Formulations in dialogic facilitation of classroom interactions

Claudio Baraldi
Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia

Formulations are turns of talk that address both interlocutors' perspectives (in previous turns) and participation (in subsequent turns). This paper examines formulations in interactions, taking place during classroom workshops held with children aged 10–13 and coordinated by facilitators. The analysis shows the ways in which facilitators' formulations combine reference to the children's previous statements with the projection of children's positioning, thus creating different opportunities for children's active participation and dialogic forms of communication. In the context taken into consideration, formulations can have five different functions: revoicing; promoting assessments of children's performances; promoting diverging opinions about controversial issues; supporting children's expressions of emotional experiences and rapport; concluding interactions by asserting shared values (upshot formulations). The analysis reveals that, in achieving different functions, formulations can take different forms, displaying and enhancing different forms of expectations and positioning, with different consequences on dialogic forms of communication.

Keywords: agency, children, education, expectations, facilitation, formulations, positioning

1. Formulations in institutional interactions

This paper looks at how formulations are achieved to address children's perspectives and participation in educational interactions. In particular, the paper analyses the functions and forms of formulations in (re)shaping children's positioning within the education system.

Formulations are frequently produced in institutional contexts (Antaki 2008; Drew 2003). The specificity of institutional interactions depends on participants' roles, objectives, and procedures (Drew and Heritage 1992); the analysis of these interactions requires clarification on the ways in which participants' turns (e.g.

Lang
ISSN

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

formulations) are designed and their sequences organized (Heritage and Clayman 2010).

Research on formulation as a specifically designed turn started with Heritage and Watson (1979, 1980). In a later paper, Heritage (1985) defined formulation as a third-turn that follows a question-answer dyad, i.e. a third-turn in a QAF (question-answer-formulation) sequence, as Hutchby (2005, 2007) redefined it more recently. The participant who initiates the sequence with a question concludes it with a formulation, which summarizes, glosses, or develops the "gist" of the utterance in second-turn position. In other words, formulations "advance the prior report by finding a point in the prior utterance and thus shifting its focus, redeveloping its gist, making something explicit that was previously implicit in the prior utterance, or by making inferences about its presuppositions or implications" (Heritage 1985, 104). Heritage and Watson also introduced the difference between formulating gist and formulating upshot. Formulating upshots means creating additional "significance" (Heritage and Watson 1980, 249) to the gist, proffering "some unexplicated version" of the previous turn (Heritage and Watson 1979, 134). In other words, formulating upshots means "articulating the unsaid" (Bolden 2010) rather than "restating/rephrasing something that has already been said in the conversation" (Garafanga and Britten 2007, 111). Finally, formulations make interlocutors' decisions in the next turn relevant, as either confirmation or disconfirmation (Heritage and Watson 1979). It is clear that reference to preceding and following turns is a crucial point in the analysis of formulations.

Functions of formulations have been studied in some institutional contexts. In his analysis of child counselling, Hutchby (2005, 2007) focuses on formulations projecting a direction for subsequent turns by inviting new responses from answerers; formulation is produced by a counsellor in order to project statements about a child's feelings or thoughts. In this perspective, formulations are investigated as turns that project further utterances.

In doctor-patient interactions, research has highlighted that doctor's formulations have two functions (Garafanga and Britten 2004, 2007): (1) formulating summaries, concerning the talk that immediately precedes formulations, and (2) action formulations, referring to actions that were previously agreed upon by the participants. While formulating summaries display and confirm shared understanding, action formulations renew agreed commitments to a course of action. Moreover, doctors' formulations can have the function of pursuing delicate topics in the interaction with patients (Beach and Dixson 2001); they can display sensitivity to the gist of patients' turns, therefore facilitating patients' elaboration of concerns. In this case, formulation is designed to facilitate elaboration of concerns and feelings; however, the formulation sequence can be moulded to maintain the focus on the institutional function of the interaction.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

In psychotherapy, formulations have been prevalently observed as upshots. Psychotherapists interpret patients' previous turns through upshot formulations that "extract a helpful implication from what the client has said", "at any point where the client's provision of information is deemed correctable or improvable" (Antaki et al. 2005, 641). Upshot formulations serve psychotherapists' work in giving meaning to symptoms and interpreting in psychological ways what patients say (Antaki 2008). Upshot formulations may also result in so-called "notionalization", which transforms lengthy and vague accounts in technical and abstract categories (Deppermann 2011).

Formulations have been studied as important devices for chairing organizational meetings, in both private and public companies (Asmuss and Svennevig 2009). Chairs' formulations can project other participants' acceptance, reaching cohesiveness and closing the sequence (Barnes 2007). Leaders can use upshot formulations to delete subordinates' voices and project both the announcement of a decision and the decision itself (Clifton 2009); therefore, upshot formulations can "eliminate the possibility of multiple understandings" (Clifton 2006, 210). However, in other cases, formulation "constructs the decision as a collaborative achievement" (Svennevig 2008, 534), therefore it makes possible to coordinate participative decision-making, in that it makes reference to the gist of previous utterances and opens future alternatives.

Formulations have been analysed in dispute resolution, "in the negotiation and establishment of a new story line, extracted from the opposing accounts" (van der Houwen 2009, 2084). The judge proffers formulations for different purposes, i.e. checking understanding (checking formulations), moving a story along (bridging formulations), specifying responsibilities (legal formulations) and drawing a case to close (judgment formulations).

Three important issues may be observed in these analyses. The first issue concerns the difference between formulating gist and formulating upshot. Formulation can either rephrase (summarises, glosses, develops) the gist of what has just been said or articulate the unsaid (upshot), reshaping previous statements, e.g. correcting or improving them. In upshot formulations, the questioner's assignment of meaning prevails over the answerer's perspective.

The second issue concerns the projection of the interlocutor's next turn. According to most analyses, formulations can project either confirmation or disconfirmation (e.g. Muntigl et al. 2012). However, formulations can also project complex and articulated turns (e.g. Svennevig 2008). Therefore, formulations may be seen as restricting or enhancing active and unpredictable participation in the next turns. Although formulations show the power to formulate in asymmetric institutional interactions, interlocutors can influence the interaction through their active participation (van der Houwen 2009).

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

The third issue concerns the importance of the context. The different ways in which formulations are achieved and may project further actions have been analysed in terms of the overall interactional mechanisms that regulate turn-taking and sequence organization. However, the specific institutional context is important for the construction of these mechanisms, as formulations serve experts' institutional work; therefore, interactional mechanisms and institutional contexts need to be considered together. Formulations can be explained in terms of both different functions and forms in different institutional contexts (e.g. counselling, psychotherapy, healthcare, business, court), and possibly different functions and forms in the same institutional context (van der Houwen 2009).

The importance and meaning of formulations depend on the function of the social systems (Luhmann 1984) within which they are included. Specific "programs", which are produced in these systems in order to achieve their functions, assign meanings to institutional interactions, such as medical encounters, counselling, psychotherapy, organizational meetings, dispute resolutions, and therefore to formulations. These programs are committed to "experts" (e.g. counsellors, medical doctors, psychiatrists, managers, judges), who have the power of formulating.

