11

The Right to Be Transnational: Narratives and Positionings of Children with a Migration Background in Italy

Sara Amadasi and Vittorio Iervese

Transnational Children Between Protection and Promotion

Since the end of the last century, studies on migration have introduced the term 'transnationalism' to describe the ways in which migrants construct and reconstitute their embeddedness in more than one nation state (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1995, p. 48). In the context of globalisation, the strong increase of transnational individuals and communities undermines the means of defining and controlling difference founded on territoriality. The concept of *transnationalism* refers thus to multiple ties and interactions linking people and institutions across the borders of nation-states (Vertovec, 1999). This concept has recently included studies concerning children and childhood, giving rise to research focused on children who are part of transnational families (Parreñas, 2001) and who live in permanent return migration experiences (Hatfield, 2010), and that

S. Amadasi • V. Iervese (✉)
Department of Studies on Language and Culture, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Modena, Italy

vittorio.iervese@unimore.it

considers and investigates the relationship between rights, emotions, place and belonging (Den Besten, 2010; Urry, 2005).

Moreover, some studies look at repeated cross-cultural movements at a young age as a challenge to an individuals' identity formation (Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004) as children might experience difficulties attaining a solid cultural identity (Hoersting & Jenkins, 2011). Therefore, children, whose lives are characterised by transnational relationships and frequent international movements are observed as disoriented and deprived of their sense of belonging (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). In this chapter, we challenge these dominant discourses about children with migration backgrounds by combining a discussion about children's rights with an analysis of children's narratives concerning their experiences in a multiplicity of migratory contexts.

As claimed by Dixon and Nussbaum (2012, p. 573), 'when people talk about children and children's rights, they often talk about the vulnerability of children and their incompetence', and this is even more meaningful when it relates to children with migrant backgrounds, caught between different cultural orientations, constraints and opportunities. According to will theory (Eekelaar, 1986; MacCormick, 1976), rights are protected exercises of choice and therefore only those who can make choices can have, or at least exercise, rights. By contrast, interest theory (Alston, 1994; Mnookin, 1979) affirms that only those who have significant interests to protect can have rights. Following these theories, children are presented not as right-holders because they are incapable of exercising choices and only their representative can protect their interests.

This debate also relates to one of the most challenging narratives of the past ten years: the importance of children's active participation in terms of practising agency rather than simply having a voice. Improving children's rights means promoting their participation, thus defining a wider concept of active citizenship. Therefore the promotion of children's rights is strictly linked with the social form of children's agency. Against this backdrop, in this chapter we deal with children's agency considering participation as a way to achieve and affirm specific rights, rather than as a right in itself. In particular, our interest is in children with a migration background, with explicit attention to children's transnational migratory experiences, which allow us to reflect and focus on a particular aspect that

this topic implies: children's agency and the discursive construction of cultural identity.

Most of the works that look at international movements as a risk for children's sense of belonging adopt an essentialist understanding of concepts such as identity (Fail et al., 2004; Hoersting & Jenkins, 2011) and culture (Moore & Barker, 2012, p. 554). However, what might be seen as an opposite view—children's mobility as a positive experience owing to the possibilities that it would open up an ability to shift between different cultural identities (Moore & Barker, 2012, p. 555)—is only apparent in contrast with the first one. This interpretation, which looks at mobility as being deeply embedded in contemporary practices, related to and affected by a globalised world as well as boundaries and opportunities of specific social systems and contexts, still observes cultural identity as reified and shaped by external forces, denying children's personal agency. In this chapter we introduce a perspective which aims to call into question both narratives of mobility, as danger and mobility as an opportunity, to reflect on the promotion of children expressing their cultural identities and their transnational experiences.

The Agency of Children Living Transnational Experiences

The common point characterising these two interpretations of mobility—that is, cultural identity as a fixed and stable product based on past experiences—orientates and binds any possibility of an individual's action. In rethinking children's rights, participation and citizenship, it is therefore relevant to challenge this essentialist interpretation of cultural identity and to pay close attention to the cultural work of children with transnational experiences. Insights into children's narratives of their journeys and lives shed new light on the cultural construction of place, identity and interconnectedness, which so far has been almost completely dominated in the literature by adult perspectives. Children with migration backgrounds are active agents, creating culture rather than merely learning it.

The idea of the child as stuck among cultures, against which the criticism of some authors (Mannitz, 2005) is addressed, is thus strongly bound up with an unambiguous understanding of these children as defined by a disadvantage that has to be compensated. The idea of disadvantage is even more overwhelming and pervasive when the child is attending specific groups where they learn the dominant language. In this chapter, these groups are defined by the abbreviation ISL (Italian as a second language). Children's need for special assistance with language and literacy offers an opportunity to qualify and observe their identities, with the risk that—in a school environment as well as in academic studies—they become labelled as '"disadvantaged' groups' (Wallace, 2011, p. 102).

Through an acknowledgement of these narratives, we aim to draw attention to the lack of studies that look at how a construction of a stable orientation, which can be defined as cultural identity, is realised in daily interactions involving children. It is possible to point out two important elements for a reflection on the construction of the cultural identity of children with transnational backgrounds. The first concerns the interconnection existing between the process of constructing a personal (and collective) identity and the study of children's agency. The second relevant aspect to be considered concerns the fact that the individual is inscribed within a chain of relationships that is crucial for the construction of cultural as well as personal identity.

