



SHARMED Policy Brief Series

Issue 1

Types and modes of production of narratives

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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 highlights the types of narratives that were produced during the SHARMED activities and the ways in which children participated in their production. This analysis is based on the video-recordings of activities. Types of narratives and ways of narrating show how narratives of memory can result from innovative education.

2. Types of narratives produced during the activities

Showing the types of narratives children choose to tell and discuss with classmates and facilitators does not mean proposing an exhaustive catalogue of possible narratives. However, children's choices during SHARMED can provide some food for thinking about narrative production in facilitated classroom interactions. Narratives were produced, directly starting from the photographs or following previous stories that started from the photographs.

Narratives of children's self were the most frequent. These narratives include stories about children as persons, their past, their characters, their opinions and emotions, their experiences, and their important relationships. Children show their interest in displaying their identities in classroom interactions, their own specificity and autonomy, observing the changes and continuity in time that made them unique persons. In particular, children tell stories about trust and friendship, preferences, experiences, beliefs. Sometimes, children remember these stories, other times stories are told them by parents or grandparents.

The following example is part of a longer narrative about the birth of a friendship, after a period of difficulties and conflicts. It shows how the two children (F5 and F14) co-narrate the story of their relationship.

Example 1

1. F14: siamo capitate in classe insieme
we happened to be in the same class
2. FAC: quindi vi eravate antipatiche una con l'altra però dice ci tocca stare insieme ci proviamo
So you disliked each other but as we have to stay together we try
3. F5: hh
4. FAC: così?
Like that?
5. F5: sì
Yes
6. FAC: ma chi è che ha abbordato l'altra?

- But which one of you went to the other?*
7. F5: tutte e due
Both
8. FAC: cioè vi siete scontrate
You mean you collided
9. F14: [hh]
10. F5: [nohh]
11. FAC: com'è dai non ti ricordi com'è accaduto?
How did don't you remember how did it happen?
12. F5: in biblioteca forse
Maybe in the library
13. F14: sì siamo andate in biblioteca insieme
Yes we went to the library together
14. FAC: ah
15. F14: e
And
16. FAC: no mi piace capire il pensiero quando (.) a un certo punto voi avevate un preconcetto l'una nei confronti dell'altra sbaglio?
No I like to know the thought when (.) at a certain point you had a preconception the one against the other am I right?
17. F5: ((looks at F14))
18. F14: sì
Yes
19. FAC: eh e come è avvenuto il cambiamento? Cioè
Eh and how did the change happen? I mean
20. F5: eh imparando a conoscerla (.) perché io pensavo che lei mi stava antipatica perché non mi parlava e mi guardava male e quindi:
eh learning to know her (.) because I thought I didn't like her because she didn't talk to me and she looked bad at me and so:
21. F14: e io la stessa cosa
And the same for me
22. FAC: beh quindi in pratica eravate ostili l'una all'altra per difesa (.) nel senso che pensavate che l'altro non aveva voglia [di: di voi e quindi
So basically you were hostile for defence (.) in the sense that you thought that the other didn't want [to: you and so
23. F5: [sì
[yes
24. FAC: e e il primo a parlare chi è stato?
And and who was the first to speak?
25. F5: eh chi si ricorda
eh who remembers?
26. FAC: sei stata te ((pointing to F5))
You did
27. F5: no! Non so
No! I don't know
28. F14: no perché mi sembra che eravamo seduti lì ((indica un banco)), [all'inizio dell'anno
No because I think we were sitting there ((points to a desk)), [at the beginning of the year
29. FAC: [qua
[here
- ah
- ah
30. F5: perché [eravamo a isole
Because [we were in isles
31. F14: [e sì eravamo a isole, e io e lei eravamo di fronte a un certo punto abbiamo tirato fuori l'astuccio era uguale e allora ci siamo messe a ridere

[and yes we were in isles, and I and she were one in front of the other and at a certain point we pulled out the pencil case and it was the same and we started laughing

32. FAC: ah: quindi un episodio fortuito
Ah: so an accidental event
33. F5: sì
Yes
34. FAC: ma vi siete mai raccontate quando vi eravate antipatiche?
But did you ever talk about when you disliked each other?
35. F5: [sì
[Yes
36. F14: [sì
[yes

Family narratives were also very frequent. These are stories regarding family members: parents, grandparents, uncles, siblings, cousins. They describe family members, their life experiences, which sometimes are painful, children's relationships with them. The stories regard the most affective relationships involving children. Through these stories, children define either their family identity, or affirm their autonomy from family. Example 2 regards a photograph representing the child's brother. A series of questions, by the facilitator and the classmates, support the child's telling of the story about his brother.

