

SHARMED Policy Brief Series

Issue 6

Facilitation: Management of conflicts and problems

Edited by Claudio Baraldi

In collaboration with: Chiara Ballestri, Luisa Conti, Federico Farini, Vittorio Iervese, Angela Scollan

1. About this policy Brief

This policy brief series regards the activities conducted in the 48 classes selected for the SHARMED project. These activities concerned the use of photography to stimulate children's narratives about their memories and to promote dialogue in the classroom, as a way of innovating education in multicultural classrooms.

During the SHARMED project, the activities were coordinated by facilitators, with the task of:

- (1) Enhancing children's active participation, and in particular children's agency (autonomous contributions influencing the structure of the interaction)
- (2) Promoting narratives and dialogue.

The SHARMED project was implemented to show if and how these activities can become part of education in multicultural classrooms.

The SHARMED Policy Brief Series highlights what these activities can suggest for policies and interventions in the education system.

Facilitation of production of narratives and dialogue requires the enhancement children's agency in choosing how to act and orient their stories. The analysis of the activities allows the identification of some important facilitative actions that can accomplish this function.

This policy brief regards some ways of managing conflicts and problems, which emerged during facilitation of classroom activities in the SHARMED project.

2. Management of conflict narratives and interactional conflicts

The SHARMED activities show that conflicts can become relevant in two ways: as narratives and as disputes between children. In the first case, facilitators need to understand what the narrative tells about transgression and conflict. In the second case, facilitators need to manage interactional conflicts emerging in the classroom. The two ways can also be combined. The SHARMED activities have also shown that the raising of interactional conflicts can depend on the context: they were more frequent in the Italian settings than in the other settings.

Facilitation of narratives of conflicts and management of interactional conflicts can require very long interactions, including tentative forms of mediation. In the SHARMED activities, conflict mediation was based on three types of action. These are certainly not the only possible actions, but they can be a useful reference for mediation in case of facilitation.

The first type of action is inviting to reflect on children's accuses: these invitations avoid that accuses become judgments and enhance the telling of different views, which are thus intended as different social constructions, as it is shown in example 1, in which a narrative mixes with an interactional conflict. Example 1 shows a sort phase of the very long conversation.

Example 1 regards a narrative of conflict triggered by a video in which M1 has described a photograph regarding a red flower. M1 says that red is his favourite colour and the facilitator asks why M1 prefers this colour. The child answers with the term "blood", repeated two times (turn 1). The facilitator asks if this means that there is life in blood or that M1 likes blood. M1's answer clarifies his violent attitude (turn 3, "I like to hit"). The facilitator repeats this statement, acknowledges it ("okay"); then he asks if someone in the class has been hit by M1. Thus, the facilitator avoids a direct confrontation with M1, asking additional details about his behaviours to his classmates. This question (1) avoids label and judgement on a "deviant" person, (2) avoids M1's self-construction of identity around deviance, (3) promotes a more nuanced narrative on this behaviour; (4) transforms a personal narrative in a collective reflection. This fourth effect of the facilitator's question imports the conflict from the narrative to the classroom interaction. The consequence of the question is a general confirmation of M1's negative behaviour (turns 7-12). The facilitator continues to promote a reflection, by asking to M2 if he has never reacted to M1 and if thinks that M1 likes to hit. Then, the facilitator repeats M2's "I don't know" (turn 17), however insisting in inviting the child to tell about the time he was hit by M1 (turn 19). M2 stresses that he has been hit several times, and the facilitator acknowledges this information (turn 22). M1's following comments ("they were a couple one and two") clearly refers to a specific episode (turn

24). However, the facilitator does not take this reference, continuing to ask M2 about the reason of M1's behavior with a focused question (turn 25). Finally, M2 provides an answer, which stresses M1's casual and humoral behavior. This answer is rejected by M1 (turns 26-29), who in this way contributes to the construction of his own identity.

