuating a reality where victims are stigmatised. This process not only sustains existing power dynamics, but also establishes a legal framework that inadvertently legitimise discriminatory practices. Such framework transforms the legal process from a means of justice into what Garfinkel (1956) termed 'status degradation ceremonies' — where the very act of seeking legal redress subjects victims to further scrutiny, suspicion, and violations of their rights.

Finally, this research emphasizes the necessity for a more scrutinised and critical use of language within the judicial setting. A careful examination of legal discourse can lead to a more just legal system that does not replicate societal biases but instead strives to dismantle them, by granting equal treatment to the parties involved



Geneviève Boivin, Carol-Ann Rouillard, Léo Lefebvre

Making sense of past dialogues. Interorganizational tensions on intersectionality in a feminist context

Around thirty years ago, in Quebec, Canada, a network of regional tables of women's groups was created. It is in this context that in each region of the province, a round table was created in an effort of "liaison, consultation and solidarity" (CAFE, 2024, our translation) and have since had an important role in Quebec's interorganizational and political dialogue surrounding gender equality. The groups indeed often generate dialogue between different regional organizations to create mutual projects and discuss positionings on the ongoing fights for women's rights.

However, like many militant organizations, the tables have undertaken an effort to adapt to the changing social context (Dufour & Pagé, 2020). In this regard, Quebec's feminist movement is currently marked by an "intersectional shift" that is not always being carried out smoothly (Campbell-Fiset, 2017) and several organized feminist circles have begun to open up the discussions on the intersectionality of oppressions. This collaborative research was built in conjunction with one of these round tables.

In this specific organized group, multiple attempts at dialogue (official meetings, formations, committees, reflective workshops, etc.) surrounding the mobilization of an intersectional approach have led to a significant conflict within and between the table members. Following this conflict, multiple members and employees have left the table. Our study thus served as a reflexive pause to allow past and actual members to verbalize their sensemaking process (Weick, 1995) surrounding these past dialogues as well as other issues.

In addition to preliminary observations made in the various general assemblies, 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with a majority of current and some past members of the table. In this article, we focus on how 1) participating organization's members bring out diverse matters of concern (Cooren, 2015) in their sensemaking, that is, what count for them and to what they are attached to, and how, in turn, 2) these matters of concern materialize several tensions (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2023) that members consider constitutive of past and future dialogues. For instance, a tension between a desire for openness and a lack of resources was highlighted in the discourse of several participants. With this analysis, we aim to contribute to a better understanding of the collective processes of transitioning toward an intersectional approach within Quebec's feminist movements.

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Alain Letourneau

A dialogic excerpt from John Dewey's *Experience and Nature* (1925): links to issues of ontology, knowledge and required action

As presented in the current call for papers, social interaction as dialogue displays/enacts a plurality of requirements: what is deemed to be – an element that needs researching, how we know about some supposed element or characteristic of the world- discussing also the value of that knowledge-, and the question of what we ought to do, also referred to as concerning the deontic or “normative”. We can recognize here the classical philosophical questions: what exists? How do we know about it? And finally, what should we do? These three interrogations, formulated by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) notably in his three Critiques, can also be seen as providing a topic space for any practical philosophy, as might be better understood by a reading of Dewey's work attentive to the dialogic aspect of communication.

One of Dewey's important books of the maturity is *Experience and Nature* (1925; LW I; here EN). A famous chapter in it offers an important (and early) theorizing about communication; in fact, it was produced a few years after the famous Lippmann and Dewey “controversy”. While developing the chapter he constructs an exchange between two partners which has a dialogic form, even though he talks there about social interaction and communication instead of dialogue, reserving in practice that term both for a literary genre (as in Plato's dialogue) and as the heart of social life and of dialectic (MW, 6, 53; LW 2, 371). The exchange in question starts with this statement: “A requests B to bring him something, to which A points, say a flower” (EN, 140; 140-145), and a few other similar formulations will follow, that we will examine. In the context of that analysis, I will try to show how Dewey points to the questions of what is, how do we know about it, and how should we act, in their relationship with communication. The considered communication act is both a request, a reference to a given object situated in space, while the signs used permit knowledge by providing distance and agency. Therefore, the goal of the presentation is both to better understand this dialogic analysis from Dewey, which will serve as our empirical data, and to see how the three questions problematized here are understood in that context, e.g. what this dialogic treatment involves about what is, how we know and what we should do.