Example 2

1. M7: also, das war und das war vor vier Jahren. Das war auch als wir als erstes in Magdeburg waren. Also, wir sind ja von Berlin nach also, wir sind das erstes Mal nach Magdeburg erfahren an diesem Tag. Und ähm, dann waren wir erst in der Stadt und, das ist hier mein Bruder ((zeigt auf das Bild)). Und das ist schon, für mich ist das schon lange her. Nicht so viel Erinnerungen.
well, that was and that was four years ago. That was when we first were in Magdeburg. Well, we did travel from Berlin well, this day we travelled the firstest time to Magdeburg. And em, then first we were in the city centre and, this is here my brother ((points to picture)). And it is a long, for me it's a long time ago. Not so much memory.
1. FAC: mhm. Klasse.
mm-hm. Great.
2. M7: und das bin ich hier.
and that's me here
3. F7: und wer ist das dann daneben?
and who is that just adjacent?
4. M7: das ist mein Bruder.
that's my brother.
5. FAC: ich glaub hier sind noch einige Fragen, guck mal.
I think there are quite a few questions, look.
6. ((M7 points to F7))
7. F7: wie alt warst du da?
how old were you then?
8. M7: F9.
9. F9: hast du dich [mit dein Bruder] vertragen?
did you get [on well with your] brother?
10. M7: [neun gewor-,] neun geworden.
[just turn-,] just turned nine.
11. F9: hast dich mit deinem Bruder vertragen?
did you get on well with your brother?
12. M7: ähm, ja
emm, yes.
13. F4: wie alt war dein Bruder da?
how old was your brother then?
14. M7: mein Bruder? Vier oder so.
my brother? About four.

15. F7: ähm, wart ihr glücklich, weil auf diesem Foto sieht das nicht, also, so-
emm, were you ((plural)) happy, because in the photo it doesn't look, well, so-
16. F6: komisch aus.
looks strange.
17. F7: ja, also lächelnd und grade.
yeah, like, smiling and stiff.
18. F7: also, wart ihr da glücklich
*well, were you *plural* happy?*
19. M7: ja. Wir waren erstes Mal in Magdeburg, wir wussten eigentlich gar nicht. Also so.
yes. We were firstest time in Magdeburg, we didn't even know. Well so.

Narratives of personal life include important events (e.g. weddings, feasts, school trips), meaningful places, sport experiences, beloved animals (above all cats and dogs) and important objects (such as toys, puppets). The narrated events, places, sports, animals and objects affect children's life experience and the formation of their personal identities. These stories show emotional aspects of children's memories, often connected with important personal relationships or social roles. Sometimes these stories can also contribute to highlight family identities. Through their narratives of personal life, children construct their identities in relation to their experiences, needs and feelings. Example 3 regards the children's participation in weddings, which was a rather popular theme during a meeting in UK.