Extract 1

Italy (SS1, 2B, third meeting)

1. M1: il sangue (.) il sangue
The blood (.) the blood
2. FAC: ah il sangue c'è la vita nel sangue eh? O perché ti piace il sangue?
Ah the blood there is life in the blood eh? Or is it because you like blood?
3. M1: no mi piace picchiare
No I like to beat
4. FAC: **ti piace picchiare ok, qualcuno di voi le ha già prese da lui?**
You like to beat ok is there some of you who was already beaten by him
5. Some: sì
yes
6. FAC: eh?
7. M2: ((rises his hand))
8. M?: tutti
everybody
9. FAC: te le hai prese?
Were you beaten?
10. M2: ((nods))
11. FAC: **non hai mai reagito**
Have you never reacted?
12. M2: ((shakes his head))
13. M1: cioè non le han mai prese ((nomi))
Well (names) were never beaten
14. M3: (?)
15. FAC: **ma secondo te perché gli piace picchiare?**
but in your opinion why does he like to beat?
16. M2: non lo so
I don't know
17. FAC: **non lo sai**
You don't know
18. M2: no
19. FAC: **non ti sei posto il problema però non hai reag- ce la vuoi raccontare quella volta hai voglia?**
You never thought of it but you have not react- would you like to tell us that time, would you?
20. M2: ma quelle: [quelle volte
But those: [those times
21. M?: [quelle volte
[those times
22. FAC: **ah più di una volta**
Ah more than once
23. M2: sì (?)
yes
24. M1: erano erano in coppia uno e due ((indicando))
They were a couple one and two ((indicates))
25. FAC: **ma secondo te lui si diverte così oppu[re**
But in your opinion does he have fun in this way [or
26. M2: [sì si sveglia e dice: vengo a scuola e picchio
[yes he awakes and says I come to school and I beat

27. FAC: **ah**
 28. M9: °(?)
 29. M1: no! non è così
No! It's not in that way

M1's rejection opens a new phase of interaction, in which M1 and M2 start to discuss, under the facilitator's coordination, through a minimal feedback to M1, i.e. a repetition of his utterance in interrogative form (turn 30). M2 and M1 confirm their diverging points of view, without any substantial explanation. The facilitator supports M1's contribution through a short explication, which however does not develop the child's view (turn 33). The facilitator insists in finding an explanation, this time addressing M1 directly (turn 35). As M1 continues to answer in uncertain way, the facilitator provides a development, suggesting contingent irritability as possible explanation (turn 37). M1 starts to talk in overlapping with M2. They mutually invite each other to talk first, and M1 insists in inviting M2, maybe trying to avoid direct explanation. M2 insists in his interpretation of M1's casual behaviour, which oscillates between aggressiveness and friendship. M1 does not seem very satisfied, but he is interrupted by M8, who invites him to listen M2. The facilitator concludes M2's suspended turn with a formulation about M1's contingent need of unloading physically (turns 51 and 53), which is confirmed by M2 (turns 52 and 54).

30. FAC: **e non è così?**
And it is not in this way
31. M2: se[condo me è così poi
In [my opinion it is in this way then
32. M1: [no per- boh non so (.) cioè non cioè non mi sveglio a dire: ah oggi picchio per
 esempio: ((guardandosi intorno))
[no, for boh I don't know (.) I mean I don't I means I don't awake to say ah today I beat for example ((he looks around))
33. FAC: **ciò non lo fai**
So you don't do it
34. M1: e: (.) cioè
 e: (.) well
35. FAC: **ma c'è qualcosa che ti spinge a comportarti così?**
 But is there something that pushes you to behave in this way?
36. M1: eh boh cioè
eh boh well
37. FAC: **a[d esempio quando sei più nervoso**
F[or instance when you are more nervous
38. M1: [quando:
 [when
39. FAC: **oppure quando**
Or when
40. M1: [ciò quando
[I mean when
41. M2: [ciò a volte
[well sometimes
42. M1: vai vai
Go go
43. M2: vai vai
Go go
44. M1: vai
go
45. M2: a volte cioè ci son dei giorni in cui (.) boh gli vie- viene lì nel tuo banco e ti picchia e altri in
 cui
sometimes well there are some days in which (.) boh he com- he comes at your desk and others in which
46. M1: beh [tu (che cosa)
Well [you what

47. M2: [ti è molto amico:
[he is very friendly with you
48. M1: aspetta tu cosa (?)?
Wait what do you (?)?
49. M8: ma gli hai appena detto di parlare lascialo parlare
But you have said him to talk joust now leave him to talk
50. M2: è molto amico: tipo: ti viene lì, ti sta vicino, ti dà un pezzo di merenda, parla, ((allarga le braccia)) e [a volte
he is very friendly like he comes there he stays close to you, he gives you a piece of snack, he talks ((extends his arms)) and [sometimes
51. FAC: **[però ci sono dei momenti in cui invece ha bisogno di:**
[however there are moments in which he needs to:
52. M2: sfogarsi
Let off steam
53. FAC: **di sfogarsi fisicamente cioè invece di ascoltare la musica e rilassarsi lui si sfoga menando**
to let off steam physically I mean instead of listening music and relax he lets off steam beating
54. M2: sì
yes

