Federica Ceccoli

MIGRANT CHILDREN ON STAGE: THEIR ROLE AS BILINGUAL BROKERS

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To my family
To Umberto and Ludovica, our sweet sunshine

Cara Federica,

L'alta volta ho aiutato un'amica di mia mamma ha tradurre in cinese, nella posta mi sentivo un po' preucupato perché ho paura di sbagliarmi e di non capire qualcosa ma alla fine sono riuscita.

Traduco spesso a mia mamma qualche volta anche alle maestre e i bambini di prima elementare mi sento felice di aiutarli.
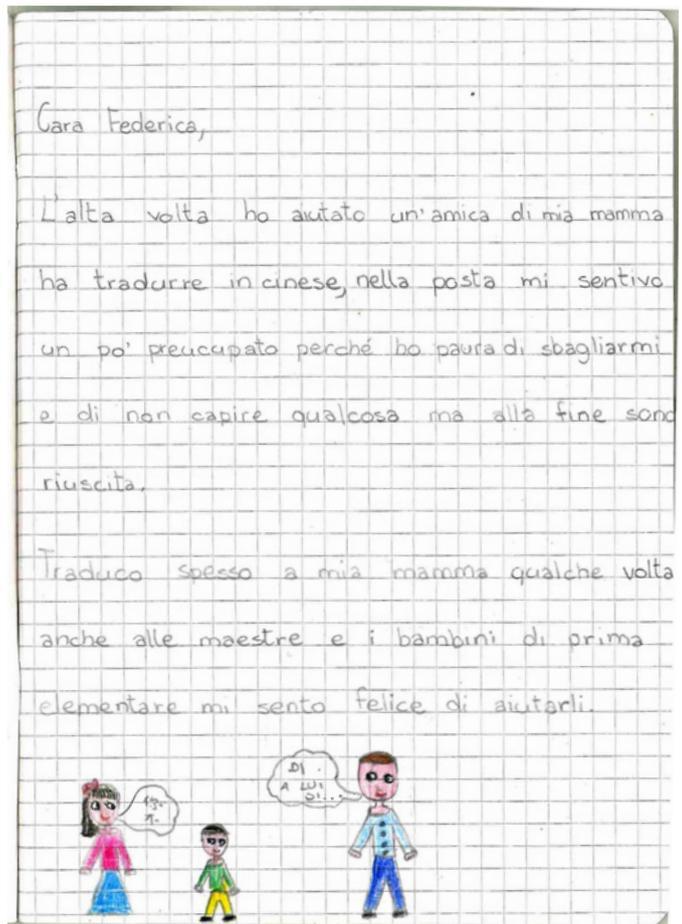
A diary page about the experience of a child language broker.

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INTRODUCTION

I. Background and context of the book

Over the last thirty years many different academic disciplines have shown an increasing interest in the study of non-professional interpreting and translation (NPIT), in particular that carried out by children and adolescents, and have started to analyse the practice from different angles and perspectives.

The phenomenon of natural forms of translation and interpreting has a long history and has always represented a valuable tool for the integration of migrant families in their host countries (Harris 1973). Very often, migrant children and adolescents are the family members who take on the role of linguistic and cultural mediators to help their parents, relatives, or friends to communicate with local people and public officials. Since they learn the societal language and become familiar with the host culture much faster than their older relatives, they are often asked to support them by translating or mediating. This process has laid the foundation for the phenomenon defined in the international literature as Child Language Brokering (hereafter CLB) which involves the interpreting and translation activities carried out by bilingual children or young people who translate or interpret on behalf of family members, peers and others who do not speak the local language.

Despite being a natural and frequent activity within migrant families, CLB has only recently gained academic interest, with the growing international migration flows. In Italian research and policy-making processes, in particular, the activity still remains relatively neglected.

Since the 1990s, when the studies on CLB began to develop systematically, various disciplines have focussed their attention on the multiple facets and outcomes of this phenomenon. Educational research (Tse 1995; Hall and Robinson 1999; Orellana *et al.* 2003a), developmental and social psychology (Buriel *et al.* 1998; Weisskirch and Alva 2002), and sociolinguistics (Angelelli 2010; 2016) are among the fields of research that have explored CLB patterns, feelings

and outcomes. Studies have applied both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and most of them have been conducted among the Latino or Asian communities in the US and the UK.

Notwithstanding the involvement of interpreting and translation activities and the fact that the study of CLB was first initiated by professors of translation studies (Harris and Sherwood 1978; Harris 1992), the interest in investigating CLB within the translation and interpreting studies (TIS) community has developed very slowly, mainly since the 2000s in Italy (Antonini 2014; Antonini *et al.* 2017; Pugliese 2017) and the UK (Hall 2004; Napier 2016; 2017).

For this reason, work in CLB has more often paid attention to the personal, cognitive, family and relational outcomes of this practice, rather than to the ability that migrant children have to combine their bilingualism with the skills necessary to translate or broker concepts.

Within this framework, and given the very recent attention of interpreting and translation studies to the practice, little is so far known about the conversational and interactional contribution of bilingual migrant children who broker for their family members and friends, and how this linguistic competence is used to establish relationships between their migrant families and the host culture and society. Additionally, only a few studies have to date explored the practice using methodologies other than self-reported surveys and retrospective reports. For example, observation and the analysis of authentic data have not been widely employed.

For all these reasons, the present research seeks to expand on and connect to previous investigations in CLB by applying a qualitative methodology that allows child language brokers to be observed. In particular, child language brokers' interactional contributions when they perform CLB will be examined. The aim is to produce new insight into child language brokers' agency and participation. The emphasis is also on the analysis of the contextual conditions that contribute to shape the performance and outcomes of this practice, as it does not occur in a social vacuum but in a situated context. Two specific research questions have driven the study and relate to child language brokers' contributions:

1. How do child language brokers participate in the interaction they broker?
2. How do child language brokers contribute to constructing the meaning of the interaction they broker?