Example 3

1. FAC: So, would you share with us a bit about your picture
2. F1: ((finger to mouth as she gets lost for words)) It was my aunts wedding and when I was about seven
3. FAC: What can you remember about the day, about going to the wedding, was it exciting, was the bride beautiful, the groom handsome. What was special about the day when you went to the wedding?
4. F1: I felt really excited being there to like be there
5. FAC: And did you have a special job, were you involved in the ceremony?
6. F1: ((Gestures to show roses being thrown)) Oh yeah, I was the rose girl so I was throwing roses.
7. FAC: Oh, so flowers. So, would you call it a rose carrier or a flower girl or bridesmaid, there's lots of different names isn't there? Flower girl
8. F1: ((nods))
9. FAC: Okay and where did the marriage happen?
10. F1: ((Maps out a 'big place' with hands)) I don't remember but it was this big place and that's where the ceremony was but the party was in a different place
11. FAC: Okay, was it a religious ceremony?
12. F1: Yeah, it was a Christian.
13. FAC: It was a Christian ceremony. So, what was it like?
14. F1: ((smiles)) After we were sat down (..) ((unclear)) it was a little bit boring.
15. FAC: It was a bit boring, was it long as well?
16. F1: ((Uses hands to display excitement)) Yeah, but when me and ((unclear)) with the rings it was like
17. FAC: It was exciting?
18. F1: ((Smiles)) Yeah.
19. FAC: Was it emotional?
20. F1: Yeah.
21. FAC: It sounds really (..) has anybody else here been to a wedding?
22. ((Classroom all talks at once))
23. FAC: Who wants to share with me about their wedding favourite experiences? Who can remember going to a wedding and share something about it.
24. F1: ((points to people in class))
25. M1: I was at a wedding and you know the platform they go to to get married
26. FAC: The platform as in when they stand up.

27. M1: (?)
28. FAC: Oh no, so you went to the wedding and the ceremony was on and you fell down the stairs, can you remember that?
29. M1: Not very well.
30. FAC: So, about four maybe, maybe three or four. Oh no, and do you remember that or is it because your family told you about it, is it on video?
31. M1: Maybe talking about it.
32. FAC: And how did it feel when they told you.
33. M1: Embarrassment.
34. FAC: Has anybody else got a memory about a wedding they want to share?
35. F2: I remember when I was two. I think my mum took me to Poland for her sister's wedding and we actually (..) my auntie's and a lot of people, like guests, they were basically dancing with me. I was like only two and everybody was trying to take care of me, but I was mostly crying during the wedding so (..) but I do remember like the music we had and like the cake.

Narratives of migration were particularly frequent in the Italian setting. These stories regard experiences connected to separation from beloved persons and places, journeys to new countries, experiences of returning to places of origin, aspirations to return in the future or lack of interest for this return. These stories are generally linked to personal aspirations and feelings, frequently to family bonds and only sometimes to the construction of national or group identity. Through these stories, children construct their identity much more frequently in relation to their family bonds and/or to their unique and specific desires, aspirations and feelings, than to their membership of cultural, ethnic or national groups.

Example 4 regards an important Muslim feast, in Afghanistan. The child (M2), supported by the facilitator, is able to provide some details of the event; then the story focuses on relatives and life with the child's grandmother.

Example 4

1. FAC: Why did you choose to bring that in?
2. M2: Because it was Eid in Afghanistan.
3. FAC: So, it's in Afghanistan, so it's celebrating Eid.
4. M2: Yeah. All of our family was gathered around in this (?) park and my grandfather unfortunately had to bring his camera because he used to be a photographer, and I think he wanted me to wear this hat and he made me put it on and it made me smile (?) picture.
5. FAC: Why did he make you wear that hat?
6. M2: Because it was my dad's old hat.
7. F: Oh, so your dad used to wear that hat as well and how does it link to Eid, how does that link to Eid?
8. M2: Because he wore it on the same day as Eid.
9. FAC: And does it represent something, does it mean something?
10. M2: It doesn't mean anything it's some hats that Afghans wear.
11. FAC: In the Eid celebration. Okay, I really love all of the sequins on there and I love the way it comes out like a little pyramid, a triangle, that's really lovely . I noticed a lot (?). What else can you remember about the picture?
12. M2: On that day, I met one of my cousins (?) and he came to the wedding. He didn't like me that much but like whenever I got closer he'd scratch me on my face.
13. FAC: Oh wow, some cousins might do that sometimes when they're younger.
14. M2: And there was (..) I can remember that my oldest cousin he used to play cricket, he made this rumour that he met one of the famous players, a cricket famous player and then I got into him and he made me do stuff, like he made me do stuff that I didn't want to do, like go to the shops (?) and he would show me a picture of when I was a baby and it made me feel embarrassed.
15. FAC: Were you very small?
16. M2: Yeah.
17. FAC: And what do you (..) when you look back at this picture how does it make you kind of feel, like to think of the time together with family, generations?
18. M2: We're apart now, we're in different countries. My other cousin (?) (..) like sometimes I cry

about it because I never met them. I meet my grandparents every five years. When I met them this year, last year, I was so emotional and I kept sort of like following them and slept with them, but when I was leaving they cried their hearts out .