> There is no essence of identity to be discovered, rather, cultural identity is continually being produced within the vectors of resemblance and distinction. Cultural identity is not an essence but a continually shifting description of ourselves. "[…]" Since meaning is never finished or completed, identity represents a 'cut' or a snapshot of unfolding meanings, a strategic positioning which makes meaning possible. (Barker & Galasiński, 2001, p. 30)

When identity is observed as the result of an accumulation of elements over lifetimes, 'that may have had their origins in childhood, adolescence and the many later "periods" of our lives' (Lemke, 2008, pp. 18–19), it is possible to recognise the dominant developmental discourse which sees

childhood as a *tabula rasa* of identities. This interpretation not only contributes to constructing an image of children as 'vulnerable, immature and in need of education and socialisation if they are to develop into fully competent citizens' (Kjørholt, 2007, p. 30) but also creates an essentialist view of identity, which constrains children to preconstituted categories and degrees of development that do not allow us to consider how they, as well as adults, take up and play with fluid positions in the discursive construction of their personal stories.

The paradigm shift introduced by the new social studies of childhood, representing an epistemological break with the traditional developmental psychology perspectives (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998), is grounded in a view of children as competent social actors in their own right (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008). Thus, in recognising their active role in social processes (Corsaro, 2003; James et al., 1998;), the interest of sociological childhood studies lies in understanding how children actively participate in giving meaning to their experiences (Jans, 2004) and how they are, together with adults, co-constructors of knowledge (Hill, Davis, Prout, & Tisdall, 2004, p. 84). Agency is therefore a paramount concept in childhood studies (Baraldi & Iervese, 2014; James, 2009; James et al., 1998; James & Prout, 1997). However, as Valentine (2011, p. 348) claims, childhood studies presents different understandings of agency.

In this chapter, agency is considered in the meaning suggested by Giddens (1984) as the capacity to 'make a difference'. This means that the agent is the author of certain events as, somewhere in the chain of acts, they came across the possibility of acting differently. It is possible thus to understand agency as the capability of individuals to both shape their own lives and influence their social contexts. From this view, children's agency is not an individual feature, independent and isolated from interactions that children have with adults. Agency, as a specific form of active participation (Baraldi & Iervese, 2014) in social processes, is seen as relational because it is in the relationships with adults that children claim their right to participate (Bjerke, 2011, p. 99). It is possible to distinguish two different visions of children's participation: one in which the point is shared decision-making between children and adults; and another in which the point is the degree to which power is handed over from adults to children. In this chapter, the meaning of children's agency is closely

associated with change and unpredictability in social processes, particularly in interactions, in which children's actions always affect their interlocutors' actions. To look at children's agency, we consider in our analysis three complementary aspects: (1) the interaction among participants and between them and the researcher; (2) the participants' positioning in the interaction; and (3) the narratives they choose to sustain their positioning.

Interaction, Positioning, Narratives

Looking at interactions means looking at 'the ways in which participants themselves make sense of one another's actions, and establish collaborative courses of social activity in real time' (Hutchby, 2005, p. 67). By doing this, the coordination of children and adults' actions in the interaction (Baraldi & Iervese, 2014) cannot be ignored, representing a key point in the accomplishment of a 'participation chain' (Prout, Simmons, & Birchall, 2006). An effective methodology to look at the interaction as an organised turn-taking system is conversation analysis (Sacks, Shegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). This regards participants' ways of taking turns (acting) in the interaction and organising sequences of turns. Our analysis, however, does not aim to be 'conversational'. Here, we use some basic methodological aspects of conversation analysis, regarding the turn-taking system and the organised sequence of turns in order to analyse how children's agency is displayed through turn design (Heritage & Clayman, 2010) and in sequence organisation in which turns are included. It is also possible to observe children's agency through children's positioning, as rejecting, confirming and negotiating meanings in the interaction. Position is created through 'a complex cluster of generic personal attributes' (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999, p. 1), which locates a participant in communication, conditioning their possibilities of action and the assignment of rights, duties, obligations and entitlements to them. Position constrains the participant's actions. Therefore agency goes through, above all, the assignment of positions and the attribution of responsibilities.

Positioning theory is a dynamic take on identity that overcomes the shortcomings of static role-based theories in understanding and explaining situational behaviour. Positioning can be understood as the construction of narrative accounts which make participants' activities intelligible to themselves and others. Positions are defined here as 'unfolding narratives'. They are dynamic and subject to change over the course of an interactional episode. However, using 'narrative' and 'story-lines' as key terms or as evocative, metaphorical concepts is not useful for an empirical observation of the interaction (Deppermann, 2013). Bamberg (1997, p. 337) distinguishes three levels of positioning to observe how identity work is shaped by narration: (1) positioning on the level of the story; (2) positioning on the level of the interaction; and (3) positioning on the level of the construction of the self. In other words, positioning and narrative can be analysed while focusing on how the characters are positioned in relation to one another within the reported events; how the speaker positions themselves in relation to the audience' and 'how narrators position themselves to themselves'. To sum up, the empirical observation of positioning and narratives in the interaction permits us to analyse how the teller chooses to take up certain positions with regard to dominant narratives and other participants' positioning, and by doing they present a certain self/identity (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008, p. 385).