These research questions explore CLB as achieved and performed by child language brokers. The purpose is to examine how they participate in the interaction they broker and to analyse how they contribute to constructing the meaning of

such an interaction. To this end, authentic child-language-brokered data were recorded and analysed relying on a sample of four meetings in which four migrant families wanted to enrol their children in the after-school activities organised by a youth centre in Forlì.

II. Justification and significance of this book

The purpose of this book is not prescriptive. It does not aim to promote or discourage ad hoc-interpreting carried out by children, but rather seeks to understand and describe it by relying on authentic data.

This book does not even seek to evaluate child language brokers' opinions and behaviours, but only to describe what they do in real-time brokering situations by means of an appropriate theoretical framework and methodology.

III. Structure of the book

Following this introduction that defines the scope of the study, the book is divided into six chapters.

Chapter One examines the characteristics of Italian migration flows and of the presence of migrants in Italy, with a focus on the different generations of immigrants and on immigrant children in Italian schools. It will also review the main policies that have been implemented to regulate immigration in Italy since the 1970s, describing, in particular, the functioning and delivery of community interpreting services and highlighting the need for stricter regulations that guarantee the provision of such services. Finally, the correlation between the lack of efficient mediation services and recourse to child language brokering activities will be investigated.

Chapter Two provides an excursus of the relevant literature published on CLB, in particular that relating to the role and functions of child language brokers, and on the feelings and outcomes related to this activity. It will begin by highlighting the relationship between migration movements, bilingualism and child language brokering. Next, the focus will be on CLB definitions and terminology, and on the development of CLB studies over the last forty years. Then, the people, settings, and documents involved in this practice will be considered, examining the consequences related to CLB, the perceived feelings reported by child language brokers, and their brokering strategies.

Finally, the controversial issues raised by CLB both in academia and for public institutions will be described.

In Chapter Three the conceptual frameworks are presented. The chapter will begin with an overview of the new sociology of childhood with a focus on children's agency and participation. The sociology of interaction and conversation analysis will then be described, in order to provide a framework for the analysis of CLB as a socially situated interactional event.

Chapter Four will consider the methodology implemented to carry out this work, focussing on the design and purposes of the survey tool used: real-life data. Additionally, the issues related to carrying out research with minors and the difficulties in collecting data will be described.

Chapters Five provides the analysis of the data collected. It will present a description of the contributions provided by child language brokers and of their status of participation at a turn-by-turn level, both when they broker and when they perform other interactional practices. The participation framework and the structural organisation of the interactions recorded will be reported together with the description of the participants. Child language brokered sequences will be examined by focussing on how and by whom child participation as language brokers is initiated, and on child language brokers' renditions. Other interactional and discursive practices will also be presented to suggest child language brokers' agency and responsibility in the interactions they broker.

Chapter Six returns to the previously analysed findings and discusses the results in relation to the aims and research questions.

The Conclusion will reference some limitations of the present research and point to further implications for future work on CLB.

MIGRATION FLOWS AND COMMUNITY INTERPRETING IN ITALY

1.1. Excursus of Italian migration flows

Italy had a long and well-established tradition of mass emigration movements, beginning with the unification of the country in 1861, which remained quite constant for over a century.

The reasons behind this mass exodus were primarily economic factors, such as the lack of jobs and low incomes caused both by weak agriculture and manufacturing sectors, and by the Italian government's inability to restore the national economy (Del Boca and Venturini 2003).

Italian emigration trends followed three main stages. During the first stage, from the mid to the end of the 19th century, nearly seven million Italians migrated to other richer European countries. During the second stage, from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1930s, large outflows of Italian migrants reached the USA, Brazil and Northern Europe. This emigration trend prevailed until the Italian fascist regime introduced anti-migration policies, causing migration flows to fall drastically. Restrictive legislation was introduced to limit emigration flows and foster returns. Emigration waves only resumed after World War II. In the third stage, which spanned from the 1940s to 1970s, more than five million Italians emigrated mainly to other European countries, such as France, Switzerland and West Germany (Centro studi e ricerche Idos 2011).

During the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, Italy was one of the leading European countries for emigration. As Del Boca and Venturini (2003: 3) reported, "between 1875 and 1928 emigration from Italy reached its peak with about 17 million emigrants abroad, between 1929 and 1985 about 9 million left the country."

It was during the 1970s that Italy started changing into a country of immigration, with an increase in foreign born residents from 143,838 in 1970 to half a million in 1985 (Del Boca and Venturini 2003).

Emigration flows began to decline sharply in the 1970s due to significant reforms that were implemented in Italy to foster voluntary return migration, alongside restrictive migration policies that were implemented in the main receiving countries, especially after the oil shock in 1973 (Zanfrini 2013). Italy, for the first time, experienced a positive migration balance. Additionally, the decades following the 1970s were characterised by major economic progress and Italy took its place among the fastest-moving industrial nations in Europe. In this context of economic productivity, immigration prevailed over emigration flows and the number of people moving to Italy increased considerably.

This trend reached its peak in the 21st century when Italy saw a shift in the number of resident foreigners, which rose from 3% in 2003 to 8,2% in 2014. By 2050 the number of immigrants living in Italy is expected to account for 18% of the whole population (IOM 2017 online[1]).

The recent growth of immigration to Italy relates to different factors. First, the restricted immigration policies implemented in northern and western European countries (such as France, Germany, and Belgium) have gradually diverted the migration flows to replacement destinations, such as Italy, Spain, and Portugal (Zanfrini 2004: 51). Second, Italy's strategic position in the Mediterranean and its growing prosperity in the 1970s and 1980s further encouraged the arrival of foreigners, and contributed to Italy's role as one of the main receivers of labour migrations (King 1993; Zanfrini 2007). The Italian labour market has attracted a high number of migrants for the following reasons (Zanfrini 2007): (i) a growing need for unskilled and non-qualified workers; (ii) a rising trend of hiring migrants to perform low-paying jobs that are usually carried out only by other migrant workers (a process that risks to strengthen migrants' job segregation and wage discrimination); (iii) a weak welfare system that has led Italian families to resort to migrant house-help workers; (iv) the expansion of an underground economy that employs migrants irregularly (Reyneri 2003). All these factors have determined a growing presence of migrant workers in the Italian labour market and immigrant labour has played a key role for the Italian economic sector.