19. FAC: They didn't want to leave you, yes. Can I ask why you slept with them - was it to feel close to them and to get in with them?
20. M2: Yeah.
21. FAC: I used to sleep with my grandma when I was little .
22. M2: My grandma she's (..). well, when I was in Afghanistan, we have this house, my cousin told me it was haunted and in one of the (?) they put their hands (?) in one of the pictures and told me like there's a ghost and a hand appeared.

Narratives of historical events and situations were much less frequent than the other types of narratives. These include two types of stories. The first type is linked to grandparents' or great-grandparent's life experiences, which were told to the children by the protagonists or by their parents. This type of narrative regards children's family heritage, transmitted through different generations, and constituting part of the family identity. It was particularly frequent in the Italian setting. In many cases, the children also display their sorry about not having spent enough time with dead grandparents or also great grandparents. A second type of stories regards the direct experience of war and displacement, in the German setting, where some refugee children have participated in the activities. These stories are more delicate as they regard experiencing war and pain, as having to flee from a conflict zone or having a boyfriend who is a soldier. These stories represent painful direct experiences for children. They remained largely unexplored in the German setting, probably for the facilitators' perception of their delicacy. Narratives of historical events can also enhance discussions about different perspectives, for instance, on war.

Example 5 regards a story about episodes involving the child's great grandmother during the Second World War. The child is able to provide many details, following the stories told to him by his grandmother and great aunt.

Example 5

1. M3: e: allora ho portato questa foto perché anche quello che mi racconta: la mia prozia e mia nonna, e: cioè mi: era interessante della sua vita e allora ho portato:
and: so I brought this photo because even the things my grandmother and great aunt tell me, e: well to me: it was interesting about her life and so I brought:
2. FAC: ma ci sono altre cose che ti hanno raccontato di lei?
But are there other things that they told you about her?
3. M3: sì
Yes
4. FAC: [che cosa
[what
5. M3: [che è successo un episodio durante la seconda Guerra Mondiale che e: lei aveva una fattoria cioè suo marito e: allora praticamente i tedeschi hanno: gli avevano: rubato un maiale
[that an episode happened during Second World War that e: she had a farm well her husband and: so basically the Germans have: they stole a pig from them
6. FAC: [ah
7. M3: [e allora e: dopo lei aveva de- e: era andata dal capo dei tedeschi a ((città) e ha detto ma voi mi avete rubato un maiale dovete ridarmelo e quel capo dei tedeschi era bravo cioè non era cattivo
[and so e: after that she de- e: went to the Germans' leader in ((city)) and told him you stole my pig you have to give it back to me and that German's leader was good I mean he wasn't bad
8. FAC: ah
9. M3: e: allora dopo si è trovata
And: so then she found
10. FAC: perché ci sono i tedeschi bravi [e i tedeschi meno bravi
Because there are good Germans [and less good Germans

11. M3: [sì sì e: ((fa un gesto con la mano, sembra indicando qualcosa di passato)) e allora si è trovata dopo il giorno dopo il maiale gliel'han dato però e:
[yes yes and: ((gesture with the hand indicating something past)) and so she found the day after the pig that they gave back to her but e:
12. M1: morto
Dead
13. M3: poco perché:: delle parti le avevano già mangiate e poi volevano portargli i soldi (.) del maiale
A bit because:: they had already eaten some parts and then they wanted to give her the money (.) for the pig
14. FAC: ah
15. M3: per[ché
Be[cause
16. FAC: [beh però
[just guess
17. M3: pagarglielo poi mia nonna ha detto ma no guarda tenetevi voi i soldi che io non li voglio e loro han detto prendi i soldi o ti spariamo
To pay for it then my grandmother said no keep the money I don't want it and they said take the money or we shoot at you
18. FAC: però
Just guess!
19. M3: eh li ha presi ((sorrìde))
eh and she took it ((smiles))

2. Modes of producing narratives

Children can tell their stories either as first person stories or as third person (or vicarious) stories. **First person narratives** regard children's lived experiences. Frequently, children are the source of these stories, which they experienced and remember. In some cases, however, children do not remember the stories, as they were too young at the time of events. In these cases, even if children can display their knowledge in the classroom, and are protagonists of the story, they cite a different source, such as a parent or grandparent. Example 3 regards a first person narrative, remembered by the children.