Hence, specific attention must be paid to narratives that children choose, reproduce and adapt to sustain and make sense of certain positions (and identities constructed through these) in the interaction. Narratives include all stories that guide actions (Baker, 2006). This concept is inscribed in the more general epistemological stance of social constructionism, asserting that human knowledge is constituted in social relationships (Gergen, 1991; Harré, 1984). Narratives constitute rather than represent reality. They are social constructions in which the observed reality is interpreted and told, through different media (oral telling and written documents, but also ballets, motion pictures, photos etc.). Narratives shape the semantic contents of communication processes. A narrative identity approach assumes that people act in particular ways because not to do so would fundamentally violate their sense of being at that particular time and place (Somers & Gibson, 1994). From this

perspective, according to Somers and Gibson, the main analytical challenge is 'to develop concepts that will allow us to capture the narrativity through which agency is negotiated, identities are constructed, and social action mediated' (Somers & Gibson, 1994, p. 64).

Positioning can be considered part of the discursive production of identities, 'whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines' (Davies & Harré, 1999, p. 48). This approach thus contributes to the understanding of individual's self and identity in institutional settings. It enables the researcher to analyse how identity is presented in positions and narratives, as well as how the practice of taking positions and of constructing narratives shapes identities.

This chapter explores the identity construction in the light of some video-recorded interactions between children and adults. We focus on children' self-expression during interactions in an institutional setting. Positioning could be distinguished into self-positioning and other positioning. Harré and van Langenhove analyse first-, second- and third-order positioning, performative and accountive positioning, moral and personal positioning, self and other positioning, and tacit and intentional positioning (Van Langenhove & Harré, 1999, p. 20). Here we limit the analysis to the categories which are more relevant to our chapter. First-order positioning (FOP) refers to the means by which a speaker locates themselves and others within a social space or moral order. Second-order positioning (SOP) occurs when FOP is not taken for granted by other participants in the interaction. Most FOP is tacit—that is, participants position themselves and others within an ongoing and lived narrative. FOP can be questioned within the conversation or within another conversation about the first one. An intentional SOP can make a tacit FOP visible and understandable in the interaction. Participants who have a dominant role in the interaction can force the other speakers into specific positions. In the classroom, for instance, teachers deliberately position pupils in a predetermined storyline. Such positioning can take the form of evaluation, reproach or moral judgement. FOP is not always evident and questionable, so it is important to focus on SOP, as opened up by children, or on self-positioning, where children try to express their points of view. In this sense, looking at children's agency in institutional settings

such as schools is important because it confirms that the course of action based on FOP is only one among various possibilities.

Methodology and Data

The data discussed in the following section have been collected during a larger study exploring how children keep ties with their (or their parents') country of origin through temporary return journeys. In particular, the study concerned the way in which these children construct and give meaning to their transnational experiences and cultural identity in the interaction (Amadasi, 2014). The research started in November 2012 and ended in November 2013. It was conducted at one primary school and one first-grade secondary school, in the province of Reggio Emilia, and a primary school in Parma (Italy). The first part of this research took place in Reggio Emilia, with students attending two ISL classes. The second part was conducted in Parma with a class composed of children with a migration background and those with no migration experience. In Reggio Emilia the ISL group in the primary school involved pupils aged 7–10, and the ISL class of the first-grade secondary school involved girls and boys aged 11–15.[1] Both groups had between 15 and 20 students from different countries.[2]

This study was based on different methods and tools to collect data. During the first part of the fieldwork, five months (November to March 2012–2013) of ethnographic observation during standard ISL lessons were conducted. This stage represents a *progressive field-access strategy* (Wolff, 2004, p. 202), whose purpose was not 'the accomplishment of the research plan' but rather 'the securing and setting up of an appropriate situational context for the research process.' (Wolff, 2004, p. 202). Some 31 hours of workshops were video-recorded with both the ISL groups in Reggio Emilia and the students in Parma. Workshops were considered to be appropriate tools to collect interactions with children as they allow a build-up of work, and the activities are based on the feedback received from the children, leaving each encounter open to being moulded by the peculiarities of the group rather than imposing a rigid schedule to which participants must adapt.

It was relevant for this kind of work that the children took up an active role inside the research process itself, allowing the researcher to adjust research tools and timing to the context and the environmental conditions of the investigation. The workshops allowed an analysis not only of children's answers but also of the interaction between them and the researcher, promoting reflections on the role of the researcher in the research process (Amadasi & Holliday, 2017). The encounters developed around the topics of travel and travelling experiences. Each ISL group was divided into three subgroups so that the groups included seven or eight participants each. Three meetings were conducted with each group. The three extracts that we present in this chapter come from the encounters taking place in a primary school in Reggio Emilia (children aged 7–10). The selected extracts are part of the same encounter, as we aim to give an account of the process through which the construction of meanings is generated during the conversation. The extracts allow us to highlight not only the development of positioning but also the development of the storylines related to this positioning.