Additionally, the increasing number of foreign-born residents is also due to recent family reunifications and to the growing presence of children born in Italy to immigrant families (IOM 2017 online). The limited use of the Italian language outside the national borders has also contributed to the permanent settlement of migrant families and to the development of the second generations (Zanfrini 2009: 544).

All these factors have led to the development of the "Mediterranean model of immigration" (Baldwin-Edwards 1997; Pugliese 2000; Ricci *et al.* 2004), which could be added to the three immigration models originally conceived by Castles and Miller (1993). The first of these three models is the differentialist or temporary or exclusionary model (typical of Germany), which completely excludes immigrants from the dominant population. This model considers immigration as a means to satisfy short-term labour demands and migrants are not expected to settle in the host country (Freeman 1995). The second is the assimilationist model (typical of France) that allows the inclusion of the foreign minority communities into the dominant community. Migrants are expected to accept and shares the values and culture of the host country. The third is the the multiculturalist model (typical of Great Britain and Sweden), which partly integrates minorities while preserving cultural heterogeneity and equality "as marks of a diverse heritage" (Simon 2012). The Mediterranean model of immigration was conceived and added to these three models to define the new immigration patterns affecting Southern European countries of new immigration, such as Italy, and contributing to changing them into the main target countries of immigration flows.

The latest migration trends shaping Europe in the 21st century have confirmed the new key role of the Italian peninsula within the international migratory scene.

1.2. Review of Italian immigration laws

As noted earlier, since the 1970s, Italy has changed from a country of mass emigration into one of the main receivers of immigration flows. This is one of the reasons why, until the 1980s, the only policy regulating immigration was the Royal Decree-Law, which came into force in 1931, requiring foreigners to register their presence with the Italian authorities. It was only in 1986 that the first law on immigration (Law 943/1986) was approved with the aim to regulate immigrants' access to the Italian labour market and to control the presence of irregularly employed migrants.

During the following decade, the phenomenon of immigration started gaining more visibility and social tensions and inequalities increased. In 1991, Law 39/1991, the so called Martelli Law, was passed. This law aimed at regulating, above all, (i) the immigration flows and the legal entries, (ii) the renewal of residence permits, (iii) the protection of displaced persons and refugees, and (iv) job opportunities for immigrants.

However, this law did not regulate the integration and reception processes of immigrants and in 1998 Italy came under pressure to limit its illegal immigration flows in order to become a full member of the Schengen Agreement. On 6th March, 1998, Law 40/1998 (the Turco-Napolitano law) was adopted. Law 40/1998 was designed to further restrict illegal immigration, to implement measures to better integrate legal foreigners, to better manage immigrant labour, and to regulate immigration flows on the basis of an appropriate quota established by the government. The Turco-Napolitano Law also included the procedures for immigrants to become legal residents.

Despite the restrictive measures implemented with Law 40/1998, in 2002 the right-wing government led by Silvio Berlusconi approved a new Law 189/2002, the Bossi-Fini law, which included stricter immigration regulations that triggered intense debate across Italy. This law introduced mandatory employment contracts for immigrants before they enter Italy, it strengthened immigrant quotas, and set harsher illegal immigration deportation practices.

In 2009, the Italian government continued its rigid approach towards immigration flows by passing Law 94/2009, the "Maroni law", which introduced a set of severe security regulations. This law required immigrants to sign an integration agreement with the Italian state when applying for their permit of stay. By signing the agreement, the applicants agreed to earn 30 credits within two years in order to have their permit of stay renewed. To obtain these credits, the applicants had to reach an A2-level mastery of Italian and to comply with a set of rules in line with the charter of the values of citizenship and integration. These credits could be curtailed if the applicants were accused of crimes. The "Maroni law" also introduced stricter punishments for illegal entries and it authorised the organisation of city patrols to guarantee public safety. This law was highly criticized by the European Union.

In the following years, Italy faced considerable migration challenges caused by the high number of immigrants and asylum-seekers reaching Italy from Africa by crossing the Mediterranean Sea. This surge in the number of arrivals is due to the European migrant crisis, a term used to describe the rising presence of asylum seekers and economic migrants reaching the European Union. In order to manage the overall reception system, Italy responded to this emergency situation by adopting emergency decrees. In April 2017, in order to provide a quick solution to the growing number of arrivals, the Italian Parliament approved Law 46/2017, the Minniti-Orlando law, with the purpose of curtailing illegal immigration. This law established several new immigration and asylum control measures. It aimed at accelerating forced returns through

bilateral agreements with the migrant's home countries and provided funds for Assisted Voluntary Returns. It also sought to increase the number of centres for identification and expulsion, and to speed up court decisions about asylum procedures.

Since the beginning of the European migrant crisis, Italy has tried to cooperate with the other European member states to formulate a common strategy with both the countries of origin and transit to better manage the incoming migration flows. However, mainly due to the divergent national attitudes and interests, a common European migration strategy is yet to be implemented and the legislation on immigration still remains weak (Cesareo 2013).

Likewise, Italy struggles to find the adequate means to fully integrate its foreign population and to benefit from the cultural variety and richness that they bring to society. Immigration has always been considered as a problem or as a temporary or emergency situation and so far migration policies have had the goal to guarantee security for Italian citizens and to fight against illegal migration (Caneva 2014). Adequate laws targeted to a fully integration of migrant people are not mature yet.

1.3. Foreign presence in Italy

The strategic position of the Italian peninsula in the Mediterranean Sea and its socio-economic development are among the main reasons for which a growing number of both temporary and permanent migrants have been reaching its costs every year since the 1970s.

As of 1 January 2021, there are 5,035,643 foreign nationals legally residing in Italy, which is equivalent to 8.4% of the entire population (Istat 2021 online[2]).