Third person (or vicarious) narratives are stories with other protagonists, such as relatives, friends and classmates. Sometimes, third person narratives are reported narratives, as the source is not the child. In case of vicarious narratives about relatives, the source can be the protagonist of the story, or another relative when the protagonist died. Vicarious narratives can also be promoted by facilitators, for instance through small group activities where children are invited to interpret and narrate the photographs of other children. In other cases, the source of third person narratives are the narrating children, who have a direct memory of experiences of other persons. Example 4 regards a vicarious narrative, i.e. a reported narrative about the child's great grandmother.

Sometimes, the children cannot remember anything about the photograph and there is no source of information about it. These cases invite to reflect on the importance of collaboration of families to this type of activities.

3. Transitions from photographs to stories

The **transition from photograph to story** is very important in this type of activities as photographs are the systematic point of departure of this proposal of innovative education. This transition can be based on different ways of connecting photographs and narratives.

The simplest transition is based on **the description of the iconographic elements** of an image, i.e. what is represented in it. Example 6 shows as the children describe the content of the photographs.

Example 6

1. M4: also, dieses Bild, also, das ist das Land Syrien und die Stadt da heißt Aleppo und und ähm auf dem ersten Bild sieht man noch dass hier alles heile ist, dass da auch noch Menschen laufen, dass hier auch so ein riesen Turm ist und ähm dass hier auch Autos, Mopeds, und alles noch schön ist. Auch hier so ein paar Bäume. Und das wirkt da noch wie ne normale Stadt.
well, this picture, well, this is the country Syria and the city is Aleppo and em on the first picture you can see that everything is still intact, that people are walking around and that there is a huge tower here and that em there are also cars, mopeds and everything is still fine. There are even some trees here. And it looks like a normal city.
2. M5: und unten ist ähm, da war bestimmt Krieg, man sieht hier auch einen Panzer und da ist alles kaputt, also ich glaub- wir glauben, dass das das Vorher Foto und das das Nachher ähm. Die ganze Häuser sind auch kaputt und der Turm äh ist auch kaputt.
and below it's em, there was definitely a war, you can see a tank here and everything is broken there, so I believe- we believe that this one is a before photo and this one after. All of the houses are destroyed too and the tower is broken too.
3. M4: also hat alles auch aus Trümmern und man stellt sich auch vor, dass man auch jetzt nicht gerne leben möchte und auch keinen Urlaub dort machen möchte.
so everything is just rubble and you can also imagine that people wouldn't like to live there or go there on holiday.

A second type of transition is based on the **inclusion of the photograph in a stream of personal experiences**, thus moving to tell what is not evident in the photograph itself, as outside its frame (relationships, places, events, et.) and as a memory evoked by the photograph. Examples 3 and 4 represent this type of transition. In particular, the transition can be based on **the link between the photograph and the child's personal emotions**. In these cases, there is not a direct correspondence between what is represented in the photograph and the feelings expressed by the child. Example 7 shows the mismatch between what is represented in the photograph (turn 2) and the emotional charge that the photograph implies (turn 7).

Example 7

1. M2: On that day, I met one of my cousins (?) and he came to the wedding. He didn't like me that much but like whenever I got closer he'd scratch me on my face.
2. FAC: Oh wow, some cousins might do that sometimes when they're younger.
3. M2: And there was (..) I can remember that my oldest cousin he used to play cricket, he made this rumour that he met one of the famous players, a cricket famous player and then I got into him and he made me do stuff, like he made me do stuff that I didn't want to do, like go to the shops (?) and he would show me a picture of when I was a baby and it made me feel embarrassed.
4. FAC: Were you very small?
5. M2: Yeah.
6. FAC: And what do you (..) when you look back at this picture how does it make you kind of feel, like to think of the time together with family, generations?
7. M2: We're apart now, we're in different countries. My other cousin (?) like sometimes I cry about it because I never met them. I meet my grandparents every five years. When I met them this year, last year, I was so emotional and I kept sort of like following them and slept with them, but when I was leaving they cried their hearts out.