Transcriptions are based on some conventions from conversation analysis, which highlight the most important features of the ongoing conversation (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). All the names in the transcriptions are pseudonyms. In the translation from Italian to English we have tried to maintain the speakers' mistakes and hesitations in the selection of some of the words.

Data Analysis

Extract 1 is taken from the first workshop. Eight children took part:, five boys and three girls. Paolo, Munirah and Andrea came from the fifth grade of a primary school, while Mor, Loveleen and Nimrit were together in third grade. Said and Hamed attended fourth grade. Although they were all attending ISL classes, their knowledge of Italian was pretty different, and while Paolo, Andrea, Mor, Said, Munirah and Nimrit spoke Italian quite well, Loveleen and Hamed, whose arrival in Italy was more recent, spoke Italian poorly.

Moreover, while Said usually travelled to his parents' country every summer, Nimrit travelled less often, although she went to visit her parents' country a few months before the encounter, around Christmas time for a few weeks. Loveleen instead planned to leave a few days after the second meeting. While all the teachers were informed about Nimrit's journey, Loveleen was one of those children usually described in teachers' accounts as 'leaving from one day to the other', without any communication from the parents to the school.

Extract 1 starts with the researcher (R) asking the participants how many flights they have caught.

Extract 1[3]

1. R:	tu Munirah l'hai mai preso l'aereo?	
	and you Munirah, have you ever caught an airplane?	
2. Munirah:	sì	
	yes	
3. RIC:	quante volt—ah m'hai detto cinque (.) e ti piace o no?	
	how many tim—ah you told me already five (.) and do you like it or not?	
4. Munirah:	sì (.) perché ( )-	
	yes (.) because	
5. Loveleen:	io dieci volte!	
	me, ten times!	
6. R:	dieci volte l'hai preso?	
	you caught it ten times?	
7. Nimrit:	io quattro volte!	
	four times me!	
8. Mor:	((teasing Loveleen)) eh::::::::	
9. Said:	I—io ci sono andato dieci volte! o—ogni volta all'anno devo andarci e io ho dieci anni	
	I—I went there ten times! e—each time every year I have to go there and I am ten years old	
10. Nimrit:	Io avevo sonno	
	I was tired	

11. R:	una volta all'anno devi andarci?
	once a year you have to go there?
12. Said:	sì
	yes
13. R:	e tu Nimrit quante volte l'hai preso?
	and you Nimrit? How many times did you take it?
14. Nimrit:	quattro
	four
15. R:	quattro volte. E per andare dove?
	four times. And to go where?
16. Nimrit:	(During the flight) ero molto stanca
	I was very tired
17. R:	come?
	pardon?
18. Nimrit:	ero molto stanca
	I was very tired

This extract shows how positioning and narratives arise in the interaction between the researcher and the children. The main narrative, which can be defined as transnational, is introduced by the researcher, who affirms that she is working with them as they are expert travellers. This action is a FOP that the children can choose whether or not to accept. If they accept it we can observe alignments or adjustments to the previous turn. If they reject it we can observe different SOPs. In Extract 1, the children start a sort of race on the number of taken flights, interpreting the narrative of themselves as transnational experts as positive. Loveleen's enthusiastic statement about having caught ten flights (turn 5) and Mor's expression of doubt about Loveleen's experiences (turn 8) seem to give a positive connotation 'to being' transnational.

This is also confirmed in turn 9, where Said, to prove the truthfulness of his statement, displays a logical reasoning: as he has to go every year to his parents' country, and he is ten years old, he has been there ten times. Interesting here is that by saying 'I have to' ('devo andarci'), Said affirms that he has to follow his parents' decisions and thus he cannot choose. However, by positioning himself as a child lacking possible choices, paradoxically he shows his agency in the conversation.

In turn 10, Nimrit seems to partially resist this positive interpretation and the corresponding positioning as 'transnational expert'. In turn 14 she confirms that she caught several flights, but in turn 16 she avoids answering the researcher's question about the destination of those journeys (turn 15), distancing herself from her experience and a positive engagement with it ('I was very tired'). By doing this, she is giving a negative connotation and a different meaning to the transnational narrative. Nimrit's SOP is a way of building a new narrative rather than a counter-positioning. To sum up, in Extract 1 we can see how the interactional participants have the chance to build a shared narrative of identity and to personalise it starting from their experiences. This identity narrative is bound to the possibility of participants making decisions about their own life freely and thus claiming their rights through social participation.

Extract 2 is the continuation of Extract 1. Here it is interesting to observe the development of the conflict which was possible in turn 8 of Extract 1, when Mor calls into question the truthfulness of what Loveleen was saying (turn 8). On that occasion this turn was ignored by all the other participants, including the researcher. In Extract 2, with a 'trick question', Mor tries to propose the previous issue.