The second type of action is presenting personal stories as ways of discouraging unproductive conflicts. This type of action avoids concluding the interaction by accusing someone of bad behaviour. Example 2 follows a long narrative about a conflict raised during a football game in the school courtyard. During the previous conversation, as in example 1, the facilitator has invited to reflect on accuses, avoiding their transformation in judgments and enhancing the telling of different views, as different social constructions. In example 2, this phase is concluded by the facilitator's personal story, delivered to enhance reflection on the conflict. The facilitator introduces the story by creating expectations of something deviant or irregular, through a series of focused questions (turns 78, 82 and 85). In turns 88 and 90, the facilitator tells his personal story of expulsion during a football game. After some comments, he increases the expectation of his deviant behavior (turn 97), telling the crucial part of his story (turns 99-107): his protest, the decision of the referee to refer about his negative behaviour and his suspension from the football games for a full year. His conclusion is that he understood that his behavior was wrong (turn 113).

Example 2

1. FAC: **adesso ve ne dico una però poi (.) ve la dimenticate subito? Se ve la dico?**
Now I tell you one thing then (.) do you forget it immediately? If I tell you it?
2. Some: sì, no
Yes, no
3. FAC: sicuro?
Are you sure?
4. F10: dillo lo stesso
Tell it anyway
5. FAC: **sicuro che ve la dimenticate?**
Are you sure that you forget it?
6. F10: [no
7. ?: [sì
[yes
8. FAC: **e che non la raccontate in giro?**
And that you don't tell it around?
9. Some: sì
yes
10. FAC: **allora io quando avevo (.) quattordici anni (..) giocavo a calcio ed ero un po' nervoso forse un po': ((indicando M2)) anch'io avevo molta energia da (.) da giocare no? E giocavo in difesa (.) allora un attaccante mi scarta, e io allungo la gamba gli faccio fallo no? Allora l'arbitro è venuto da me e mi ha e: dato il cartellino rosso [e io**

so when I was (.) fourteen years old (.) I played football and I was a bit nervous, maybe a bit ((indicating M2)) I too had much energy to (.) to play, ok? And I played defense (.) so a striker dribbled me, I extended my leg and I made a foul, ok? So the referee came to me and gave me the red card [and I

11. M14: giallo [come? Giallo
yellow [How? Yellow
12. FAC: **no rosso diretto**
No, directly red
13. M14: rosso?
Red?
14. FAC: ((nods))
15. ?: (per?)
16. M3: sì [si può si può
Yes [it's possible it's possible
17. FAC: [perché era un fallo che secondo lui non dovevo fare
[as it was a foul that in his opinion I shouldn't do
18. ?: (?)
19. FAC: **e indovinate cos'ho fatto io**
And guess what I did
20. M2: [hai dato un calcio all'arbitro
[you kicked the referee
21. F3: [boh eri arrabbiato
[boh you were angry
22. FAC: **((indica M2)) ho fatto un po' come lui mi sono arrabbiato con l'arbitro**
((indicates M2)) I did a bit as him I became angry with the referee
23. ?: (?)
24. M3: come Higuain
As Higuain
25. FAC: **e sapete cos'ha fatto l'arbitro?**
And do you know what the referee did?
26. F3: cos'ha fatto?
What did he?
27. FAC: **ha scritto nel suo: libretto che: io avevo reagito e mi hanno sospeso per un anno**
He wrote in his book that I reacted and they suspended me for a year
28. Some: ah:!
29. F10: cosa significa?
What does it mean?
30. FAC: **che per un anno non ho più potuto giocare a calcio**
That for a year I couldn't play football
31. M2: [quando ti esplodono dalla scuola
[when they explode you from school
32. M3: [ma cosa ti ha scritto?
[but what did he write about you?
33. FAC: mh?
34. M3: ma
but
35. FAC: **dopo ho capito che insomma**
After that I understood that hence

The third type of action is managing reflection by leaving room to the children but concluding with a personal comment about the advantages of reflecting on conflicts. Example 3 follows a long discussion among the children about a conflict raised while they were preparing the space for the activity. The facilitator has coordinated this discussion rather loosely, leaving room to the children (adopting the second form of facilitation shown in policy brief 5). At the end of the discussion, however, he provides a comment, saying

that the discussion was particularly interesting and that it is very important to continue to talk, listen each other, sharing agreements and decisions, in order to solve problems (turn 1). He also starts to add a suggestion about avoiding to accuse who did not the best performance (turn 3).