In general, formulations are important in institutional interactions when experts' interpretations of interlocutors' turns are important. For example, in psychotherapy, psychiatrists' formulations depend on programs that establish symptoms and their circumstances in the client's life-history (Antaki 2008; Antaki et al. 2005). However, formulations are also important in institutional interactions that give relevance to the perspectives of interlocutors. In other words, the importance of formulation can also be related to its function of addressing and promoting interlocutors' agency. Agency (Giddens 1984; Harré and van Langhenove 1999) means choice among different courses of action. Formulations can address and promote interlocutors' choices of perspectives. In child counselling, counsellors' formulations depend on client-centred counselling programs (Mearns and Thorne 1998), as ways to enhance "active listening" promoting children's perspectives (Hutchby 2005, 2007). In the healthcare system, doctors' formulations depend on patient-centred programs (e.g. Mead and Bower 2000; Sparks and Villagran 2010), aiming to enhance patients' self-disclosure through doctors' active listening and affiliation. In private and public companies, formulations depend on management programs aiming to enhance participative and collaborative achievement of decisions.

To sum up, formulations may be seen as parts of specific programs achieving the functions of social systems, such as counselling, psychotherapy, medicine, companies, legal system. In general, in these systems, experts' formulations are ways of addressing interlocutors' perspectives (in previous turns) and participation (in subsequent turns). However, they may address these perspectives and

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

participation for different functions and in different forms. This paper aims to highlight formulations' functions and forms within the education system.

2. Formulations in education

Educational interaction is a specific kind of institutional interaction. The most influential studies on educational interactions (e.g. Mehan 1979; Seedhouse 2004; Sinclair and Coulthard 1975; Walsh 2011) show that children's actions are included in sequences that are initiated and concluded by teachers, who orchestrate the interaction, reducing the range of children's choices. Teachers initiate interactions, often through questions, and conclude them through third turns that are designed as evaluation of children's answers to initial questions.

Against this backdrop, formulations of children's statements, projecting children's active participation, have never been analysed in educational settings. However, a specific type of turn has been labelled "revoicing", i.e. "a particular kind of re-uttering of a student's contribution" (O'Connor and Michaels 1996: 71) performed by the teacher in the third turn, after a question-answer sequence. Revoicing is a type of formulation, as it "may include a change in the propositional content of the student's formulation or in the language used to frame that contribution" (ibid., 65). Let us give a look at the following example (ibid., 70):

Godfrey (teacher):	[…] Marshall / what did you do //
Marshall (student):	I/I started at Alewife / in the / beginning //… because / um / it's just the beginning / um / I think Alewife's a good terminal // (students laugh) and I been to Alewife three times and I liked the way it looked //
Godfrey:	okay / **so you chose Alewife based on your own personal experience**

The teacher's third turn ("so you chose Alewife on your own personal experience") can be understood as a "so-prefaced" formulation (Hutchby 2005, 2007) introduced by an acknowledgment of the student's contribution ("okay"). According to O'Connor and Michaels (1996), revoicing has the main function of reformulating the content of students' utterances, in order to promote their explanations and their voices. In the extract shown above, the teacher develops the gist of the student's statement; she introduces the idea of "choice based on personal experience", as a development of "I been to Alewife three times and I liked the way it looked". The teacher makes the idea of personal experience explicit and makes an inference about the implications of the student's utterance.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

Revoicing can project either confirmation or disconfirmation among students; this means that revoicing projects a direction for subsequent turns by inviting students' responses. To sum up, revoicing has the general function "to credit a student for his or her contribution while still clarifying or reframing the contribution in terms most useful for group consumption" (Ibid., 64).

Revoicing is a turn that displays sensitivity to the gist of students' turns, facilitating their elaboration of knowledge in the interaction. Moreover, the revoicing sequence is moulded to project further talk about students' utterances, while maintaining the focus on the educational function of the interaction. Revoicing is a form of formulation, which contributes to the achievement of educational interactions by increasing the importance of students' participation in these interactions. Children's participation is an important concern for recent studies on childhood (e.g. James et al. 1998; Percy-Smith and Thomas 2010), which shift the focus from the issue of children's development to that of children's agency (James 2009). In educational settings, children's agency indicates that a range of possible choices of action is made available to children. The increasing importance assigned to children's participation in the educational setting leads to the investigation of the teachers' actions that can enhance students' agency.

In the education system, revoicing is part and parcel of pedagogical programs that observe learners as active constructors of knowledge, who can express their views, challenge different ones and explore different options (Mercer 2002; Mercer and Littleton 2007). In these programs, learning is seen as the result of interactions between teachers and learners (Seedhouse 2004, 2005, 2007; Walsh 2011). Learning can be promoted through "dialogic teaching", defined as "that in which both teachers and pupils make substantial and significant contributions and through which children's thinking on a given idea or theme is helped to move forward" (Mercer and Littleton 2007, 41). In the education system, therefore, teachers' revoicing is seen as part of programs of dialogic teaching, promoting children's agency. Revoicing is designed as a teacher's action that addresses students' perspectives and active participation; it can be seen as a type of "scaffolding" (Seedhouse 2004, 2007), helping learners to take control of the process of achieving knowledge (Sharpe 2008).

3. Research methodology and data

This paper analyses formulations as ways of addressing children's perspectives and participation in educational interactions. The analysis focuses *group* interactions, which are very frequent in educational settings. While formulations have been frequently observed in dyadic interactions, it is possible to show that they can also be

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

produced in group meetings (Baraldi 2009, 2012a, 2012b: Baraldi et al. 2011). In group interactions, the connections between formulations, on the one hand, and previous utterances and subsequent turns, on the other, are particularly complex, as formulations do not necessarily address the answerer, as in a dyadic question-answer sequence.

The analysis concerns some workshops on education to peace and dialogue with children aged 10–13 in Italian schools. It concerns two settings of data, in two regions in Northern Italy. In the first setting, some experts promoted talk about memories of conflicts, human rights and peace initiatives. In the second setting, some experts promoted talk about dialogue in order to prevent the culture of harassment in classrooms. All workshops were video-recorded and transcribed between 2010 and 2012, for overall 17 hours in the first setting and 34 hours in second setting.

In both kinds of workshop, experts acted as facilitators of class communication processes. In these workshops, therefore, facilitation is the program that should achieve the educational function. Facilitation is conceived as a range of actions that promote children's agency (Baraldi 2012b). Programs of facilitation are introduced in the education system in order to change the hierarchical form of the teacher-student interaction (Hendry 2009). Facilitation aims to promote a form of dialogic communication in which "both children and adults are co-constructors of knowledge and expertise" (Hill et al. 2004: 84).

Previous analyses have shown that formulations are particularly relevant in interactions included in programs of facilitation (Baraldi 2009, 2012a, 2012b; Baraldi et al. 2011). This paper adopts an analytical perspective that includes formulations in organized sequences of actions. The analysis focuses on facilitators' formulation, as part of a sequence, which includes the facilitator's initiation, the children's statements, the facilitator's formulation and the children's responses to the formulation. The analysis concerns the ways in which facilitators' formulations (1) address, both rephrasing and shaping, the gist of children's perspectives, (2) project, both restricting and enlarging, children's opportunities for participation.

The analysis concerns the ways in which formulations project children's positioning on the basis of their previous utterances. Positioning locates participants in the interaction, conditioning their possibilities of action and the assignment of rights, duties, obligations and entitlements to them (Harré and van Langhenove 1999). This paper analyses formulations as ways of addressing and defining children's positioning, i.e. children's possibilities of actions and, therefore, children's rights, obligations and entitlements.