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Blake Cameron

Mendacious Organizing: Deception and Dialogic Modes of Organizational Expression

This paper attempts to build a preliminary theoretical account for organizational deception using Niklas Luhmann's systems theory, and specifically with the articulations and advancements of this approach made by the Luhmannian communication-as-constitutive (CCO) school (Seidl, 2004; Schoeneborn, 2011). I review how deception has historically been addressed in organization studies with questions of how organizations maintain internal order and project external legitimacy despite the presence of deception. With such prompts, some scholars have looked to deception as constitutive but fallen short of explicitly adopting a CCO perspective. I identify two conceptual issues present in this literature: morality and individualization. Most predetermine a moral stance, which demarcates only two possible renderings of deception as either negative amoral behavior or positive justifiable strategy. Relatedly, deception has been commonly seen as an individual action, with varied and unclear grounds for what makes deception organizational. I suggest that these problems find more productive resolve in a developed account for deception within Luhmannian CCO thought.

Luhmann (2018) echoes the idea that both reality and organizations are consistently talked-into-being (see Bruner, 1986; Cooren et al., 2011) but emphasizes one type of communication—decision-making—as the scaffolding of self-organizing systems. From here, the theory supposes a set of concepts that mostly revolve around streamlining decision-making and generating intrasystemic knowledge. I argue that considering organizational deception within this frame develops two key assumptions. First, deception is only considered in relation to the function of decision-making communications in systems, which shifts attention away from questions of intentionality and thus morality. Second, deception is made organizational when present in decision-making processes.

With these guiding theoretical conditions, I discuss what the resulting study of deception looks like. As David Seidl (2004) explains, Luhmannian systems are operationally closed but interactionally open, which means that contact is governed: “the system determines, when, what and through what channels energy or matter is exchanged with the environment” (Seidl, 2004, p. 3). Since deception is generally perceived as non-normative (Ashforth & Anand, 2003), deceptive organizations have complicated relationships with their environments. I suggest that a way of studying this is by focusing on an organization's public relations, which is demonstrative of how the system expresses itself via its dialogue with the public. The dialogic turn in public relations (Kent & Taylor, 2002) supposes that the work of the field is building two-way relationships with publics; this matches the Luhmannian premise that “mutual understanding is displayed in the communications themselves, which is all that matters from a social viewpoint” (Cooren & Seidl, 2020, p. 481). I contend that the paradoxical stresses of deception in the interior networks of communication that actively constitute organizations create dialogic modes of public engagement that variously reflect the deception. To exemplify, I assess three organizational scandals with attention to how different dialogic forms of organizational expression are invoked. I examine interactive communicative events for how the organization manages channels of dialogue with the public using a mode of engagement (pedagogical, experiential, and aesthetic).

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Jo M. Katambwe

The Dialogical Machination of Reality: A Sociopragmatic Perspective

There are multiple conceptions of dialogue (Barge & Little, 2002; Hammond et al., 2004; Deetz & Simpson, 2004; Weigand, 2017). We have identified five ourselves. For the purposes of this discussion, namely how dialogue creates social reality, we will only address two conceptions of dialogue: the relational conception and the sociopragmatic conception.

Sociopragmatics “is focused on the construction and understanding of meanings arising from interactions between language (or other semiotic resources) and socio-cultural phenomena ...it often considers norms emerging in such contexts, how they are exploited by participants, and how they lead to evaluations of (in) appropriateness.” (Culpeper, 2023, 27). Sociopragmatics examines the relationship between discourse and its social context (Holmes & King, 2017). It studies the construction of meaning or reality as it emerges from the interaction between language use and the surrounding norms, values, and beliefs that influence the emergence of collective meaning.