Example 3

1. FAC: **allora la discussione che avete fatto e: mi e: era particolarmente interessante l'ho trovata almeno io l'ho trovata particolarmente interessante nel senso che credo che se voi e: continuate a parlare in questo modo tra di voi cioè che e: parlate ma anche vi ascoltate, e: ecco che forse è più facile e: risolvere i problemi no? Dovete mettervi dovete mettervi d'accordo magari cioè non lo so io ve la dico così e: è giusto parlarsi e però quando c'è da organizzare un lavoro magari qualcuno può dirigere mentre gli altri stanno ad ascoltare ad esempio no?**
so your discussion e: was particularly interesting as I believe that if you continue to talk in this way between you and you speak but also listen to each other maybe it is easier to solve problem isn't it? You must you must agree maybe well I don't know I tell you so e: it's right talk and however when you must organise a work maybe someone can direct while the others listen for example, don't you?
2. M1: (?)
3. FAC: **come come volete però ecco io trovo interessante la modalità che avete adottato nel senso che e: vi siete: chiariti, avete parlato, eccetera eccetera, un consiglio un suggerimento che io do no? E: e quando: e: non so succedono queste cose qua, e: invece di dire eh ma lui non ha fatto:**
how how you prefer but ok I find interesting the way that you adopted as you cleared up, you talked etcetera etcetera, an advice a suggestion that I have, okay? E: when I don't know something like this happens e: instead of saying eh but he didn't do

This comment is interrupted by a new, rather long conversation among the children, In turns 70-74, the facilitator restarts his comment, suggesting that the children should think what they can do to improve the situation, rather than what others did not.

70. FAC: **no provate a pensare a quello che potevate fare voi piuttosto che a quello che doveva fare l'altro**
no try to think what you could do rather than that someone else had to do
71. M1: in che senso?
In what sense?
72. FAC: **cioè invece di dire l'altro non ha fatto, l'altro ha fatto, l'altro: stava seduto, l'altro::, cosa potevo fare per (..) migliorare la situa[zione]?**
I mean rather than saying the other did not do, the other did, the other was sitting, the other, what could I do to (..) improve the situation?
73. M1: [chiedere
To ask
74. FAC: **sì tu sì tu cos'avresti potuto fare?**
Yes you yes what could you do?

Later, at the end of this long conversation, the facilitator stresses the importance of understanding each other and having the possibility to contribute to the conversation freely, without being accused by others.

103. FAC: **ok vedete però la cosa ribadisco la cosa importante è che in questo caso ci siamo un po' chiariti no?**
ok look however the thing I repeat the important thing is that in this case we have cleared up didn't we?
104. ?: mh mh
105. FAC: **e che l'importante è che quando si affronta un problema come avete fatto voi ognuno di voi abbia la possibilità di intervenire liberamente no? Senza sentirsi magari accusato (.) ok?**

And that the important thing is that when a problems is dealt with as you did each of you can intervene freely, isn't it? Without feeling maybe accused (.) ok?

Conflicts can also be avoided or ignored, thus privileging the smooth production of narratives. Avoiding and ignoring may be considered a positive way of acting, as it does not emphasize conflicts. However, conflicts that are not managed can become, or remain, unresolved in the classroom. Conflicts are symptoms of relational problems, which in the long run can destroy positive relations in the classroom. Avoiding their management may be a good solution for the contingent continuity of facilitation, but it may also be a negative perspective for the classroom.

Example 4 follows a phase of some turbulence in the classroom and the facilitator's comment that she does not want to hear jokes that can offend other children. F2 takes the floor to announce a series of questions to the facilitator (turn 1). In fact, however, F2 does not ask questions, but she talk about her annoyance when children talk loudly. This is followed by a short exchange with the facilitator, who develops her contribution (turns 5-9), overlapping with F5's exclamation, which is not clearly linked to what is happening. The conflict raises when M11 accuses F2 to lie (turn 11) and F2 reacts with a nasty comment (turn 12). The facilitator ignores this exchange inviting other contributions (turn 13).