The analysis concerns the ways in which formulations achieve specific programs of facilitation in the education system, i.e. if these programs promote forms of dialogue with and among children. The analysis shows that formulations can

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

have different functions in these programs of facilitation, namely: (1) revoicing; (2) embedding positive assessments of children's performances; (3) promoting children's divergent perspectives about controversial issues; (4) supporting children's expressions of emotional experiences and rapport; (5) producing conclusive meanings (upshots). In achieving these different functions, formulations take different forms, with different consequences for dialogue. In the next section, some examples will be presented in order to describe these functions and forms of formulations.

4. Facilitation through formulation

4.1 Revoicing

Formulations can have the function of revoicing, which encourages children's elaboration of original meanings, not previously uttered by facilitators. This function is particularly frequent in the second setting of data. Extract 1 exemplifies a typical sequence in this setting.

In turn 1, the facilitator formulates as a collective production ("we said together") what has been previously uttered about the meaning of "self-improvement", then she asks if something else should be added. M1 responds affirmatively and the facilitator, who has not seen him, inquires about the speaker's identity ("who said yes?"). Against the backdrop of facilitation, this turn is interpreted by M1 as a way of leaving him the floor, without waiting for the facilitator's permission to take the turn; therefore, the child, after revealing his identity ("Me"), expresses his opinion on self-improvement as solidarity (turn 4). In the next turn, M2 takes the floor completing M1's discourse. In turn 6, the facilitator formulates the two previous turns. She introduces the formulation with a prefatory "so", then emphasises that the children are authors of the formulated meanings ("you're saying"), and adds a second formulation regarding a previous turn ("as someone said before"). The two formulations develop the gist of the children's previous turns; they develop the issues of school and help for individuals within the broader issues of society and collective engagement. These formulations project M3's turn, which starts with a confirmation of formulations ("yes"), and is developed as an original contribution, by proposing an example of the issue introduced by M1 and M2 and formulated by the facilitator.

(1) 1. FAC. **okay va bene allora abbiamo detto insieme che migliorarsi vuol dire fare il proprio dovere, essere più leali (.) crescere (.) aiutare gli altri (.) pensate che ci sia da aggiungere qualcos'altro?**

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

Okay, right, so we said together that self-improvement means accomplishing your own duty, being more loyal (.) growing up (.) helping others (.) do you think there's anything else to add?

2. M1: sì
   Yes
3. FAC: chi ha detto sì?
   Who said yes?
4. M1: Io. Come posso dire, aiutare la comunità a migliorare per esempio aiutando a costruire una scuola per la gente che non può, una scuola a spese di tutti che possa aiutare i bambini che non possono, che i loro genitori non possono avere i soldi per pagare i libri questo
   Me. How can I say, helping the community to improve for example by helping to build a school for people who cannot, a school financed by everybody which can help children who cannot, with their parents who cannot have money to pay for textbooks that
5. M2: aiutare i bambini che vanno in giro, poi magari una scuola migliore
   Helping children who hang around, then maybe a better school
6. FAC: **quindi voi dite impegnarsi nella società, non solo nei confronti della singola persona, come diceva prima qualcheduno aiuto la persona in difficoltà, non la prendo in giro ma proprio la società –**
   So, you're saying to engage in society, not only towards single persons, as someone said before I help persons who have difficulties, I don't make fun of them, but society itself -
7. M3: sì, per esempio quello che fate voi a scuola, il prestito dei libri può essere una cosa buona uno non può permettersi di comprarsi dei libri, magari gli ha regalato cento euro e piuttosto che andare lì a comperarsi i libri si va a comperare dei vestiti e magari non ha i soldi per comprarsi dei libri e magari grazie alla scuola che dà una mano può averli.
   Yes, for example what you do at school, borrowing books may be a good thing for those who cannot afford buying books, maybe someone gave them one hundred euros and rather than buying books, they buy clothes and maybe they don't have money for buying books and maybe they can have them thanks to the school that helps them.

Revoicing can promote children's active participation, contributing to shaping a dialogic form of facilitation, in which children can autonomously express their perspectives on the topic that has been introduced by facilitators, and through which children's perspective "on a given idea or theme is helped to move forward" (Mercer and Littleton 2007, 41).

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

4.2 Embedding positive assessments

Formulations can embed positive assessments of children's performances, showing original contributions to conversation. This happens in formulations that conclude sequences of facilitators' questions and children's answers, both rephrasing these answers and embedding a positive assessment.

In extract 2 (first setting), at the end of a long turn explaining the meaning of "rights" (data not shown), the facilitator asks a question about rights ("tell me a right"). After some hesitation, in turn 6, M2 responds by making reference to the right to education ("going to school"). In turn 7, the facilitator formulates this response, glossing it through a "notionalization" (Deppermann 2011), i.e. giving it a technical meaning ("the right to receive education"). Immediately after this formulation, he evaluates the child's response ("you are right, it's true"), and expands on the formulation ("so, all of us have the right"). F's turn 8 ("also of healthcare"), while not being an interruption proper, seems to prevent the facilitator from concluding his discourse. In turn 9, the facilitator formulates the contribution in turn 8 ("to be cured by the healthcare"), repeating the positive assessment ("it's right") and continuing with the discourse on rights.

(2)
1. Fac: (…) vediamo se qualcuno di voi comincia a essere un pochino più complessa questa domanda mi fa un esempio una differe- eh capisce la differenza (.) difficile questa mi sa (.) ditemi un diritto –
   let's see if somebody- this question is a little more complex- gives me an example a differe- eh understands the difference (.) it's a difficult one, I think (.) tell me a right -
2. M1: che diritto?
   Which right?
3. Fac: uno qualsiasi senza paura
   Whichever, without any fear
4. (2)
5. Fac: diritto? (.) voi con- ciascuno di noi ha il diritto?
   Right? (.) you con- does each of one us have the right?
6. M2: °di andare a scuola° di andare a scuola -
   °of going to school° going to school -
7. Fac: **ha il diritto a: essere a ricevere un'istruzione hai ragione è vero (.) allora tutti noi abbiamo il diritto**
   has the right to: be to receive education you are right it's true (.) so all of us have the right
8. F: anche della sanità
   of healthcare too

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

9. Fac: **di essere curati della sanità è giusto tutti noi abbiamo il diritto di poter esprimerci comunicare**
to be cured by healthcare it's right all of us have the right to express communicate

The two formulations (turns 7 and 9) gloss the gist of children's utterances, embedding their positive assessments. The facilitator tries to conclude his glossing in turn 7, however, after F's initiative, he continues to gloss the gist of turn 8 with a new formulation and a new assessment which highlight F's role performance.

In extract 3 (second setting), in the first turn the facilitator inquires about who "educators" are supposed to be, then, in the third turn, she formulates F's answer. This formulation shows the facilitators' active listening of F's statement, and projects F's additional remarks about the identity of parents as educators. In turn 5, the facilitator formulates F's additional statement, emphasizing it through positive assessments ("that's nice", "she said a very interesting thing"). In the last part of the turn, the facilitator also formulates M's previous statement as a positive performance, in the context of the positive evaluation of F's contribution. In these formulations, the facilitator directly refers to the children as authors of the formulated turns ("F dice", "F said", "M said"), thus stressing their performances as agency.