A third type of transition is based on the **reference to the function of the photograph**, by defining its importance for children (why did the child bring it?) and how it was used by children or other people (e.g., as a way of remembering). Example 8 shows how the child gives relevance to the castle of Dracula, which is in the photograph.

Example 8

“questa foto rappresenta il castello di Dracula, ci sono andata in vacanza nel duemila quattordici, in Romania, e desideravo tanto visitare questo castello, e: ci tengo a questa foto perché primo perché è fatta in Romania, quindi è da dove viene mia madre, e perché era da tanto che desideravo andare lì”

“this photo represents the Dracula castle, I went there on holidays in two thousand fourteen, in Romania, and I wanted so much to visit that castle, and: I love this photo because first it's taken in Romania, so it's from where my mother comes, and because it was a long time I wanted to go there”

A fourth type of transition is based on **looking at the photograph as a tangible object** and describing its technical aspects. In these cases, children talk about the support, the surface, the format, the quality of preservation of the photos they are handling. In other cases, they comment some elements of the photographic composition, such as light or perspective. In example 9, M2 notices the quality of the surface of his photo id.

Example 9

1. M2: [è una fo- è una foto: liscia come l'olio
[this photo is smooth like water]
2. FAC: è una foto tessera no?
It's a photo id, isn't it?
3. M2: eh liscia [come liscia come l'olio [senza niente
Eh smooth [like smooth like water [without nothing]
4. FAC: [per mettere [liscia come l'olio
[to keep [smooth like water]

Following facilitators' invitations to tell, children can choose a specific way of participating actively in the construction of narratives. Facilitation consists in leaving them this choice and supporting it.

4. Transitions between stories

There are different ways of producing transitions between different stories.

Change of teller. This type of transition may be accomplished by children, but it may also be promoted by facilitators. When a child narrates a certain type of experience, other children can intervene spontaneously to narrate similar experiences they lived. The facilitator can promote the narrative of an experience, extending participation to other children, by asking if they lived something similar. Example 3 represents a change of teller, from F1 to M1.

Modes of producing narratives. These are transitions from the third person to the first person. They may be promoted by facilitators, after small group activities, which are concluded through a third person narrative concerning a classmate's photograph, and followed by the “true story” of the child who brought the photograph. This type of transition allows children's telling of stories about other children's photographs, using imagination and creating connections between stories. Facilitators can invite those who have direct knowledge to tell their versions, after the previous third person versions.

Different types of narratives, moving from a photograph to another one. This transition can be promoted by facilitators, and accomplished by children or by facilitators themselves, when they explore a specific theme. The new narrative can be linked to something invisible in the photograph, behind its frame. Example 10 regards a transition accomplished by a child. Starting from his picture, M4 tells of when he started walking (turns 1-19), then he provides another narrative about something regarding the same day: his parents' fight that led to divorce (turns 20-30).

Example 10

1. M4: allora là ho appena iniziato [a camminare
So there I had just started [walking]
2. FAC: [beh innanzitutto dicci perché l'hai portata
[beh first of all tell us why did you bring it]
3. M4: perché là ho iniziato a camminare
Because there I started walking