Example 4

1. F2: ähm, ich habe drei Fragen an Sie.
emm, I have three questions for you ((FAC))
2. ((children talk over one another))
3. FAC: ich merk das.
I can see that.
4. F2: das nervt wenn die so laut sind.
it's annoying when they get so loud.
5. FAC: oh, hier war gerade ein Kommentar, das nervt wenn die Gruppe so laut ist, weil jemand was [Fragen möchte].
oh, there was just a comment here, that it's annoying when the group gets so loud because someone [has a question].
6. F5: [halt die Klappe]
[shut up]
7. FAC: das heißt, manchmal ist es dir doch wichtig, dass die Leute dir zuhören.
that means sometimes it is important to you that people listen to you after all.
8. F2: nee, das nervt.
nah, it's annoying.
9. FAC: ah, gut. Du möchtest doch die ganze Zeit was sagen, und wenn ich nicht sage okay, oder die anderen dir nicht zuhören ist das anscheinend nervig für dich.
aha, I see. You've wanted to say something the whole time and if I don't say okay, or if the others don't listen to you, that's apparently annoying for you.
10. M11: **das ist jetzt unfair und sie lügt. Sie erzählt uns fast jeden Tag irgendwelche Geschichten.**
that's unfair and she's lying. She tells us some sort of stories almost every day.
11. F2: **red mal Deutsch, das heißt gelogen und nicht gelügt.**
speak German, it's called lying and not lyinged.
12. ((children talk over one another))
13. FAC: **so, okay, hier hat jemand eine Frage in der Runde.**
well, okay, there's someone else here with a question in the group.

3. Management of problems

An important problem of facilitation is the upgrading of facilitators' **epistemic authority**, i.e., authority in producing knowledge, which limits the promotion of children's agency. Epistemic authority is a very delicate issue in facilitation. Facilitators are active in producing knowledge by coordinating classroom interactions. It is illusory to think that, in this activity of coordination, facilitators' authority in producing knowledge can be

cancelled. However, facilitation aims to use this authority to upgrade children's authority in narrating, commenting, showing their feelings, i.e. in displaying their agency. Facilitation fails when facilitators' authority does not enhance children's agency: in these cases, the upgrading of facilitators' authority undermines children's construction of knowledge. Problems of epistemic authority can be shown, for instance, through ways of checking children's knowledge and guiding conversations towards certain outcomes, regarding relations and behaviours.

Problems of facilitation arise when facilitators initiate a so-called IRE sequence (Initiation, Reply, Evaluation) in order to check children's knowledge. The facilitator initiates this type of sequence through a question and concludes it giving an evaluative feedback to the child's reply. In example 5, the facilitator asks what is the synonym for "shisha" (turn 3), M3 answers to this question (turn 4) and the facilitator provides a positive evaluation (turn 5).

Example 5

1. M5: das ist eine Shisha.
it's a shisha pipe.
2. M6: ja.
yeah.
3. FAC: **mhm. wisst ihr noch ein anderes Wort für Shisha? Irgendein anderes Wort?**
mm-hm. Do you know another word for shisha? Any other word?
4. M3: **Wasserpfeife**
water pipe
5. FAC: **genau**
exactly

Problems of facilitation also arise when facilitators direct conversations, guiding them towards positive social relations or providing normative directions. In these cases, facilitators' actions reduce children's authority by assimilating it to deviance and obedience. In example 6, the facilitator stresses that too many questions impede the child to answer (turn 1), then he blocks a contribution inviting to listen and inviting M5 to repeat his first question (turn 4). Finally, he invites to wait for an answer before providing other questions (turn 6).

Example 6

1. FAC: **sì però se fate tante domande lui come fa a rispondervi?**
Yes but if you ask so many questions how can he answer to you?
2. F4: eh lo so
eh I know
3. ?: posso dire?
may I say?
4. FAC: **no ascolta ascolta un po' allora la prima domanda gliela ripeti per piacere?**
No listen listen a little so can you please repeat the first question?
5. M5: no [ho detto
No [I said
6. FAC: **[e aspetti e aspetti che ti risponda**
[and you wait and you wait that he answers

In example 7, the facilitator invites to respect the turn of speech, based on a circular organisation (turns 4 and 6). However, this organisation prevents children's provision of autonomous and timely contributions.

Example 7

1. F5: nee, eigentlich ist so gemischt, manchmal is egal, manchmal nicht.
no, actually it's mixed, sometimes it doesn't matter to me, sometimes it does.
2. FAC: okay, manchmal egal, manchmal nicht.
okay, sometimes it doesn't matter, sometimes it does.
3. F2: mir ist eigentlich voll egal. Jetzt wollte ich natürlich noch was fragen.