Among the most important theories of communication, the one closest to sociopragmatics is the systemic/cybernetic theory of communication and dialogue proposed by Luhmann (1995). We will use this theory as a foundation to describe how communication, and dialogue in particular, explain and describe the social construction of reality.

To better highlight the dimensions and elements of a sociopragmatic approach to dialogue, we will use cybernetic theory to create a contrast. In cybernetic theory, communication creates social reality through a dialogical relationship in which, through its tripartition, the selection it operates eventually gets accepted by the other. This represents a relational conception of dialogue and social reality (Luhmann, 1995), which we will contrast with the sociopragmatic perspective and its connectivist conception of dialogue.

In this contribution, we will begin by 1) defining dialogue from a sociopragmatic perspective; 2) identifying the nature of social reality according to sociopragmatic dialogue; 3) subsequently demonstrating how dialogue constructs this reality through machination (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007); and finally, 4) how, thanks to this machination, dialogue manages to generate a) different forms of social and organizational reality construction or collective enunciative arrangements, as well as b) forms of power and ultimately c) social ethics that the forms of social reality construction induce.

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Online dialogicality and narrativity: Lessons from reviewing genocide history museums on Google Maps Reviews Platform

During the past two decades online spaces have become “Lifeworlds”, or vast yet self-evident social realms. This talk sheds light on the interrelations between dialogic and narrative practices, and on how they shape these online realms or environments. It presents advances from ongoing research that examines reviewing platforms (such as Google Maps Reviews, TripAdvisor, Yelp, and others), which comprise huge digital realms that have not been well-researched compared to social media. The main inter-action reviewing platforms propel concerns sharing user-created texts, where evaluation and assessment of places and destinations visited is narrativized (attractions, restaurants, hotels, public spaces and so on). In this talk I discuss online reviews shared on the Google Maps Review Platform about several museums and monuments of genocides worldwide (e.g. The Tsitsernakaberd Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex in Yerevan, The Kigali Genocide Memorial in Kigali, The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Japan, the Florida Holocaust Museum) that serve as dark global tourism attractions. In particular, I will focus on The Kigali Genocide Memorial in Kigali, and The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Japan. The analysis highlights the organic inter-relations between socio-technological environments and participatory affordances, on the one hand, and the reviews’ inter-connected narrative and dialogic dimensions, on the other hand. Reviews are conceptualized most accurately as travel-related and place-related “short stories” (Alexandra Georgakopoulou, 2017), that contribute to the constitution of these vast online realms as such. Moreover, at these reviews index a visit to a dark history museum, they serve in re-mediating the visit’s experience, and in communicating and re-interpreting an overwhelming and traumatic past. Hence the study is located at the heart of the interactional semiotic construction of the present and the past (and the epistemologies of the relationship between them), as well as, indexically, between the notions of “here” and the “there” of online and offline spaces, and of practices of reading, writing, and visiting. The study of audiences’ re-interpretation and re-narration of museums’ narrative mediation of troubled histories may be helpful in understanding and preventing the recurrence of such traumatic events.



Leah Sprain

Contesting Moderators Through Ground Rules: A Ventriloquial Analysis of Ground Rules in Political Candidate Debates

Facilitators use ground rules in group discussions, deliberative forums, and public debates to provide a shared structure and expectations for conduct for how participants can talk to each other. Ground rules can provide “guard rails to create a sense of safety for the group” that let the facilitator steer the meeting (Oliver-Blackburn & Chatham-Carpenter, 2023). Ground rules can be a technique “to ensure the atmosphere remains conducive” to the interactional goal (Avery & Steingard, 2008). Whether co-constructed by participants or provided by the facilitator, ground rules provide conventions to govern a speech event that can be negotiated by participants in a dynamic relationship as the event unfolds (Fine & Speer, 1977).