4. FAC: ah questo è stato il giorno in cui hai iniziato a camminare?
Ah was this the day you started walking?
5. M4: ((nods))
6. FAC: ma questo te l'ha detto chi?
But who told you this?
7. M4: mia madre
My mum
8. FAC: tua mamma?
Your mum?
9. M4: ((nods))
10. FAC: che è quella che ha fatto la foto?
Is she the one who took the picture?
11. M4: sì
Yes
12. FAC: ok quindi
Ok so
13. M4: là stavo osservando le caramelle
There I was watching the candy
14. Many: ((laugh))
15. M4: che erano sul tavolo
that were on the table
16. FAC: e le guardavi da lontano perché la mamma ti aveva detto di star fermo?
And did you watch them by far because mum told you to stay still?
17. M4: sì
Yes
18. Alcuni: hh
19. FAC: hh
20. M4: poi là era il giorno in cui mia madre e mio padre hanno iniziato a litigare
Then there was the day in which my mum and my dad started fighting
21. FAC: ah quindi è stata una giornata intensa
Ah so it was an intensive day
22. M4: ((nods))
23. FAC: tu hai iniziato a camminare
you started walking,
24. M4: ((nods))
25. FAC: e hanno iniziato a litigare nel senso che discutevano su questa cosa, (.) o ti ha raccontato la mamma anche questa?
And they started fighting in the sense that they were discussing on this thing, (.) or did mum tell you about this thing too?
26. M4: no che stavano litigando che poi hanno anche divorziato
No that they were fighting and then they divorced too
27. FAC: ah quindi ha portato a un evento insomma significativo (.) e quindi per te come dire è importante da che punto di vista questa foto? più per il fatto che è la giornata in cui hai iniziato a camminare, (.) perché c'erano le caramelle che poi volevi andare a prendere, o per l'altro motivo?
Ah so you basically brought a meaningful event (.) and so for you let's say this photo is important from what point of view? More because it's the day you started walking, (.) because there were candy that you wanted to reach, or for the other reason?
28. M4: perché hanno iniziato a litigare e poi cioè è venuto il divorzio quindi
Because they started fighting and then the divorce came so
29. FAC: mh quindi qui ancora erano tutti e due lì insieme anche se non si vedono
Mh so here they were still both there together even if we don't see them
30. M4: sì
Yes

5. Difficulties in narrating

Sometimes, the production of narratives meet difficulties. Narratives can have problems of **relevance**, as they do not interest the audience, in particular when the tellers are not able to connect the photograph to the story, which they do not know sufficiently well. Moreover, narratives meet problems when they include **delicate issues or taboos**, conveying the teller's transgressive identity. Usually, stories that include delicate issues are not allowed in communication, especially in educational contexts. They can lead to a negative evaluation of the tellers, above all when they tell of their unusual or nasty behaviours. Children can also enact nasty behaviours during the activities. These problems, however, were not frequent during the SHARMED activities. Example 11 regards the child's story of his nasty behaviour during a wedding. The facilitator supports the telling of the story, avoiding any judgement.

Example 11

1. M3: I've been to a wedding which basically there was plenty of juices at the far back. So, we got (..) we mixed all of the juices and we put pepper (?) and we were daring them to drink it. And I got another one which the cucumbers and then we got started fighting with the cucumbers.
2. FAC: At the wedding?
3. M3: ((smiles)) Yeah
4. FAC: And do you think the adults knew that you were doing all of this at the wedding?
5. M3: Yeah.
6. FAC: And was this a children's kind of, young people's lives at the wedding, what do you do, that's interesting, so you were doing potions and dares at the wedding?
7. M3: Yeah and our parents were just dancing.
8. FAC: And do you think the parents knew what you were doing all of the time, all of these potions and
9. M3. Yeah.
10. FAC: They did and they were okay with it?
11. M3: Yeah.
12. FAC: And who were you doing these potions with, were they people that you normally see?
13. M3: ((smiles)). Yeah and some people that I don't normally see.
14. FAC: So, would it be a member of your family or
15. M3: Friends and family.
16. FAC: Both. Yeah, you see them every time there is an event.

6. Final reflections

This policy brief has provided an overview of children's preferred narratives, transitions from photographs to stories, transitions between tellers and stories, some problems of telling. We have provided some examples from real classroom situations. Children's preference for narratives involving personal experiences and family, above all involving important personal feelings, is very clear. More general or abstract contents can only be enhanced by teachers and facilitators. Transitions, from photograph to stories as well as between tellers and stories, can be very different, and facilitators may guide them to enrich narratives and dialogue. Difficulties in narrating can be overcome on the one hand involving families in sharing narratives with children, on the other hand, accepting transgressions (which however do not seem frequent) without judgements.

The aim of this policy brief was to show to teacher and facilitators what they can expect for what concerns types of narratives and ways of narrating during SHARMED-type activities. It does not aim to be predictive, but to give a general idea about these issues, so that the interested professionals can be more prepared to what can happen when children participate in these activities.