(3)
1. Fac: ma gli educatori chi sono secondo voi?
But, who are educators in your opinion?
2. F: i genitori da piccolo
Parents when you are small
3. Fac **F dice i genitori**
F says parents
4. F: Hanno il diritto di educare
They have the right to educate
5. Fac: **hanno il diritto, questo è bello, ha detto F, lo ha detto un po' piano ma ha detto una cosa interessantissima, i genitori hanno il diritto di educare i figli e M ha detto a volte però si tolgono questo diritto cioè non esercitano questo diritto di educare i figli.**
They have the right, that's nice, F said, she said this in a little low voice but she said a very interesting thing, parents have the right to educate their children and M said that sometimes however they give up this right, that is they don't exercise this right to educate their children

In extracts 2 and 3, formulations enhance children's active participation in constructing knowledge, not only through revoicing but also through positive assessments of children's agency as production of performances. Formulations are produced as part of scaffolding, in which facilitators' embedded assessments do not interrupt the flow of the interaction, showing their engagement with and

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

confidence in children's ideas and personal meanings. In this way, the function of formulations is embedding positive assessment of children's performances, promoting a dialogic form of facilitation in which children's perspective on given ideas or themes is helped to move forward.

4.3 Promoting divergent perspectives

Formulations can promote children's diverging perspectives about the issues that emerge in interactions. The function of formulation as a device promoting diverging perspectives on some controversial gist is shown in extracts 4 and 5 below (second setting of data).

In extract 4, turn 1, M1 expresses an opinion about lies; in the next turn, M2 adds an example that confirms M1's statement. In turn 3, the facilitator's formulation, which is introduced by an acknowledgement token ("ah yes"), glosses the meaning of M2's turn as a fairy tale. After completing M1's turn in turn 5, the facilitator proffers three consecutive formulations (turns 7, 9, 11). In turns 7 and 11, two formulations make inferences about what the children have said in the previous turns, and are both introduced by a prefatory "so". In turn 9, an inference is mitigated through an explicit expression of doubt about understanding ("did I get right"), followed by a comment that underlines the facilitator's will to understand ("no because I wanted to understand exactly"). In turns 9 and 11, formulations are concluded by leaving the floor to the children's opinions. Moreover, in turn 9, the facilitator's formulation stresses the originality of M4's perspective. In turn 15, the facilitator proffers a new formulation, developing M5's statement (turn 12) and projecting M5's expansion (turn 16).

(4)
1. M1: Io volevo dire quasi la stessa cosa di F e volevo dire che se dici sempre le bugie poi le persone non ti credono più non ti danno più importanza e anche se dici una cosa vera non ti credono
   I wanted to say almost the same thing as F and I wanted to say that if you always lie, people won't believe you anymore and won't listen to you and even if you say something true, they won't believe you.
2. M2: Come la storia in inglese che ci ha raccontato la maestra R., al lupo al lupo
   As in the story in English that teacher R. told us, the cry wolf one.
3. Fac: **ah, si lui fa riferimento ad una fiaba, eh::** M1
   Ah yes, he is making reference to a fairy tale eh:: M1
4. M1: Allora come ha detto M2 soprattutto la storia del Al lupo al lupo, che dopo un po' che dice delle mh, mh
   So, as M2 said especially the cry wolf story, which after a while that he tells mh mh.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

5. Fac: delle bugie
   lies
6. M1: Sì delle bugie, dopo non ti credono più e poi comunque hai tanti amici e poi gli dici delle bugie, poi non ti credono più, ti prendono in giro
   Yes lies, after that they won't believe you anymore and then anyway you have many friends and then you lie to them then they won't believe you anymore, they will tease you.
7. Fac: **quindi tu pensi che in ogni caso sia meglio dire la verità**
   So, you think that in any case it is better to tell the truth
8. M3: Alcune volte, se è proprio necessario, puoi dire delle bugie mentre se non è proprio importante con i tuoi amici puoi anche dire la verità no puoi,devi dire la verità
   Sometimes, if it is absolutely necessary, you can lie, but if it is not really important with your friends you can also tell the truth, not can, you must tell the truth.
9. Fac: **sulle cose non importanti tu puoi dire la verità, sulle cose importanti tu puoi dire una bugia, ho capito bene, no perché volevo capire bene quello che aveva detto lui.** M4?
   You can tell the truth about non-important things, you can lie about important things, did I get right, no because I wanted to understand exactly what he said. M4?
10. M4: Secondo me, devi dire sempre la verità, soprattutto sulle cose importanti, se no poi potrebbero succedere delle conseguenze
    In my opinion, you must always tell the truth, especially about important things, otherwise there may be consequences.
11. Fac: **quindi tu la pensi al contrario, secondo te è importante dire la verità su cose importanti e::** prego
    So, you think the opposite, in your opinion it is important to tell the truth about important things and::: please
12. M5: Per me invece se, tipo, uno è fidanzato con un'altra e suo fratello scopre che lei sta, fa il doppio gioco diciamo e il fratello gli dice a quello più grande, che è fidanzato, non gli dice che l'ha visto perché altrimenti si::: il fratello più grande –
    In my opinion, instead, if, for example, a boy is engaged with a girl and his brother discovers that she is two-timing, and the brother tells the older one, who is engaged, he won't tell him that he has seen her because otherwise yes::: the older brother -
13. Fac: sta male?
    will be upset?
14. M5: Eh, si::
    Eh, yes::

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

15. Fac: **quindi secondo te è una strategia per per proteggere la persona che ami**
So, in your opinion this is a strategy to to protect the person you love
16. M5: Sì lo dici al momento giusto
Yes, you say it at the right time.

In extract 5, the facilitator's formulation (turn 11) follows a conflict between two children on the way of considering migrants (turns 1–10). The facilitator explicitly formulates the gist of this conflict ("I´ll: summarise a little in a louder voice"), focusing on both perspectives, but also glossing on F2's particular perspective, in order to clarify it for F3 and the other children. The formulation promotes both F2's expanded confirmation (turn 12), and F3's comment (turn 13), which makes it clear that she still rejects F2's perspective.

(5)
1. F3: io volevo dire una cosa di quello che ha detto prima F2 (.) comunque non c'è differenza tra i paesi più lontani che i ragazzi prendono in giro però
I wanted to say one thing about what F2 said before (.) anyway there is no difference between far away countries that children make fun of anyway
2. F2: no (?) differenza
No (?) difference
3. F3: secondo me cioè no è una colpa proprio dei ragazzi che sono nati:: in un paese straniero
In my opinion, that is, no, it is just the fault of children who were born:: in a foreign country
4. M1: sì infatti
Yes, it's true
5. F3: quindi cioè (2) non bisogna prenderli in giro (.) perché come loro sono stranieri che parlano di un'altra lingua anche noi siamo siamo italiani e quindi anche noi abbiamo la propria a lingua
So, that means (2) you don't have to tease them (.) because they are strangers who speak another language, as we are Italians and therefore also have our own language.
6. F2: sai magari F3, quello che magari stavo dicendo io è che magari certe persone pur di farti del male ti colpiscono anche::: di dove sei nato
You know maybe F3, what I was saying maybe is that maybe some people just to hurt you may also strike you::: where you were born.
7. F3: ma cioè::: non c'entra niente (4) perché non ti posso prendere in giro perché tu sei di un altro paese
But, that is::: that has nothing to do with (4) because I can't tease you because you come from another country.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