Extract 2

19. Mor: (addressing Loveleen) anche te una volta all'anno?
    once a year you too?
20. Loveleen: sì
    yes
21. Mor: bugiarda!
    you liar!
22. Loveleen: (da quando siamo a casa)
    (since we were home)
23. Mor: bugiarda! è una bu—ha detto ogni—ogni—ogni anno! Quindi no—
    ha:: otto—ha: sette anni
    you liar! She is a l—she said—every—every—every year! So no—
    she is eight—is seven years old

24. Loveleen: no (.) stavo dicendo [(   )] quando finisce la scuo::la::!
                 no (.) I was saying [(   )] when the school ends!
25. Mor: [ha sette anni]
                                  [she's seven years old]
26. RIC: quando finisci la scuola tu devi prendere l'aereo per andare
                dove?
                when you finish school you have to catch the airplane to go
                where?
27. Loveleen: Mh:: in India dove::::
                Mh:: to India whe::::re
28. RIC: in India dai tuoi:: parenti?
                in India to see your relatives?
29. Mor: eh!
30. RIC: e quante volte ci sei andata?
                and how many times did you go there?
31. Loveleen: Mh:::::
32. Nimrit: dieci ha detto
                she said ten
33. Loveleen: no cinque volte in 'merica
                no five times in America
34. Nimrit: e perché hai detto dieci?
                and why did you say ten?
35. Loveleen: e in 'merica dieci volte!
                e in America ten times!
36. Mor: eh::::::
37. RIC: in America dieci volte?
                in America ten times?
38. Loveleen: sì:::
                ye:::
39. Mor: eh::::::: (.) maestra
                eh::::::: (.) teacher
40. Loveleen: sì! una volta quand'ero piccola, ancora piccola, ancora
                piccola,
                yes! Once when I was a baby, again a baby, again a baby
                again
41. Nimrit: ma basta adesso
                stop it now

42. RIC: e perché dite che non è v—che non può essere vero?
              and why do you all say it can't be t—it can't be true?
43. Mor: perché lei ha sette anni (.) ha sette   anni e ha preso dieci aerei?!!
              because she's seven years old (.) she's seven years old and did she take ten flights?!!
44. Said: ma secondo te eh può anche andare non p-
              but eh she can also go not t-
45. Loveleen: dai smettetela (che io devo—devo ancora disegnare!)
              c'mon stop it (that I have—I still have to draw!)
46. Hamed: la prima volta in Italia!
              the first time in Italy!
47. RIC: la prima volta in Italia?
              the first time in Italy?
48. Said: cioè nessuno ha detto che ci va una volta all'anno lei e inizia a
              dire le—eh:: lei non ha neanche dieci anni come può andare eh—
              in un anno può essere andata tre o quattro volte no?
              I mean no one has said that she goes once a year and he starts saying she—eh:: she isn't even ten years old how can she go eh— in one year she maybe could have gone there three or four time, couldn't she?
49. RIC: tre o quattro volte
              three or four times
50. Mor: eh:::
51. Loveleen: ma:: ero andata anche (.) con la mia mamma quando ero piccola::
              bu::t I went also (.) with my mum when I was a baby
52. RIC: in America o in India?
              in America or India?
53. Loveleen: anche in 'merica anche in India
              In America as well as in India

In turn 19, Mor takes the 'evidence of truth' reasoning used by Said in turn 9 of Extract 1 as a method to investigate the truthfulness of what Loveleen has affirmed. In turns 21 and 23, he openly claims that Loveleen

is a liar, and in turn 25 he starts to display his own logical reasoning to prove this truth. Our aim is not to find out the truthfulness of what Loveleen is affirming; interesting here is to observe the narrative and the emergence of a counter-positioning which stimulates an action–opposition sequence.

By claiming that she has travelled ten times, Loveleen is constructing and proposing a particular transnational identity: what she suggests is that she travels not because she is an immigrant but by choice; being a 'transnational expert' is for Loveleen an opportunity and a privilege. This perspective is refused by both Mor and Nimrit, who, in turns 32 and 34, step in, to follow Mor's approach to Loveleen's statement, trying to highlight contradictions in her accounts to 'unmask' her.

By doing this, the children are not only trying to position Loveleen as 'the liar' of the group; they are trying to position themselves as acute observers. This is also particularly evident in turn 50, when Said apparently intervenes to take the defence of Loveleen. He does not openly defend her; rather, he seems to expose a logical reasoning (as in Extract 1) with the aim of opening up a range of possibilities. By doing this he at the same time tries to fix two points. First, by recognising the possibility of the positioning displayed by Loveleen, he is constructing himself as cosmopolitan as well, reconfirming a narrative of a transnational experience. Second, by showing his logical ability, he is positioning himself as a particularly clever and accurate observer, skilled in arguing his own point of view. Every position opens up opportunities to give substance to some narratives and, at the same time, projects other positions in the following turns. The interplay between FOP (turns 21 and 23) and SOP (turns 24 and 40) is at the core of a discursive identity construction. From this point of view, conflict is a form of interaction in which different positions try to affirm different narratives. In this specific case, the two narratives at stake are the one expressed by Mor (a child cannot have such frequent journeys) and that expressed by Loveleen (I am a transnational child in a transnational family).

This use of narratives as tools to argue and sustain the reason of a positioning inside the group is also evident in Extract 3.