The largest foreign-born community comes from Romania, accounting for 22.9% of the total number of foreign residents, followed by Albania (8.5%) and Morocco (8.1%). Chinese and Ukrainian immigrants ranked fourth and fifth among the largest immigrant minorities with respectively 5.7% and 4.6% (Statistiche demografiche 2019 online[3]).

1.4. Immigrant children in Italian schools

The recent increase in foreign-born residents in Italy is strictly related to the high birth rates within migrant families. According to the official figures pro-

vided by the ISMU foundation (ISMU online[4]), the number of foreign resident minors in Italy increased from 288,950 in 2002 to 1,038,046 in 2017.

This increasing presence of foreign minors is also seen in the greater percentage of foreign students enrolled in Italian schools.

As reported by the Ministry of Education, University, and Research, in the 2001/2002 school year the number of non-Italian students was 196,414 (2.2% of the total population), it increased to 802,844 in the 2013/2014 school year (8% of the total population), and to 826,091 in the 2016/2017 school year (9.4% of the total population) (Miur 2019 online[5]).

In the 2018/2019 school year Emilia Romagna hosted the largest number of foreign students (16.4%), followed by Lombardy (15.5%). In particular, 50% of the total number of foreign students were students with foreign citizenship but born in Italy.

The three main nationalities were Romanian, Albanian, and Moroccan. The number of females was slightly lower than the male component (respectively 48% and 52%).

This high number of foreign pupils in Italian schools is also related to the right of foreign children, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and children of asylum seekers, to equal education services as the Italian children.

Access to the Italian school system for migrant students is regulated by Article 38 of the Legislative Decree no. 286/1998, also called Consolidated Act on Immigration, which states that foreign children in Italy are guaranteed the education services and assistance they need and they are subject to the same compulsory education until the age of 16, as their Italian peers. It also promotes the linguistic and cultural differences within school communities as an added value for mutual respect and cultural enrichment. With this decree, the Italian state aims to guarantee each child's right to be educated and to enjoy a level of education that corresponds to his/her own ability.

Examining the school career of migrant students living in Italy, the statistics provided by the Italian Ministry of Education, University, and Research (Miur statistics online) show that despite the recent improvement in their school success, academic failure and delays persist among foreign pupils, who mainly attend technical and vocational institutes. The reasons for this choice are twofold. First of all, migrant families consider vocational schools as a better investment for future job opportunities. Second of all, Italian teachers often encourage foreing pupils to opt for short-term school careers instead of long-term educational paths, thus leading them to enrol in vocational institutes (Minello and Barban 2012).

1.5. Generations of immigrants

The migrant population can be divided into different migration statuses: first-generation immigrants, who are foreign-born; first-and-a-half-generation immigrants, who usually arrive in the host country during childhood or adolescence; and second-generation immigrants, who are usually born in the country where they reside with at least one foreign-born parent (Tassello 1987; Ambrosini 2005). These generations of immigrants face different challenges when dealing with integration and social inclusion in Italian culture and society.

Migrant adults, who are usually the first generation of immigrants, face greater challenges in becoming part of the new society and learning the host country language than their children, who are usually the first-and-a-half or second-generation of immigrants, and who integrate more easily mainly because of compulsory education.

Adult immigrants are usually employed as unskilled workers with lower social status in the agriculture and building sectors (Zanfrini 2009; Rapporto OIM 2011). According to the Twenty-third Italian Report on Migrations (IOM 2017 online) 76.6% of migrants are blue collars (compared to 30.7% of Italians) and only 8.6% of foreign employees are office workers (compared to 35.9% of Italians). Managers and executives do not reach 1% and only 2.5% (0.3% of all employed migrants) are entrepreneurs.

Often their jobs do not require great communicative skills, so they generally only develop the basic linguistic competencies that are necessary for survival (Demetrio and Favaro 1997). The workplace also represents one of the few opportunities they have to be socially included, but the relations they establish in this environment are often too weak to contribute to their social and linguistic integration (Ambrosini 2014). Sometimes immigrant adults themselves do not want to learn Italian since they perceive it as the language of duties and administrative burdens. Safeguarding and keeping their own native language represents a bond and a sign of loyalty towards their communities of origin and this consideration holds all the more true for those refugees who consider their native languages as a symbol of continuity and as a guarantee of their going back to their home country (Balsamo 2003: 41). Likewise, their poor command of Italian prevents these people from expressing their opinions and judgments and from having access to information and public services (*ibid.*).

The situation is different for their children who generally integrate into the new society more rapidly thanks to peer socialization and education. The children of migrant families can either be born in their parents' country of origin

and move to a new country usually in their early childhood, or they can be born in the host country where their family has migrated. Very often, both these groups are referred to as belonging to the second generation of immigrants.

However, given the different outcomes that the age of their arrival can produce on their adaptation and integration processes, researchers have identified three subcategories within the second generation of immigrants (Portes and Rumbaut 2005).

In particular:

- the 1.75 generation, which includes children who migrate to the host country in their early childhood (from 0 to 5 years old);
- the 1.5 generation, which includes children who migrate to the host country when they are between 6 and 12 years old;
- the 1.25 generation, which includes children who migrate to the host country when they are between 13 and 17 years old;

Referring to the Italian experience, Favaro (2004) identified two main subgroups of second generation immigrants. The first subgroup refers to the children born in Italy from migrant families or who migrated to Italy during their early childhood. These children experience their socialization and acculturation processes in Italy and they thus face fewer difficulties integrating with the Italian culture and society. The second subgroup includes those children who arrived in Italy either as non-accompanied minors or following family reunifications when they were 12 years old or older. These adolescents usually face greater difficulties in their social, linguistic, and educational integration processes.