8. F2: questo sì però cioè magari (4) a una persona non gli sta bene magari lui dice che ne so::: magari 'sta persona qua: non gli sta bene una persona straniera e allora lo pig-lo prende in giro
   This is true, but, that is, maybe (4) a person is not happy, maybe he says that, I don't know::: maybe this person: doesn't like foreigners and then he teas-teases him.
9. F3: va be': cioè lo può insultare (?)
   right: do you mean he can insult him (?)
10. F2: questa persona qua praticamente è razzista
    This person is basically racist
11. FAC: **allora F2 e F3 stanno discutendo su un argomento molto interessante, potremmo intervenire tutti (.) io: riassumo un po' ad alta voce quello che state dicendo, mi sembra che le opinioni siano queste (2) a: volte si ferisce andando a ferire una persona nelle cose in cui pensa sia:: eh:: più facile colpirla uno dice (4) F2 dice però essere di un altro paese non è:: una: assolutamente una cosa che rende più deboli**
    So, F2 and F3 are discussing a very interesting topic everybody can intervene (,) I´ll: summarise a little in a louder voice what you are saying, it seems to me that the opinions are the following (2) s: ometimes you can hurt by hitting a person where you think it is:: eh:: easier to hurt one says (4) however F2 says to be born in another country is not:: one: absolutely one thing that makes weaker.
12. F2: sì ma::: magari per noi non lo è ma per altre persone magari lo è
    Yes, but::: maybe for us it is not, but for other people it is.
13. F3: va beh ma in certi casi bisogna capire la persona se viene da un altro paese
    right but in some cases it is necessary to understand the person if s/he comes from another country.

In extracts 4 and 5, the facilitators encourage the expression of children's diverging perspectives in controversial conversations. The facilitators formulate the gist of children's divergent perspectives, without assessing them. This function of formulation also emphasizes the possibility to engage in conflicts without negative consequences. Formulations promote a form of dialogic facilitation in which disagreements and alternative perspectives are treated as enrichments.

4.4 Promoting emotional experiences and rapport

Formulations can have the function of explicit affective support in situations where children position themselves as uncomfortable or embarrassed in the interaction;

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

in these cases, formulations stress the right to personal expression, as in extracts 6, 7 and 8 (first setting).

In extract 6, the facilitator supports M1's personal expressions with two formulations. In turn 2, the facilitator develops the last part of M1's utterance in turn 1 ("I like […] one of second D"), adding the key-word "girl", and stressing the relevance of this piece of information with an open appreciation ("ah very good"). This appreciation is reinforced in turns 4 and 6, in which the second formulation, which is a gloss of the child's hypothetical love story, is combined with an open appreciation ("how lovely so you are in love"). M1 rejects the formulation ("engaged", which suggests "not really in love"), but the rejection does not prevent the facilitator from continuing in her appreciation in turns 8 ("wonderful") and 10, where she gives her compliments to M1.

(6)
1. M1: sono:: R., mi piace il verde, mi piace giocare a calcio, e:: una di seconda D
   I'm:: R., I like green, I like to play football, and:: one in second D ((seventh grade))
2. Fac: ah benissimo **una ragazza di seconda D**
   *Ah very good **a girl in second D***
3. M2: io lo so
   I know that
4. Fac: benissimo
   very good
5. ((laughter and comments in the classroom))
6. Fac: che bello **sei innamorato allora**
   *what a wonderful thing **so you are in love***
7. M1: fidanzato
   engaged
8. Fac: bellissimo
   wonderful
9. M2: (??)
10. Fac: beh ci vuole del — ci vuole del coraggio complimenti ti posso fare i complimenti? Ha confessa- >cioè confessare< dire una cosa così:: — ti devo fare i miei complimenti. Invece che cosa non ti piace M2.
    Well you need — you need courage compliments may I give you my compliments? He confesse- >I mean to confess< to say things like that:: — I must give you my compliments. And what do you dislike M2.

When formulations support the children's personal expressions, they can also enhance the opportunity of rejection, without negative consequences.

In extract 7, the facilitator's formulation concludes a sequence in which F is praised for her change in the way of participating, which she declares in turn 1.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

In turn 2, the facilitator starts with a comment, which shows understanding and empathy for F's past behavioral problems. In turn 4, the facilitator glosses M1's comment about the changes in F's behavior. This gloss, combined with a stress on personal involvement ("I am pleased"), emphasizes the ambiguous comment expressed by M1 in turn 3, suggesting its very positive content ("therefore, you say that this is a huge outcome"). This gloss suggests that M1's comment, which could be interpreted in different ways, is very positive towards F.

(7) 1. F: io invece dalla scorsa volta e:: (.) ho meno timidezza dei miei compagni e:: ho anche meno riso >cioè< questa volta son stata molto più seria invece l'altra volta avevo più:: emozione
since last time I:: (.) am less shy with my classmates and:: I laughed less than usual >I mean< this time I have been much more serious while last time I was more:: touched
2. Fac: sì perché c'era l'imbarazzo intanto perché è una cosa che non conosc- è sempre così, siamo sempre così, una cosa che non conosciamo (.) è naturale, umano, sapevate già di cosa::
[si trattava
Yes because there was embarrassment because it is a thing that you don't kno- it is always this way, we are always this way, something that we don't know (.) it's natural, human, you already knew what::
[it was all about
3. M1: [comunque è già tanto che la F non ride
[anyway the fact that F isn't laughing already says a lot
4. Fac: è è tanto che la F — eh (.) e **quindi dici che è un risultato: enorme** (.) mi fa piacere C., ti ho visto (.) molto seria oggi
*It it says a lot that F. — eh (.) and **therefore you are saying that it's a huge result** (.) I am pleased C., I have seen you (.) very serious today*
5. M2: vai F
Go on F

The formulation in turn 4 develops the potentially ambiguous gist of M1's turn 3 regarding F's actions. The facilitator's formulation suggests that M1's comment enhances a positive rapport between the two adolescents. This formulation enhances positive communication between the two children.

Extract 8 is a particularly complex example of this function of formulation. The extract concerns group reflection on a role-play in which some children have played the role of "mirrors" of their mates, interpreting their personal traits. In particular, M1 has been the mirror of F1. The facilitator invites the participants to reflect on the emotions that they felt during the activity (turn 1).

In turn 2, F1 reacts to the facilitator's invitation complaining her marginality in the classroom. The facilitator formulates the complaint, in order to check what

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

F1 is saying (turn 3); the formulation is tentative ("now:: you have::-, is it clearer:: or: you don't have understood yet: (.) how is that") and shows doubts of interpretation. After a turn that is not understandable, F1 asserts that she was fine during the role-play (turn 6). The facilitator glosses turn 6 (formulating "fine" as "relaxed" in turn 7), and asks for M's opinion on F1's disclosure, glossing again her statement, this time without uncertainties (turn 9: "L. says there have been moments in which I felt diverse, excluded"). This gloss is based on previous formulations (turns 3 and 7), which contribute to clarify the meanings of the child's talk. After a failure in involving M, in turn 16 F2 asserts a sense of collective responsibility for F1's discomfort ("I believe it's partly our fault"). However, F3 contests this statement (turn 17, "no"), and F2 repairs it by referring to individual responsibility (turn 18, "well, I speak for myself"). In turn 19, the facilitator supports F2's repair with a formulation ("thus partly mine, you wonna say"), which makes it possible to stress shared responsibility (with F1) and to avoid conflict (with F3). This formulation triggers F2's clarification, which partly echoes it ("yes, it is partly my fault") and partly rejects it ("even if"). In addition, the formulation makes a smooth continuation of the interaction possible, in which the "problem" continues to be discussed (data not shown).