This paper takes a ventrilocal approach (Cooren, 2020) to see how ground rules and related figures are voiced, used, and moved in two episodes from televised political debates where candidates contest some aspect of moderator’s conduct using ground rules. Analysis follows how candidates invoke previously unspoken rules (“the rules were that you guys weren’t going to fact check, and since you’re fact checking me”) as well as make agreement to the rules conditional on the facilitator disclosing political bias (“before I agree to the rules, I do have one request for you, Edie, can you please disclose to the audience that you publicly supported by 2020 Democrat candidate...”).

Ventriloquial analysis reveals how ground rules are used in the dialogic constitution of “what is,” “what can be,” and “what ought to be” for the specific interaction as well as their broader communicative events. This analysis follows how ground rules are invoked within these interactions as a means to further theorizing ground rules as a facilitation technique due to the ways that ground rules can become an interactional resource for participants and facilitators well beyond the “guard rails” for controlling the limits of dialogue.

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Amelia Mutter, Martin Westin, Sofie Joosse, Miron Arljung

Dialogical or diabolical? Analysing possibilities for sustainability dialogues in post-truth situations

There has been a dialogical turn in environmental governance. The governing of sustainability challenges, such as climate change and biodiversity loss, involves a multitude of actors who communicate across boundaries of sectors, professions and social groups. The current political condition, with increasing social tension and polarisation, challenges such dialogues. While social groups drift apart and subscribe to competing truth claims, the common institutions needed to enable dialogue across differences are weakened. Scholars use the concept post-truth to signify this political condition, where destructive truth-controversies are commonplace. While the post-truth concept carries potential to shed light on dialogical practices in the governing of sustainability challenges, it has mainly been applied statically to signify broken political communication beyond repair.

The purpose of this paper is to develop a conceptual framework for analysing situations characterised by destructive truth controversies in view of clarifying the possibilities and constraints for dialogue on sustainability challenges. The development of the framework is informed by the literatures on post-truth (Fischer, 2021; Jasanoff and Simmet, 2017) and deliberative democracy in times of social tension (Bächtiger and Dryzek, 2024; Curato et al., 2019). Empirically, we draw on the experiences of Swedish facilitators of dialogues on sustainability challenges. We interview and conduct focus groups with these street level workers of democracy. Thereby, we get access to how they assess possibilities and constraints for dialogue in situations where facts are contested and emotions run high.

The result is a framework that enables analysis of conditions for dialogue in situations where actors subscribe to competing truth claims. The framework supplies a set of assessment questions regarding the situational dimensions: emotions, facts and power relations. By applying the questions, situations can be analysed and placed on a continuum ranging from dialogical (amendable to dialogue) to diabolical (ill-suited for dialogue). As such, the framework shows how situations are not either dialogical or diabolical, but multifaceted, ever-changing and contradictory. The framework provides possibilities for identifying situated dialogue strategies and also supplies conceptual tools for assessing when a dialogue might do more harm than good.

By developing the framework, we make a contribution to the literature on deliberative democracy. We add conceptual resources to the burgeoning work on governance dialogues in times of social tensions. More specifically, we empirically test and further develop the work on deliberation in diabolical times (Bächtiger and Dryzek, 2024) and power in deliberative democracy (Curato et al., 2019). The framework we develop can be used to guide future research as well as design of dialogical processes.

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Emily Montgomerie, Lars Hallgren, Hanna Bergea, Anke Fischer, Rikard Hedling
The quality of trust. How trust is constructed, maintained and negotiated in the context of Swedish natural resource management

Trust plays a vital role in human interaction. Simmel (1990) described trust as the force which keeps societies together, using the example of money to illustrate how trust in a common belief system is necessary for large scale social cooperation (ie, society). Garfinkel (1963) defined trust as “constitutive expectancies”, arguing that to be able to carry out any form of social activity, one must to some degree assume that the other sees the situation in a similar way, and that all participants expect a certain set of actions from themselves and the others. The assumption of compliance with these expectations is the basic form of trust which society depends on.