Zanfrini (2007: 47) adopted the categories established by Rosoli and Cavallaro (1987) who identified three groups of second generation immigrants: (i) the native or primary second generation (*seconda generazione nativa o primaria*), including those who were born in the host country and who have developed strong relationships with its people and culture since birth; (ii) improper second generation (*seconda generazione impropria*), including those who were born in a country from which they migrated when they were between 1 and 6 years old, thus beginning their schooling in the host country; (iii) spurious second generation (*seconda generazione spuria*), including those who arrived in the host country when they were between 11 and 15 years old, thus interrupting their schooling or after completing it in their country of origin.

Despite these differences within the category of second generation immigrants, for most of these children the issue of integration is handled differently than their parents.

Since they were born in Italy, or moved to this country at compulsory school age, they tend to learn the language much more easily, manage to establish stronger social relations and their integration is usually less complicated.

Nonetheless, they have to take on multiple burdens and deal with conflict situations as well. One of the main issues they have to face, for instance, is related to their identity, which is divided between two communities having different values, traditions and languages. Parents very often require their children to preserve their national identities, but at the same time they ask them to be more integrated in the host society and to obtain good academic results (Balsamo 2003: 42). Similarly, given that a migrant child's positive integration can result in a positive acculturation processes for the migrant family as a whole, the host society, especially through its education system, encourages these children to be better integrated.

These contradictory demands may lead to conflict situations for immigrant children who often struggle to build their own status (Ambrosini 2014).

Furthermore, their desire for emancipation often clashes with their family's cultural traditions and integration choices. They may not agree with the approaches adopted by their parents, and may not approve of the dangerous and exhausting jobs their parents have to carry out in order to earn an income and play a role in the foreign country (De Marie and Molina 2004: XV).

Despite these elements of discontinuity, the socialization of immigrant children represents a fundamental element for the interethnic relations of the whole migrant family. Since second-generation immigrants speak Italian and grow into the Italian culture, they often provide a positive contribution to the relationship between their family members and the host society, thus reducing their parents' exclusion and helping them to become citizens of the new country (Ambrosini and Molina 2004: 2).

1.6. Community interpreting services

In light of the background described above, the increasing and changing patterns of migration flows characterising Europe in the 21st century have led to the development of multilingual and intercultural societies.

To describe these new patterns of immigration and their societal outcomes, Vertovec (2007) adopted the term superdiversity. Superdiversity refers to the "dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differ-

entiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade" (Vertovec 2007: 1024). The variables that the author mentioned and that contribute to the development of super diverse societies are, *inter alia*, the different countries of origin, the migration channels used, the legal status of the migrants, the human capital of the migrants and their access to employment (Vertovec 2007: 1049). The interplay of all these factors has shaped the social and economic relations that characterise the multicultural societies of the 21st century.

The emergence of multicultural and multilingual societies has posed new challenges to public institutions and service providers, which need to interact and communicate with people from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

The lack of a shared language between the migrant population and the host community has triggered the need for community interpreting services, which could facilitate migrants' access to public services.

Community interpreting can be defined as:

> interpreting in institutional settings of a given society in which public service providers and individual clients do not speak the same language […] community interpreting facilitates communication within a social entity (society) that includes culturally different sub-groups. Hence, the qualifier 'community' refers to both the (mainstream) society as such and its constituent sub-community (ethnic or indigenous community, linguistic minority, etc.). (Pöchhacker 1999: 126-127)

Community interpreting is provided in settings that range from medical consultations to courtroom cases, police interviews, and immigration and educational related contexts. In all these settings community interpreting provides migrants with the right to be treated as "relevant others; through interpreting services, migrants are 'literally being addressed or hailed in their (language) difference and it is arguably easier to invest in the subject-position of intercultural contact if the host society is addressing you as a subject with a specific identity than if you are treated as a generic other whose language and cultural differences are simply ignored' (Cronin 2006: 63)" (Baraldi and Gavioli 2010: 142).

However, despite the importance of community interpreting, the implementation of integration policies that affect the provision of such linguistic services is not equally guaranteed in all European countries. A variety of elements may influence a government's choice to implement specific linguistic policies. In particular, Ozolins (2010: 194) identified four macro and universal factors that affect national and local responses to the need for public service

interpreting. The first factor is the presence of increasing linguistic diversity, which requires a growing number of linguistic professionals speaking minority languages; the second factor is related to the reliance on public sector funding and budgets, which influences the quality of the services provided; the third factor regards the presence of standards and practices that are institution-led rather than profession-led; and the forth factor is associated with the cross-sector interpreting needs that differ from the traditional sector-specific policy development.

These four factors apply in all countries and have a considerable effect on the degrees to which community interpreting services are implemented and guaranteed. Generally, the countries with a more established immigration history usually promote and enforce comprehensive linguistic services, whereas the countries with more recent immigration flows, such as Italy, still struggle to ensure adequate community interpreting services, as the next section will describe in detail.

1.7. Linguistic and cultural mediation in Italy

In Italy, the growing immigration flows that started in the 1970s have led to increasing requests of linguistic and cultural mediation services, as they are called in Italy, which could help migrants obtain equal access to public services.

Initially, these services were organised and provided by NGOs, local organisations, and private charity institutions, such as the Caritas Catholic organisation (Rudvin and Tomassini 2008). It was only in 1996, with Legislative Decree 286/96 (*Testo Unico sull'Immigrazione*), that the role of cultural and linguistic mediators was officially acknowledged (*ibid.*: 248).

After this initial recognition of the role, other specific legislative decrees were approved. Legislative decree no. 286 of 1998, for example, provided for the presence of cultural and linguistic mediators to facilitate interactions with non-Italian families in the school setting. The National Plan for Integration and Security, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 10th June 2010, supported the need of integrating foreigners into the Italian job market by relying on the assistance of cultural and linguistic mediators. Legislative decree no. 7 of 2006 included the provision of professional and specialized mediators to assist migrants in healthcare situations. Legislative decree no. 32 of 2014 implemented the European directive 2010/64/UE regarding the right of migrants to have interpreting and translation services in legal proceedings.