(8) 1. Fac: domande? (4) dai F1 tocca a te, vai
Questions? (4) Come on F1, it's your turn, go ahead

2. F1: sì, cioè, per que-, per questo che ha-, per quello che ha detto::, cioè all'inizio va bene, quando (??) (sono andati sul discorso) della classe, certe —, molte volte, il più delle volte non mi sento:: inserita perché:: (..) e:: mi considerano diversa (??) mi considerano diversa e:: (2) mm:: cioè dal secondo quadrimestre, non ho ancora capito il perché mi:: emarginano: così (??)
Yes, well, for th-, for this he has-, for what he has said::, I mean at first it's okay, when (??) (they dealt with the discourse) of the classroom, some-, many times, most of the time I don't feel:: included because:: (..) and:: they consider me different (??), they consider me different and:: (2) mm:: I mean since the second term, I still have not understood why they:: exclude: me in that way (??)

3. Fac: **adesso:: hai::-, ti è più chiaro:: o: non hai ancora capito:** [**(.) come mai::**
Now:: do you have::, is it clearer:: or: you still don't understand [(.) why::

4. F1: [(??) (2)

5. Fac: e:: (..) come ti sei sentita mentre ti:: descriveva?
And:: (..) how did you feel while he:: was describing you

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

6. F1: bene
   Fine
7. Fac: **tranquilla** (..) M? (..) tu come:: ti sei sentito un po' in difficoltà?
   ***Calm** (..) M? (..) How:: did you feel ha a bit in difficulty?*
8. M: (un po')
   (a bit)
9. Fac: eh:: (..) secondo te:: adesso come M. e non come F1, se:: **F1 dice ci son stati dei momenti in cui mi son sentita:: diversa, esclusa** (..) secondo te come mai F1 (??) questa:: (..) questa sensazione (..) ti sei fatto qualche idea (.) su questa cosa? (2) tu come M.
   *Eh:: (..) in your opinion:: now as M. and not as F1, if:: **F1 says that there have been moments in which I felt:: different, excluded** (..) in your opinion why I. (??) this:: (..) this feeling (..) have you made up your mind (.) about this thing? (2) You as M.*
10. (17)
    ((Four turns omitted))
15. Fac: **vai, vai** ((she looks at F2))
    Go on, go on
16. F2: beh, (credo che::) sia:: in parte colpa nostra [(..) perché:: =
    Well, (I believe that::) it is:: partly our fault [(..) because:: =
17. F3: [no
18. F2: = beh, io dico per me (??)
    Well, I talk for myself (??)
19. Fac: okay, (??) ((overlapping voices)) **quindi in parte colpa anche mia, vuoi dire**
    so it's partly also my fault, you wonna say
20. F2: sì, è colpa mia in parte (..) anche se:: all'inizio in prima media avevo tantissimi rapporti con F1, F1 poi abbiamo avuto un dei problemi e ci siamo staccate (.)
    Yes, it's partly my fault (..) even if:: at the beginning in sixth grade I had so many relations with F1, F1 then we had a some problems and we separated (.)

Formulations in turns 3, 7, 9 and 19 support the children's personal expressions of experiences that are emotionally intense and show an uncomfortable condition. Such a support is based on glossing, which progressively increases the facilitator's risk of interpreting what the children are saying.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

This way of checking understanding through formulations is used to interpret and support emotional disclosure. Formulations display sensitivity for the children's needs, promoting a dialogic form of facilitation that encourages the children's trusting commitment in rapports.

4.5 Concluding with upshots

Facilitators formulate upshots to conclude sequences regarding specific topics. By formulating upshots, facilitators fix relevant meanings, ascribing them to children's previous statements, as in extracts 9 and 10 (second setting of data).

Extract 9 regards a conversation on the meaning of harassment and its consequences. In turn 4, the facilitator's so-prefaced formulation suggests a clear link with the gist of M2's utterance (turn 3). However, the "sense of proportion", which is formulated by the facilitator, has nothing to do with the gist of the previous turn, which is lack of entertainment in harassment. The facilitator proffers un upshot of what the child has left unsaid, rather than rephrasing what he has said. The facilitator's production of meaning thus prevails over the child's autonomous perspective.

(9) 1. FAC: non sempre succede che la smetta, che cosa lo fa smettere
Not always does it happen that he stops, what makes him stop
2. M1: Il rendersi conto –
To be aware -
3. M2: Il rendersi conto che non si diverte
To be aware that he´s not having fun
4. FAC: **quindi il senso della misura**
So, the sense of proportion

In extract 10, turn 1, M1 introduces the risks of skipping homework and study and the advantages of doing schoolwork. In turn 2, the facilitator formulates this turn as parents' educational responsibilities for children's choices, which is clearly not the gist of the child's statement. Therefore, the facilitator's formulation in turn 2 is neither an inference, nor a gloss; it is an upshot, although proffered in an interrogative form. M2 confirms this upshot, answering to the facilitator's question (turn 3).

(10) 1. M1: Per esempio, uno non fa i compiti non studia mai poi da adulto avrà una vita pesante, invece se inizia ad impratichirsi avrà una vita più leggera
For example, one doesn't do homework, one never studies, then as an adult that one will have a hard life, while if one starts to make practice s/he will have an easier life.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

2. FAC: **Quindi forse i genitori dovrebbero riuscire a fargli capire che quello che gli dicono è per il suo bene futuro? Fargli capire l'importanza delle cose nella vita e nella responsabilità**
   So, maybe his parents try and make him understand that what they tell him is for his future good? Make him understand the importance of things in life and responsibility.
3. M2: Sì
   Yes

Upshot formulations conclude sequences by stating relevant issues, which were not expressed in children's utterances. Sometimes, upshot formulations receive children's confirmation, however they do not promote a dialogic form of facilitation.

5. Functions and forms of formulation

In all the extracts shown above, formulation is a turn produced by the facilitator, which (1) interprets children's previous turn(s), and (2) projects children's positioning. The reference to the gist of children's previous turns is highlighted by the use of the prefatory "so", acknowledgment tokens (e.g. "okay", "yes", "ah"), appreciations (e.g. "very good", "fine", "very interesting"), dubitative formulae (e.g. "did I get right", "you wonna say", "it seems to me"), attributions of agency (e.g. "s/he says that"). Moreover, children's participation can be supported through sequences of formulation, and other facilitating turns or parts of turns (acknowledgements, encouragements, appreciations, questions).

Formulations can have different functions in programs of facilitation. First, revoicing promotes children's active participation, summarising, glossing or developing their autonomous production of new meanings in the ongoing conversation (extract 1). Second, formulations embed assessments of children's positioning as role performances, glossing or developing a gist as meaningful for learning (extracts 2–3). Children's active participation is assessed as positive performance and production of knowledge. Third, formulations summarise, gloss or develop a controversial gist, opening to confrontation and dissent on autonomously produced meanings, and promoting the display of children's different perspectives (extracts 4–5). In these cases, formulations open up new perspectives and encourage mutual interest among children. Fourth, formulations support children's self-disclosure of emotions and experiences (extracts 6–8). In these cases, formulations actively encourage children's most personal expressions and rapport. Functions of disclosing controversial perspectives, emotions and experiences promote children's agency

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

in the form of personal expression, although in different ways. Finally, formulations conclude sequences with upshots, ascribing a value to children's utterances, without promoting children's agency (extracts 9–10).