Extract 3

101. RIC: Loveleen tu invece dove vorresti vivere?
                 Loveleen and you, where would you like to live?
102. Loveleen: In eh::: 'merica
                 In eh::: America
103. RIC: In America? Perché in America?
                 In America? Why in America?
104. Paolo: perché è bella!
                 because it's beautiful!
105. Loveleen: così!
                 no reason actually
106. Nimrit: tu non ci sei neanche andata!
                 You didn't even go there!
107. Said: io ci vorrei andare (.) in America
                 I would like to go there (.) in America
108. Loveleen: Sì::: sono andata!
                 Ye::: I went there!
109. Mor: io voglio andare a New York!
                 I want to go to New York
110. Nimrit: ((addressing Loveleen)) quando?
                 when?
111. Loveleen: con la mia mamma e con il mio papà
                 with my mum and my dad
112. Nimrit: e perché gli indiani vanno in America se non c'è niente?
                 And why do Indians go to America if there is nothing?
114. Loveleen: lì è la mia zia!
                 There is my aunt!
115. RIC: c'è la tua zia lì?
                 Is there your aunt there?
116. Loveleen: Sì!
                 Yes
117: Paolo: (   )
118. Said: Io voglio andare a Hollywood!
                 I want to go to Hollywood!
119. Nimrit: °non ci credo°
                 °I don't believe it°
120: Loveleen: [Sì::]
                 [ye::s]

vittorio.iervese@unimore.it

121. RIC:	[perché] non ci credi Nimrit?
	[Why] you don't believe it Nimrit?
122. Loveleen:	Sì::
	ye::s
123. Nimrit:	perché in America ci sono dei dei::: mh: non ci sono italiani
	because in America there are no Italians!
124. Loveleen:	no è indiana:: (.) la mia zia!
	No, she is India::n (.) my aunt!
125. Nimrit:	eh eh perché in In in I:::
	eh—eh—because in In—in I:::
126. Munirah:	non ci sono
	there aren't
127. Loveleen:	Eh:::::↑ per and—qua—vado perché voglio eh anche capire
	ingle:::se:: per quello vado
	Eh:::::↑ to go—whe—I go because I want eh also to understand English, this is why I go!

In turn 106, Nimrit tries to raise doubt again concerning the truthfulness of Loveleen's accounts. However, Said and Mor this time ignore this suggestion and continue by telling the researcher about where they wish to live, while the dialogue between Loveleen and Nimrit carries on.

Initially Nimrit shows her scepticism about Loveleen's accounts through a further narrative, which presents identity as depending on national borders (as an Indian immigrated to Italy, Loveleen has to stay either in India or in Italy: turns 112 and 119). Nimrit tries to develop and adapt her position during the conversation to prove Loveleen's lies (turns 123 and 125). Here, owing to Nimrit's visible attempt to catch Loveleen out, it is possible to observe the use of narratives as tools to sustain or reject certain positions suggested or pursued in the interaction. According to Somers and Gibson, 'agents adjust stories to fit their own identities, and conversely, they will tailor "reality" to fit their stories. But the interpersonal webs of relationality sustain and transform narratives over time' (Somers & Gibson, 1994, pp. 61–62). Therefore during this conversation it is possible to observe Loveleen's determination to affirm her positioning through a developing of the narrative, which starts with

the affirmation of herself as a frequent traveller together with her parents (turn 111), passing through a description of her family as transnational and therefore with a family member living in America (turn 114), and finally declaring a far-sighted plan for her future: 'I go because I want also to understand English, this is why I go!' (turn 127).

These contributions, and the two narratives emerging through them, one centred on national borders and the other on a transnational view, should not be considered as isolated but in mutual relation and connected to the context generated through the interaction. Thus Nimrit assumes a positioning which is in a relation of counter-position to Loveleen's statements, and she supports this positioning by choosing an opposite narrative—that of the denial of the aptitude to international movements.

Conclusions

Positioning can be understood as a construction of identity in conversation, based on narrative accounts (Tirado & Galvèz, 2007). Narratives are constantly adapted to positioning and vice versa. Both positioning and the narratives through which it is constructed are extremely dynamic and can change easily. Moreover, positions are negotiable in the sense that there is always the possibility of questioning a determined act of positioning.

The analysis of the three extracts has highlighted how (1) the dynamic relationship between FOP and SOP contributes to structuring the meanings of participation in the interactions; and (2) the feedback loop between positioning and narratives shapes personal identity, conceived as the active result of a relational process rather than a static entity. In this regard, looking at negotiations between positions is crucial to understand how people manage opportunities and constraints—in other words, how opening up different courses of action allows children to enhance the meaning of their social actions.

Promoting children's positioning means promoting their participation in social interactions. This practice often has a conflictive character, but not in terms of incompatibilities (Ayoko, Härtel, & Callan, 2002) or

opposed and frustrated interests (DeChurch & Marks, 2001; Gudykunst, 1994); quite the opposite (Baraldi & Iervese, 2012). By observing the communicative production of conflictive meanings and orientations in the extracts presented in this chapter, it is possible to analyse (1) how children construct their narrative of identity through positioning and counter-positioning in the interaction; and (2) how this construction allows us to exercise and improve agency, showing that children can choose, achieve and affirm specific rights.