At a regional level, the role, skills, and competencies of linguistic and cultural mediators are officially established and recognised by means of regional laws in the following ten regions: Tuscany, Abruzzo, Campania, Emilia Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Liguria, Piemonte, Trentino Alto Adige, and Val d'Aosta.

The presence of these national and local regulations that acknowledge interpreting as a right in public service settings notwithstanding, a unique national regulatory framework in terms of linguistic and cultural mediation services is still needed and, as a consequence, community interpreting is not always available in institutional contexts. It often is the exception rather than the rule (Antonini 2016).

In addition, insufficient linguistic services are also due to economic reasons and to the absence of an appropriate recognition of the profession.

In Italy, the funding for the provision of these services is granted by both national and local governments. However, very often, it does not meet all the linguistic requests for each specific setting, and the budgets granted are mainly used to pay professional mediators to translate informational materials, such as brochures or leaflets. Apart from few exceptions and despite the increasing visibility of the need for professional mediators, this situation still persists in most Italian regions.

Given this situation, one of the solutions adopted by migrant families and public officials alike to overcome the cultural and linguistic barriers is the use of ad-hoc interpreting practices, which is the "spontaneous use (and sometimes abuse) of bilingual employees, family members or other available individuals to provide interpreting services" (Meyer *et al.* 2010: 164).

A telling example of ad-hoc interpreting is represented by the linguistic and cultural assistance provided by migrant children.

Since migrant adolescents and children often become integrated into the new society more rapidly than their parents thanks to peer socialization and education, when their family members have to communicate with representatives of public institutions, they often rely on their children for help. In so doing, they contribute to the phenomenon defined as child language brokering (Tse 1996a; 1996b; Orellana *et al.* 2003a; Antonini 2014; 2015), where they contribute not only to the well-being of their families, but also to a better functioning host society (Bauer 2010).

However, as Antonini (2016) aptly argued, despite the key role played by these children both for migrant families and host societies, their help is often invisible and not recognised. There is a clear lack of laws mentioning or

acknowledging the existence of child language brokering. Only a bulletin on the integration of foreign students published in 1989[6] and the guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign students published by the Ministry of Education, University, and Research in 2014 (Miur 2014 online[7]) made a direct reference to this practice, by encouraging those students who have different ethnic origins or linguistic backgrounds to assist their newly-arrived peers who still struggle with Italian. Given this background, this book aims to explore this still invisible phenomenon by giving voice to migrant bilingual by documenting the children' opinions and beliefs about this activity, and by highlighting their valuable contribution to the success of the interactions they broker.

CHILD LANGUAGE BROKERING: WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR

2.1. Immigration, bilingualism and child language brokering: a fil rouge

The migration flows and population movements that have been taking place in Europe over the last twenty years have largely contributed to the presence of a wider multilingual landscape in which the minority or heritage languages spoken by the migrant people interact with the dominant languages of the host countries.

The contact between different languages is a natural consequence of migration flows, that lead migrants to learn the societal language and to become familiar with the culture of the country where they have moved.

The acquisition process of a new and different language from that spoken by the communities of origin is strictly intertwined with the increased number of people who are able to understand and/or speak two or more languages, thus giving rise to growing bilingual communities or speakers within European countries (Meyer and Apfelbaum 2010).

When referring to bilingual speakers or to bilingualism, providing a unique and shared definition is a challenging task, since various researchers have reported different interpretations, to the point that Haugen (1973) argued that the term bilingualism had become virtually meaningless.

The concept of bilingualism began to broaden at the beginning of the 20th century when it started to be considered as the "the practice of alternately using two languages" (Weinreich 1953: 1), irrespective of the degree of mastery of each language. As Wei (2000: 5) argued, "many people believe that, to be described as bilingual, the person has to have equal proficiency in both languages. The fact is, however, that balanced bilinguals of this kind are a rarity." This is one of the reasons why "*bilingual* has thus come to mean knowing and using two autonomous languages. The term *multilingual* is often used to mean knowing and using more than two languages" (García and Wei 2014: 11).

For the purposes of this book, the concept of bilingualism will be interpreted drawing on Valdés and Figueroa's interpretation, according to which:

> bilingualism can be defined in its broadest terms as a common human condition in which an individual possesses more than one language competence. Expanding further on this notion, it can be said that bilingualism is a condition that makes it possible for an individual to function, at some level, in more than one language. Again, the key to this very broad and inclusionary definition is the descriptor more than one. (Valdés and Figueroa 1994: 8)

Following this perspective, the term bilingualism refers to the practice of using more than one language, and it highlights the condition of language contact and its consequences in a communicative event (Weinreich 1953). Bilinguals are thus considered as all those individuals who are able to communicate in two languages, irrespective of their levels of proficiency in each language.

In addition to the various definitions that have been offered, multiple subcategories have also been identified to provide a better outline of this complex phenomenon.

Wei (2000: 5) identified four key variables to define a person as bilingual: age and manner of acquisition; proficiency level in specific languages; domains of language use; self-identification and attitude. Based on these factors, more than forty subcategories were used to describe the different varieties of bilinguals (e.g. achieved bilingual, balanced bilingual, recessive bilingual).

For the purposes of this research study, the two groups of circumstantial or natural bilinguals (who become bilinguals because of the circumstances in which they live), and elective or academic or elite bilinguals (who become bilinguals by choice) will be taken into consideration (Valdés and Figueora 1994: 11). These two categories differ because of the motivations that lay behind the acquisition of two or more languages and the circumstances that brought about the bilingualism.

Migrant people usually belong to the category of circumstantial bilinguals (Valdés 1992), since their need to acquire the societal language of the country where they migrated is imposed by external circumstances. Migration movements are often among the causes that lead to the contact between the language of the country of origin (L1) and the language of the host country (L2), thus urging migrant people to become bilingual in order to fully participate and integrate in the new society.

Circumstantial bilinguals may develop different levels of language proficiency depending on multiple factors that affect the acquisition process of

the new dominant language, such as their age, education, occupation and cultural beliefs.