In all these cases, formulations display, shape and enhance expectations regarding children's positioning in the interaction. Expectations are constructed in social systems, and are visible only in communication (Luhmann 1984); they are socially constructed. Revoicing and formulations that embed assessments both displays and enhance expectations of children's production of new meanings (cognitive expectations). Formulations of personal expression both display and enhance expectations of children's self-disclosure (affective expectations), which are shaped as expectations of either autonomous and controversial opinions or emotional disclosure. Formulations of upshots both display and enhance expectations of shared values (normative expectations).

Overall, the extracts discussed highlight different forms of formulations, which make different forms of positioning visible and intelligible, not only concerning children but also facilitators as promoters of children's active participation, by displaying and enhancing different forms of expectations. Throughout the interaction, formulations project, shape and enhance forms of mutual expectations and mutual positioning. Therefore, forms of formulations reproduce and enhance these forms of expectations and positioning in programs of facilitation in the education system.

Revoicing and formulations that embed assessments reproduce and enhance both the positioning of children as role performances of active learners and the positioning of facilitators as promoters of children's active construction of knowledge. Formulations of divergent opinions and emotional disclosure, reproduce and enhance both the positioning of children as self-expressing persons and the positioning of facilitators as promoters of personal agency.

Formulations of divergent opinions and emotional disclosure promote a dialogic form of communication in which children can express their personal ideas, experiences and emotions. Formulations of upshots reproduce and enhance both the positioning of children as role performances and the paradoxical positioning of facilitators as producers of children's construction of shared values.

Different forms of formulations are embedded in different programs of facilitation, which support their functions, enhancing preferred forms of positioning and expectations: programs of facilitation of children's role performances prevail in the second setting of our data; programs of facilitation of children's personal expressions prevail in the first setting of our data. Formulations display, shape and enhance the meanings of these programs in the interaction.

Revoicing and formulations embedding assessments can be considered as specific forms of scaffolding in dialogic facilitation, which is similar to dialogic

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

teaching. As scaffolding, formulations of children's personal expressions show engagement with and trust in children's production of meanings, glossing controversial gist and supporting emotional self-disclosure; however, in the data analysed, they do not encourage children's learning, rather they project children's agency as personal expression. They promote a form of dialogic facilitation that includes display of sensitivity and positive treatment of disagreements and alternative perspectives. Formulations of upshots are paradoxical ascriptions of children's autonomous production of shared meanings; facilitators formulate conclusions on values, attributing them to children's agency through apparent inference.

On the one hand, agency can assume the meaning of adequate performance, as production of new meanings or paradoxical ascription of production of values. On the other hand, agency can assume the meaning of personal expression of opinions, emotions and experiences. Revoicing, formulations embedding assessments and formulations of upshots promote positioning as children's role performances. However, upshot formulations cannot promote a form of dialogic facilitation. Formulations of divergent opinions and emotional disclosure promote positioning as children's personal expressions. However, formulations of emotional disclosure promote a higher degree of intensity in personal expressions.

6. Conclusions

This study has shown that formulations can be investigated with interesting results for the understanding of institutional contexts. In particular, it has shown that functions and forms of formulations are differentiated in the *same* social system, i.e. the education system, in which they occur, but also shape different forms of expectations and positioning. Formulations are ways of giving an interactional meaning to children's positioning, which can be based on normative, cognitive or affective expectations.

In programs of facilitation of classroom interactions, formulations both reproduce and enhance forms of adults and children's positioning, with important consequences on educational interactions. In previous studies concerning the education system, formulations have been observed as scaffolding of role positioning. Here, formulations have been observed to achieve (1) different forms of scaffolding of role positioning (revoicing and embedded assessments), (2) different forms of promotion of personal expressions (divergent opinions and emotional experience), and (3) ascription of unexplicated values. Revoicing and formulations embedding assessments can be included in programs of dialogic teaching. Formulations of children's personal expressions can be included in programs of dialogic facilitation that include children's agency in more radical ways. Upshot

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

formulations of "unexplicated values" reproduce more traditional power differences between experts and children.

What has emerged may be connected with the specificity of the observed educational settings, in which peaceful relations and dialogue are primarily important not only as objects to learn, but also as forms of interaction. In these settings, the oscillation between expectations of learning the value of dialogue and expectations of practising dialogue may explain the oscillation between different forms of formulations.

In conclusion, this study has shown that the observation of different functions and forms of formulations requires an accurate analysis of both the interactional mechanisms, and forms of expectations and positioning that are constructed in social systems. Such analysis can be applied not only to the education system, but also to counselling, psychotherapy, healthcare, private and public companies, dispute resolution, and other social systems in which formulations are observed.

In all these social systems, the mere analysis of the differences between (1) rephrasing the gist and formulating upshots, and (2) confirming and disconfirming formulations, is not enough to highlight different forms of formulations. Against this backdrop, further research is needed to clarify the interplay among (1) social systems, (2) forms of expectations and positioning, (3) functions and forms of formulations, (4) combination and alternation of differently designed turns (formulations, acknowledgments, encouragements, appreciations, questions, etc.), and (5) different ways of addressing previous turns (summaries, glosses, developments, articulation of the unsaid) and projecting more complex next turns (which frequently differ from yes/no reactions).

References

Antaki Charles, Rebecca Barnes, and Ivan Leudar. 2005. "Diagnostic Formulations in Psychotherapy." *Discourse Studies* 7 (6): 627–647. DOI: 10.1177/1461445605055420

Antaki, Charles. 2008. "Formulations in Psychotherapy." In *Conversation Analysis and Psychotherapy*, ed. by Anssi Peräkylä, Charles Antaki, Sanna Vehviläinen, and Ivan Leudar, 26–42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511490002.003

Asmuss, Birte, and Jan Svennevig. 2009. "Meeting Talk. An Introduction." *Journal of Business Communication* 46 (1): 3–22. DOI: 10.1177/0021943608326761

Baraldi, Claudio (ed). 2009. *Dialogue in Intercultural Communities. From an Educational point of View*. Amsterdam:John Benjamins.

Baraldi, Claudio. 2012a. "Participation, Facilitation and Mediation in Educational Interactions." In *Participation, Facilitation, and Mediation. Children and Young People in their Social Contexts*, ed. by Claudio Baraldi and Vittorio Iervese, 66–86. London-New York: Routledge.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

Baraldi, Claudio. 2012b. "The Function of Formulations in Polyphonic Dialogue." In *Spces of Polyphony,* ed. by Ubaldina Lorda and Peter Zabalbeascoa, 73–85. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Baraldi, Claudio, and Federico Farini. 2011. "Dialogic Mediation in International Groups of Adolescents." *Language and Dialogue* 1(2): 207–232.