Notes

1. Although the standard age for first-grade secondary school in Italy is 11–13, most of the students attending ISL classes have repeated some years as a result of their limited knowledge of Italian.
2. The number of students in an ISL class can vary during the school year as a result of new arrivals and departures.
3. Transcription symbols
   [ ] Overlapping utterances
   (.) Micropause (>2 seconds)
   ( ) Inaudible expression
   (expression) Not clear expression, probable
   ((expression)) Description of non-verbal act
   text- Interrupted turn
   : Sound extension of the last letter of a word

References

Alston, P. (Ed.). (1994). *The best interests of the child: Reconciling culture and human rights*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Amadasi, S. (2014). Beyond belonging. How migrant children actively construct their cultural identities in the interaction. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Family Studies, 19*(1), 136–152.

Amadasi, S., & Holliday, A. (2017). Block and thread intercultural narratives and positioning: Conversations with newly arrived postgraduate students. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 17*(3), 254–269. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2016.1276583.

Ayoko, O. B., Härtel, C. E., & Callan, V. J. (2002). Resolving the puzzle of productive and destructive conflict in culturally heterogeneous workgroups: A communication accommodation theory approach. *The International Journal of Conflict Management, 13*(2), 165–195. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb022873.

Baker, M. (2006). *Translation and conflict*. London/New York: Routledge.

Bamberg, M. (1997). Positioning between structure and performance. *Journal of Narrative and Life History, 7*, 335–342. https://doi.org/10.1075/jnlh.7.42pos.

Bamberg, M., & Georgakopoulou, A. (2008). Small stories as a new perspective in narrative and identity analysis. *Text & Talk, 28*(3), 377–396. https://doi.org/10.1515/TEXT.2008.018.

Baraldi, C., & Iervese, V. (Eds.). (2012). *Participation, facilitation, and mediation: Children and young people in their social contexts*. New York: Routledge.

Baraldi, C., & Iervese, V. (2014). Observing children's capabilities as agency. In D. Stoecklin & J. M. Bonvin (Eds.), *Children's rights and the capability approach. Challenges and prospects* (pp. 43–65). Dodrecht: Springer.

Barker, C., & Galasiński, D. (2001). *Cultural studies and discourse analysis: A dialogue on language and identity*. London: Sage.

Bjerke, H. (2011). It's the way to do it. Expressions of agency in child-adult relations at home and school. *Children & Society, 25*, 93–103. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1099-0860.2009.00266.x.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.

Corsaro, W. A. (2003). *Le culture dei bambini*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1999). Positioning and personhood. In H. Rom & L. van Langenhove (Eds.), *Positioning theory. Moral contexts of intentional action* (pp. 32–52). Oxford: Blackwell.

DeChurch, L., & Marks, M. M. (2001). Maximizing the benefits of task conflict: The role of conflict management. *The International Journal of Conflict Management, 12*(1), 4–22. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb022847.

Den Besten, O. (2010). Local belonging and 'geographies of emotions': Immigrant children's experience of their neighbourhoods in Paris and Berlin. *Childhood, 17*(2), 181–195. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568210365649.

Deppermann, A. (2013). Editorial: Positioning in narrative interaction. *Narrative Inquiry, 23*(1). https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.23.1.01dep.

Dixon, R., & Nussbaum, M. (2012). Children's rights and a capability approach: The question of special priority. *Cornell Law Review, 97,* 549–594. *Public Law Working Chapter No. 384*.

Eekelaar, J. (1986). The emergence of children's rights. *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies, 6*, 161–182. https://doi.org/10.1093/ojls/6.2.161.

Fail, H., Thompson, J., & Walker, G. (2004). Belonging, identity and Third Culture Kids. Life histories of former international school students. *Journal of Research in International Education, 3*(3), 319–338. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240904047358.

Gallacher, L. A., & Gallagher, M. (2008). Methodological immaturity in childhood research? Thinking through 'participatory methods'. *Childhood, 15*(4), 499–516. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568208091672.

Gergen, K. (1991). *The saturated self: Dilemmas of identity in contemporary life*. New York: Basic Books.

Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Glick-Schiller, N., Basch, L., & Blanc-Szanton, C. (1995). From immigrant to transmigrant: Theorizing transnational migration. *Anthropological Quarterly, 68*(1), 48–63. https://doi.org/10.2307/3317464.

Gudykunst, W. (1994). *Bridging differences: Effective intergroup communication* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Harré, R. (1984). *Personal being. A theory for individual psychology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Harré, R., & Van Langenhove, L. (Eds.). (1999). *Positioning Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hatfield, M. (2010). Children moving 'home'?: Everyday experiences of return migration in highly skilled households. *Childhood, 17*(2), 243–257. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568210365747.

Heritage, J., & Clayman, S. (2010). *Talk in action. Interactions, identities, and institutions*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Hill, M., Davis, J., Prout, A., & Tisdall, K. (2004). Moving the participation agenda forward. *Children and Society, 18*, 77–96. https://doi.org/10.1002/chi.819.