First generation bilinguals usually arrive in the host country in adulthood and remain dominant in the language of their country of origin. In contrast, second generation bilinguals were born in the host country and they thus tend to develop better linguistic skills in the societal language.

In light of this, parents and other adult family members in migrant families usually face greater difficulties in their linguistic integration process than their children.

Migrant parents tend to speak their native languages at home, in the neighbourhood where they have settled, and at work. As Demetrio and Favaro (1992: 99) maintain, the kind of occupation generally found by migrant adults, who are mainly employed as blue collars (Zanfrini 2013), does not require high linguistic proficiency thus discouraging the learning of the societal language. The desire and the need of migrant adults to learn the new language also play a key role in their language acquisition process. Some migrant adults believe that safeguarding their native language is the only strategy to keep a close relationship with their country of origin and they are not interested in learning the dominant language. Others realise that learning the societal language is a decisive factor for their integration and assimilation in the new country (Demetrio and Favaro 1992). Additionally, migrant mothers, who in specific linguistic and ethnic communities tend to stay at home, may attain a limited competence in the language of their new country of residence (Rubin *et al.* 2008).

The background can be different for migrant children, who undergo heterogeneous experiences and whose level of bilingualism may vary considerably. Children who arrive in the new country during adolescence may be dominant in their heritage language, whereas those who arrive during childhood may shift quickly to the host language in a similar way to children who were born in the host countries from migrant families. They may all develop an academic vocabulary in the dominant language of the country where they moved to, while building a home-life vocabulary in the heritage language of their families (Weisskirch 2017: 10).

Despite this diverse array of situations, migrant children often learn the societal language at school and integrate with their peers at a faster pace than their parents. They engage in an acculturation process whereby the language and culture of the new society intertwine with the language and culture of the country of origin of their families, so developing a stronger bilingual and bicultural identity. Migrant children have sufficient bilingual competence to help those family members, often their parents, who still struggle to speak and

understand the societal language, and these skills are crucial for the integration process of the whole migrant family (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001; Weisskirch 2005).

In order to facilitate their parents' social and cultural inclusion and to allow them to establish relationships with local people and monolingual officials, migrant children self-select or are selected to serve as cultural and linguistic brokers. In so doing they give rise to the phenomenon defined as Child Language Brokering (hereafter CLB), a practice that refers to the linguistic and cultural mediation activities performed by children and adolescents belonging to linguistic minorities.

2.2. The practice of CLB: definitions and terminology

Children acting as language brokers engage in multiple and complex tasks, such as, for example, mediating face-to-face interactions, translating written documents, but also acting as advocates for the migrant family or as intermediaries in sociocultural communications (Shannon 1990; De Abreu and O'Dell 2017).

When CLB takes place, there are usually three parties involved in the interaction: two monolingual speakers of different languages (usually one speaker of the dominant language and one relative of the language broker speaking his/her own heritage language) and a child/adolescent acting as language broker who enables the communication between the other two speakers. It may also happen that the communication is dyadic (Orellana *et al.* 2003b), such as, for example, when a child translates or paraphrases texts for his/her parents, or facilitates the communication between a speaker and a cultural artefact, practice or norm (Orellana *et al.* 2003a).

Bolden defined language brokering very clearly, by arguing that:

> to broker a (potential) problem of understanding is to act as an intermediary between the other participants (i.e. between the speaker of the problematic talk and his/her addressed recipient) and to attempt to resolve the problem in a way that would expose and bridge participants' divergent linguistic and/or cultural expertise – for instance, by providing a translation or a simplified paraphrase of the problematic talk. (Bolden 2012: 99)

Given the non-professional nature of this practice, CLB refers to those non-professional interpreting and translation activities (NPIT, Lörscher 2005) performed by children and adolescents.

NPIT is a recent strand of research that started to be investigated as an independent object of study about 50 years ago, when Harris (1973) as well as Harris and Sherwood (1978) used the expression "natural translation" to define and shed light on "the translation done in everyday circumstances by bilinguals who have no special training for it" (Harris 1976: 96). However, the term non-professional interpreting and translation "is only one of a plethora of terms used by various scholars from different perspectives and vantage points" (Antonini *et al.* 2017).

In particular, the term CLB was coined by Tse in 1995, following the anthropologist Wolf's (1956) conceptualization of the practice of cultural brokering. He defined as brokering those activities carried out by "groups of people who mediate between community-oriented groups in communities and nation-oriented groups which operate through national institutions" (Wolf 1956: 1075). In his view, cultural brokers are able to establish relationships between local and national communities and to create bonds between the main culture of a pluralistic society and its different subcultures (Robbins 1996).

Tse (1995) and, shortly after, Hall and Sham (1998) adopted the term child language brokers to specifically indicate those children born of migrant families who translate and interpret for their family members, friends, and other people belonging to their same linguistic communities. As Tse specified, they "are our language minority students who interpret and translate between parents, teachers, friends, neighbours, and many others" (Tse 1995: 16). The term child language brokering was thereby chosen with the purpose of underlining the role of these children as intermediaries between two parties who do not share the same language or the same culture and who "influence the contents and nature of the messages they convey, and ultimately affect the perceptions and decisions of the agents for whom they act" (Tse 1995: 180).

Other expressions have subsequently been implemented to refer to the complexity of this practice. Orellana *et al.* (2003a: 15) developed the term "para-phraser" to indicate "a play on the Spanish word para and its English translation (for), to name what children do when they phrase things for other, and in order to accomplish social goals", while Valdés (2003) referred to these children as "family interpreters", thus highlighting the collaborative nature of this activity among family members. Jones and Trickett (2005: 407) opted for the expression "culture brokers", because they considered translation as a task requiring, among other abilities, the communication of cultural knowledge. The term culture brokers acknowledges the relationship between language and culture and suggests how these children mediate not only between two languages but also between their parent culture and the culture of the host society. In 2015,

Antonini provided a definition of child language brokering specifying that the practice includes those

> interpreting and translation activities carried out by bilingual children who mediate linguistically and culturally in formal and informal contexts and domains for their family, friends as well as members of the linguistic community to which they belong. (Antonini 2015: 48)

All these designations shed light on the multiple activities that migrant children perform in order to: (1) develop their own social and linguistic skills, (2) adapt to the setting where they are asked to broker, and (3) establish relationships and facilitate communication between their migrant family members and the societal language speakers.