Barnes, Rebecca. 2007. "Formulation and the Facilitation of Agreement in Meetings Talk." *Text & Talk* 27 (3): 273–296. DOI: 10.1515/TEXT.2007.011

Beach, Wayne, and C. N. Dixson. 2001. "Revealing Moments: Formulating Understandings of Adverse Experiences in a Health Appraisal Interview." *Social Science and Medicine* 52: 25–44. DOI: 10.1016/S0277-9536(00)00118-0

Bolden, Galina. 2010. "Articulating the Unsaid via And-Prefaced Formulations of Other's Talk." *Discourse Studies* 12 (1): 5–32. DOI: 10.1177/1461445609346770

Clifton, Jonathan. 2006. "A Conversation Analytical Approach to Business Communication. The Case of Leadership." *Journal of Business Communication* 43 (3): 202–219. DOI: 10.1177/0021943606288190

Clifton, Jonathan. 2009. "Beyond Taxonomies of Influence. 'Doing' Influence and Making Decisions in Management Team Meetings." *Journal of Business Communication* 46 (1): 57–79. DOI: 10.1177/0021943608325749

Deppelmann, Arnulf. 2011. "Notionalization: The Transformation of Descriptions in Categorizations." *Human Studies* 34: 155–181. DOI: 10.1007/s10746-011-9186-9

Drew, Paul. 2003. "Comparative Analysis of Talk-in-Interaction in Different Institutional Settings." In *Studies in Language and Social Interaction*, ed. by P. Glenn, C. LeBaron, J. Mandelbaum, 293–308. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Drew, Paul, and John Heritage. 1992. *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gafaranga, Joseph, and Britten, Nancy. 2004. "Formulation in General Practice Consultation." *Text* 24 (2): 147–170.

Gafaranga, Joseph, and Nancy Britten. 2007. "Patient Participation in Formulating and Opening Sequences." In *Patient Participation in Health Care Consultations: Qualitative Perspectives*, ed. by Sarah Collins, Nancy Britten, Joanna Ruusuvuori, and Andrew Thompson, 104–120. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Gardner, Rod. 2001. *When Listeners Talk. Response Tokens and Listener Stance*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. DOI: 10.1075/pbns.92

Giddens, Anthony. 1984. *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Harré, Rom, and Luk Van Langenhove (eds). 1999. *Positioning Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hendry, Richard. 2009. *Building and Restoring Respectful Relationships in Schools*. London/New York: Routledge.

Heritage John. 1985. "Analysing News Interviews: Aspects of the Production of Talk for an Overhearing Audience." In *Handbook of Discourse Analysis. Discourse and Dialogue*, ed. by Teun Van Dijk, 95–117. London: Academic Press.

Heritage, John, and Steven Clayman. 2010. *Talk in Action. Interactions, Identities, and Institutions*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Heritage, John, and Rod D. Watson. 1979. "Formulations as Conversational Objects". In *Everyday Language*, ed. by George Psathas, 123–162. New York: Irvington Press.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

Heritage, John, and Rod D. Watson. 1980. "Aspects of the Properties of Formulations in Natural Conversations: Some Instances Analysed". *Semiotica* 30 (3/4): 245–262. DOI: 10.1515/semi.1980.30.3-4.245

Hill, Malcolm, John Davis, Prout Alan, and Key Tisdall. 2004. "Moving the Participation Agenda Forward." *Children & Society* 18: 77–96. DOI: 10.1002/chi.819

Hutchby, Ian. 2005. "Active Listening: Formulations and the Elicitation of Feelings-Talk in Child Counselling." *Research on language and Social Interaction* 38 (3): 303–329. DOI: 10.1207/s15327973rlsi3803_4

Hutchby, Ian. 2007. *The Discourse of Child Counselling*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. DOI: 10.1075/impact.21

James, Allison. 2009. "Agency". In *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*, ed. by Jens Qvortrup, William Corsaro, and Michael-Sebastian Honig, 34–45. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

James, Allison, Chris Jenks, and Alan Prout. 1998. *Theorizing Childhood*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Luhmann, Niklas. 1984. *Soziale Systeme*. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

McHoul, Alexander. 1990. "The Organization of Repair in Classroom Talk." *Language in society* 19: 349–377. DOI: 10.1017/S004740450001455X

Mead Nicola, and Peter Bower. 2000. "Patient Centredness: A Conceptual Framework and Review of the Empirical Literature." *Social Science & Medicine* 51: 1087–1110. DOI: 10.1016/S0277-9536(00)00098-8

Mearns, Dave, and Brian Thorne. 1999. *Person-centred Counselling in Action*. London/Beverly Hills: Sage.

Mehan, Hugh. 1979. *Learning Lessons*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. DOI: 10.4159/harvard.9780674420106

Mercer, Neil. 2002. "Developing Dialogues." In *Learning for Life in the 21st Century*, ed. by Gordon Wells, and Guy Claxton, 141–153. London: Blackwell. DOI: 10.1002/9780470753545.ch11

Mercer, Neil, and Karen Littleton. 2007. *Dialogue and Development of Children's Thinking*. London/New York: Routledge.

Muntigl, Peter, Naomi Knight, and Ashley Watkins. 2012. "Working to Keep Aligned in Psychotherapy: Using Nods as Dialogic Resource to Display Affiliation." *Language and Dialogue* 2 (1): 9–27. DOI: 10.1075/ld.2.1.01mun

O'Connor, Catherine, and Sarah Michaels. 1996. "Shifting Participant Frameworks: Orchestrating Thinking Practices in Group Discussion." In *Discourse, Learning, and Schooling*, ed. by Deborah Hicks, 63–103. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511720390.003

Percy-Smith, Barry, and Nigel Thomas (eds). 2010. *A Handbook of Children's and Young People's Participation. Perspectives from Theory and Practice*. London/New York: Routledge.

Rogers, Carl. 1951. *Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Seedhouse, Paul. 2004. *The Interactional Architecture of the Language Classroom: A Conversation Analysis Perspective*. Blackwell: Oxford.

Seedhouse, Paul. 2005. "Conversation Analysis and Language Learning." *Language Teaching* 38 (4): 165–187. DOI: 10.1017/S0261444805003010

Seedhouse, Paul. 2007. "Interaction and Constructs". In *Language Learning and Teaching as Social Inter-action*, ed. by Zhu Hua, Paul Seedhouse, and Vivian Cook, 9–21. Houndmills: Palgrave.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)

Sharpe, Tina. 2008. "How Can Teacher Talk Support Learning?" *Linguistics and Education* 19: 132–148. DOI: 10.1016/j.linged.2008.05.001

Sinclair, John, and Michael Coulthard. 1975. *Towards an Analysis of Discourse. The English used by Teachers and Pupils*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sparks, Lisa, and Melinda Villagran. 2010. *Patient and Provider Interaction. A Global Health Communication Perspective*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Svennevig, Jan. 2008. "Exploring Leadership Conversations." *Management Communication Quarterly* 21 (4): 529–536. DOI: 10.1177/0893318907313717

van der Houwen, Fleur. 2009. "Formulating Disputes." *Journal of Pragmatics* 41: 2072–2085. DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2009.02.009

Walsh, Steven. 2011. *Exploring Classroom Discourse: Language in Action*. New York/London: Routledge.

Author's address

Prof. Dr. Claudio Baraldi
Dipartimento di Studi linguistici e culturali
Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia
Largo Sant'Eufemia 19
I-41121 Modena
Tel: +390592055913
Fax: +390592055931

claudio.baraldi@unimore.it
http://personale.unimore.it/Rubrica/dettaglio/cbaraldi

About the author

Claudio Baraldi is professor of Sociology of Cultural and Communicative processes. His research includes work on cultural presuppositions and interaction in social systems, facilitation and promotion of children's and migrants' participation and agency, interlinguistic and intercultural communication and mediation, conflict management, and the development of methodologies and techniques of dialogue.

BDD-A25566 © 2014 John Benjamins
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.216.75 (2026-10-30 00:14:30 UTC)