Based on this view of trust as an interpersonal and interactive phenomenon rather than an individual, cognitive one, we investigate how trust is constructed, maintained and negotiated in interaction, in the context of collaborative natural resource management in Sweden. Various forms of collaborative processes have been established in Sweden and elsewhere to meet the need for participatory forms of governance, such as wildlife management groups and collaborative processes for forestry policy production. These groups discuss and make decisions regarding highly contested issues where there is disagreement on what is true, right, and desirable. Trust is often explicitly identified as vital for these processes. These groups actively negotiate and manage their constitutive expectancies; thus this setting offers a possibility to study the social construction and management of trust as an interactive phenomenon. Insights on how these expectancies are managed and negotiated are likely to also apply to other settings of governance, where important societal issues are discussed and at stake.

We use conversation analysis (Sacks et al. 1995) to gain understanding about how trust is established and maintained in the groups, as well as how trust issues are raised, and if and how they are (attempted to be) repaired by the participants. One of the conversational mechanisms we identified entailed anticipatory trust building: Participants displayed an awareness that something they were about to say might upset other participants, and used conversational procedures to mitigate the negative impact that their statement might have. We see these turns as a way of managing the constitutive expectancies of the situation, and as such, they are a way of managing trust, in Garfinkel’s sense. With this and other findings, we show how trust, or distrust, is “done” in interaction, and how the quality of trust is co-created by participants in discussions on contested governance issues.

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Bianca Alecu

‘Take a seat and order a drink’. Dialogic discourse practices in Romanian Reddit interactions

This paper is concerned with the analysis and description of several dialogic discourse practices documented in Romanian Reddit communities in the course of three years (2021-2024). We analyse two socially-oriented discourse practices that aim to replicate small talk or dialogic self-disclosure within a projected (imagined) context. These dialogic practices occur in special recurrent threads entitled Rom. cafeaua de dimineață, ‘morning coffee’ and Rom. barul sentimentelor, ‘the feelings’ bar’. We believe Romanian Reddit users engage in these dialogic discourse practices as a way of maintaining social bonds while actively being part of a community of practice. Moreover, users create and enforce metadiscursive practices by which the purpose, frame, length, objective and general tone of the interaction are established.

In our theoretical framework, subreddits are virtual communities of practice (Wenger 1998, Herring 2004). Communities of practice are groups in which people are joined by shared activities that use common resources and abide by formal and informal rules and regulations. In the online communities of Reddit, discourse is the main social activity: users create threads, post comments or vote (evaluate) the contributions of other users (Panek 2022). For instance, self-disclosure is enacted via a conventional dialogic practice based on the script of bar talk in (1). Technological affordances shape dialogue: users typically produce comments in which they disclose personal information and “order” a drink from the bar. Dialogue is the way possible worlds, such as the bar, are formed via collective projection:

(1) [Title of the thread] “BARUL SENTIMENTELOR” este vineri seară și barul sentimentelor este deschis. [...] Întră și așează-te la tejghea. Ce pot să-ți aduc de băut? Ce te deranjează în viața ta? Hai să discutăm!

[Title of the thread] “The Feelings Bar” it’s Friday night and the feelings bar is open. [...] Come on in and take a seat at the bar. What can I get you to drink? What upsets you? Let’s talk!

[Comment] Bună seara la toată lumea, ultimul update la picior: sunt 99% nou. Vă doresc sănătate [...] și un whiskey dacă se poate.

[Comment] Good evening everyone, last update on my leg: I’m 99% healed. I wish you all the best [...] and a whiskey, please.

In the online environment, dialogic discourse practices both replicate offline practice and creatively transgress offline conventions. From a pragmatic and discursive point of view, the relationship between participants and (mediated) context influences the ways dialogue takes shape online (Herring 1996, Crystal 2001, Yus 2011). Users need to make up for the lack of contextual cues (Gumperz 1992) and other factors which impact interaction. Online dialogic practices involve a repertoire of lexical and discursive resources, such as discourse markers and metadiscursive tags used to conceptualize dialogue as social activity.

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