- it doesn't matter to me at all actually. Now I wanted to ask something of course.*
4. FAC: **nee, warte, nein,nein nein. Ja. Lässt dein Foto einfach hier. Leg auf dein Stuhl. Wir machen erst die eine Runde zu Ende. Du kannst dir so lange merken, was du wissen möchtest.**
no, wait, no, no, no. Yes. Just leave your photo here. Put it on the chair. We're finishing the first round first. You can keep in mind what you wanted to know that long.
5. M11: darf ich was dazu sagen?
can I say something?
6. FAC: **hier gehen wir weiter.**
we're moving round the circle.

Other two types of problem of facilitation are the lack of focus on children's contributions and narratives, and the missed opportunity to enhance children's agency and narratives. Example 8 follows F7's long story about a gift to her aunt. The facilitator guesses about a gift of her father to her mother, not mentioned by F7 (turn 1). He insists on this topic (turns 3 and 5), although F7 seems to avoid it, until the child reveals that her parents are separated (turn 6). The facilitator shows understanding of this news (turns 7 and 9), then he repairs his lack of attention supporting the child's interest in the gift for her aunt (turns 11 and 13).

Example 8

1. FAC: **e posso essere curioso e indiscreto il papà ha fatto un regalo alla mamma?**
And may I be curious and tactless did your dad a gift to your mum?
(..)
2. F7: non lo so no perché
I don't know no because
3. FAC: **gliel'ha fatto in segre- in segreto**
He made it secre- secretly
4. F7: perché [io
Because [I
5. FAC: [senza raccontarti nie-
[without telling you not-
6. F7: e: i miei genitori non stanno più insieme
e: my parents are no more together
7. FAC: **ah ecco perché hai fotografato lo zio**
Ah this is because you took the picture of your uncle
8. F7: ((nods))
9. FAC: ((nods)) **i tuoi non stanno più insieme e quindi tu hai fatto la foto del regalo che lo zio ha fatto alla zia**
your parents are no more together and so you took the picture of the gift that your uncle mad to your aunt
10. F7: ((nods))
11. FAC: **e e la zia come com'è rimasta? Molto contenta?**
And and how was your aunt? Very happy?
12. F7: sì
yes
13. FAC: **e: come come: ti sei accorta che era contenta la zia?**
And how how did you understand that your aunt was happy?

In example 9, the facilitator does not support F6's story, in the attempt of connecting it with his personal story. After some questions about F6's origins, the facilitator develops the child's utterance about her place of birth as a place that is near to his own home (turn 5). The teacher repairs this deviation from the ongoing narrative asking for further details about F6's story (turns 6 and 8). The teacher's unusual intervention enhances the child's story.

Example 9

1. FAC: ma sei nata in Cina?
But were you born in China?
2. F6: no sono nata qui in Italia a ((città))
No I was born here in Italy in ((city))
3. FAC: a ((città))?
In ((city))
4. F6: sì
Yes
5. FAC: [**quindi vicino più vicino a casa mia**]
[so near nearer to my house
6. T: [**e poi?**]
[and then?
7. F6: ((smiles))
8. T: **è nata sei nata a ((città)) poi?**
She was born you were born in ((city)) then?
9. F6: e: quando tipo avevo tipo: un anno sono andata in Cina,
and: when I was like: one year old I went to China,
10. FAC: ah
11. F6: ci sono rimasta tipo due o tre anni, (.) e: quando dovevo ritornare cioè dovevo ritornare in Italia e sono andata in autobus insieme a mia sorella e poi c'era un uomo che non conoscevo e io ho chiesto ma chi sei te? E poi lui mi ha detto sono tuo padre hh
I stayed there more or less two or three years, (.) and: when I had to come back I mean I had to come back to Italy and I went on a bus with my sister and then there was a man that I didn't know and I asked who are you? And then he told me I am your father hh

4. Final reflections

This policy brief has shown two important types of problems arising in activities of facilitation: conflicts and problems of epistemic authority.

Conflicts are a very delicate issue for facilitation, and their management requires both important and complex skills and time. It seems very hard to transform facilitation of narratives and dialogue in conflict management, in particular in conflict mediation. However, facilitators can employ some form of mediation when conflicts arise, avoiding accuses, inviting to reflect, narrating personal stories and providing personal comments. The alternative of avoiding or ignoring conflicts seems more risky for classroom relations.

Facilitators' upgrading of their epistemic authority lead to assess children's contributions, guide conversations, underestimate children's contributions. These effects increase the difficulty of facilitating children's display of agency and dialogue between children. The best way of avoiding this type of problems is keeping the children's interest alive, paying systematic attention to their contributions and on promotion of narratives and dialogue in the classroom.