Hoersting, R. C., & Jenkins, S. R. (2011). No place to call home: Cultural homelessness, self-esteem and cross-cultural identities. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 35*, 17–30. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.11.005.

Hutchby, I. (2005). Children's talk and social competence. *Children and Society, 19*, 66–73. https://doi.org/10.1002/chi.858.

Hutchby, I., & Wooffitt, R. (1998). *Conversation analysis. Principles, practices and applications*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

James, A. (2009). Agency. In J. Qvortrup, G. Valentine, W. Corsaro, & M. S. Honig (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of childhood studies* (pp. 34–45). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

James, A., Jenks, C., & Prout, A. (1998). *Theorizing childhood*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

James, A., & Prout, A. (Eds.). (1997). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood*. London: Falmer Press.

Jans, M. (2004). Children as citizens. Towards a contemporary notion of child participation. *Childhood, 11*(1), 27–44. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568204040182.

Kjørholt, A. T. (2007). Childhood as a symbolic space: Searching for authentic voices in the era of globalisation. *Children's Geographies, 5*(1–2), 29–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733280601108148.

Lemke, J. L. (2008). Identity, development and desire: Critical questions. In C. R. Caldas-Coulthard & R. Iedema (Eds.), *Identity trouble. Critical discourse and contested identities* (pp. 17–42). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

MacCormick, N. (1976). Children's rights: A test-case for theories of rights. *Archiv für Rechts und Sozialphilosophie, 62*(3), 305–317.

Mannitz, S. (2005). Coming of age as the third generation: Children of immigrants in Berlin. In J. Knörr (Ed.), *Childhood and migration: From experience to agency*. Bielefeld/Somerset, NJ: Transcript & Transaction Publishers.

Mnookin, R. H. (1979). Foster care: In whose best interests? In O. O'Neill & W. Ruddick (Eds.), *Having children: Philosophical and legal reflections on parenthood* (pp. 179–213). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Moore, A. M., & Barker, G. G. (2012). Confused or multicultural: Third culture individuals' cultural identity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 36*, 553–562. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.11.002.

Parreñas, R. (2001). Mothering from a distance: Emotions, gender, intergenerational relations in filipino transnational families. *Feminist Studies, 27*(2), 261–291. https://doi.org/10.2307/3178765.

Pollock, D. C., & Van Reken, R. E. (2009). *The third culture kid experience growing up among worlds*. Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Prout, A., Simmons, R., & Birchall, J. (2006). Reconnecting and extending the research agenda on children's participation: Mutual incentives and the participation chain. In E. K. M. Tisdall, J. M. Davis, M. Hill, & A. Prout (Eds.), *Children, young people and social inclusion* (pp. 75–101). Bristol: Policy Press.

Sacks, H., Shegloff, E., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematic for the organization of turn—Taking for conversation. *Language, 50*, 696–735. https://doi.org/10.2307/412243.

Somers, M., & Gibson, G. D. (1994). Reclaiming the epistemological 'other': Narrative and the social constitution of identity. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (pp. 37–99). Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Tirado, F., & Gálvez, A. (2007). Positioning theory and discourse analysis: Some tools for social interaction analysis. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 8*(2). https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-8.2.248.

Urry, J. (2005). The place of emotions within place. In J. Davidson, L. Bondi, & M. Smith (Eds.), *Emotional geographies* (pp. 77–86). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Valentine, K. (2011). Accounting for agency. *Children & Society, 25*, 347–358. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1099-0860.2009.00279.x.

Van Langenhove, L., & Harré, R. (1999). Introducing positioning theory. In R. Harré & L. Van Langenhove (Eds.), *Positioning theory* (pp. 14–31). Oxford: Blackwell.

Vertovec, S. (1999). Conceiving and researching transnationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 22*(2), 445–462. https://doi.org/10.1080/014198799329558.

Wallace, C. (2011). A school of immigrants: How new arrivals become pupils in a multilingual London school. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 11*(2), 97–112. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2011.556742.

Wolff, S. (2004). Ways into the field and their variants. In U. Flick, E. von Kardorff, & I. Steinke (Eds.), *A companion to qualitative research* (pp. 195–202). London: Sage.

12

Conclusion: Lived Childhoods

Claudio Baraldi and Tom Cockburn

The contributions to this volume introduce some new theoretical insights into children's citizenship, rights and participation. These highlight the specificities of *lived* citizenship, rights and participation, which we might summarise as *lived childhoods*. The concept of lived childhoods highlights the interdependence of citizenship, rights and participation in defining and shaping the lives of children. Thus we move away from an abstraction of 'childhood', where all individual children share a general condition based on their age premised on fixed social norms. By way of contrast the concept of *lived* childhood refers to children, in different regions and countries, situations and conditions, who share, in their daily life, the problems and opportunities of being citizens, having rights and participating in social processes. Thus the contributors discuss aspects of *lived* citizenship, *lived* rights and *lived* participation, thereby eschewing

C. Baraldi (✉)
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Emilia-Romagna, Italy

T. Cockburn
Edge Hill University, Ormskirk, UK

263