Child language brokers manage to understand, interpret, translate and handle intercultural relations between two parties who do not share the same values or expectations (Tse 1996a; Buriel *et al.* 1998; Trickett *et al.* 2010; Antonini *et al.* 2017). As Hall and Robinson (1999) pointed out, the task they carry out is neither neutral nor formal, but represents a real intercultural transaction since they have to convey meanings, solve problems and negotiate concepts. When child language brokers mediate and translate, they take on the responsibility to manage the interaction and to explain to the other family members how the host culture and society work, thus constructing versions of the new world for both themselves and the whole family (Orellana 2010).

In view of all the different terms adopted to describe the complex processes involved in the non-professional interpreting and translation activities performed by children and adolescents, I have decided to adopt the term child language brokers. The rationale for this choice is twofold: it highlights the young age of the non-professional interpreters and translators who are the object of this research (and who are underage children) and it stresses the concept of brokering, which includes both the translation and interpreting activities and the interactional and cultural responsibilities engendered by this practice (Antonini 2017: 316).

2.3. Child language brokers: not merely bilinguals but gifted children

The activities performed by child language brokers when they assist their families linguistically and culturally are multifaceted and complex, and often re-

quire specific skills that go beyond the ability to speak and/or understand two or more languages.

Despite the potential correlation between bilingualism and child language brokering, language brokering does not merely imply being bilingual. Bilingualism deals with the ability to learn, understand and speak two or more languages. Language brokering deals with the practice of mediating, translating and/or interpreting from one language into another.

Some scholars (e.g. Harris 1976; Harris and Sherwood 1978) maintain that the two phenomena are naturally related, since being able to interpret is a natural consequence of bilingualism. In contrast, other researchers (Orellana 1987; Valdés *et al.* 2003; Valero-Garcés 2008) have highlighted the different and specific skills that are required when mediating, interpreting and/or translating that need to be developed and trained.

The natural relationship between bilingualism and translation was first identified by Harris (1973; 1976), who recognized the innate abilities of bilingual or multilingual speakers to interpret and translate and to observe the cognitive and linguistic skills that "natural" interpreters implement. He argued that natural translation is produced by individuals who have not received any formal training in translation and who rely on a set of natural linguistic skills. In his view, all people who acquire a second language can translate in all cultures, languages and registers (Harris and Sherwood 1978). Lörscher (1991) shared this perspective by talking about a "rudimentary" ability to mediate that every bilingual or multilingual speaker has.

Other scholars hold divergent views. Bell (1997: 95) suggested that "the ability to use two or more languages, even at a high standard, is no guarantee of a person's capacity to work between them or to operate as an interpreter or translator for sustained periods of time or at reasonable speeds." Neubert (1985) claimed that, while anyone can learn two or more languages, only intelligent people can become interpreters, thus stressing the specific cognitive and metalinguistic skills required by interpreting. Toury (1986) partially challenged the assumption of translation as an innate skill by developing the concept of translation competence. He maintains that bilingualism is not a sufficient condition to guarantee translation competence, which is strictly related to interlingualism, i.e. the ability to establish relationships between the similarities and differences of the two languages. Toury acknowledges the relationship between bilingualism and translation, however he also highlights the presence of other factors that are essential to the predisposition to translation skills, such as the context, the social motivations and the social functions of translation. Similarly, Gile (1995)

argued that natural and innate aptitudes are necessary to become translators or interpreters, and that bilinguals need training to develop the interpreting skills and to fully unlock their potential.

Other researchers (Weber 1984; Valdés *et al.* 2003) also suggested that those bilinguals who exhibit natural translation and interpreting skills display high performance in what Treffinger and Renzulli (1986) termed "gifted behaviours". More specifically, Valdés *et al.* (2003) identified giftedness from cultural and linguistic perspectives in their ethnographic study with 25 students who accomplished some interpreting assignments. At the end of the study, these students were able to report information accurately and to perform complicated activities that are rarely found in bilingual children with no experience in interpreting or translating. As Angelelli (2000) suggested, the abilities exhibited and performed by these language brokers may fall into Sternberg's definition of human intelligence, which is a "mental activity directed toward purposive adaptation to, selection and shaping of, real-world environments relevant to one's life" (Sternberg 1985: 45). Sternberg (1985; 1986; 1988) developed a triarchic theory of intelligence that included three sub-theories: the componential sub-theory, the experiential sub-theory, and the contextual sub-theory. The componential sub-theory is composed of three information-processing components: the metacomponents used to plan and monitor a task, the performance components used to execute a task, and the knowledge-acquisition components used to learn new things. All these components can be observed in CLB activities, which include problem-solving and decision making processes (metacomponents), the construction of plans and relations (performance components), and the encoding of new information and the assessment of behavioural and translation processes (knowledge-acquisition components). The experiential sub-theory and the contextual sub-theory could also be applied to language brokers. The experiential sub-theory implies the ability to automatize information processing, while the contextual sub-theory entails the ability to adapt or shape to different environments. As Valdés *et al.* (2003) pointed out, all these intellectual skills may be developed by child language brokers.

In view of these different positions, it is important to acknowledge that even though bilingualism is a precondition in order to broker between two or more languages or cultures, and even though assisting other people linguistically can be a natural activity that bilinguals usually perform, the success of this practice and its consequences on both the participants and the whole interaction are linked to specific skills that bilinguals develop or train.

Having said that, the study of natural translations (Harris 1992), especially performed by family members and children, should be pursued both to observe

and value the help that these non-professional interpreters provide to support the family, and to provide useful tools for the training of professional interpreters and translators.

2.4. Child Language Brokering as a field of research: three main stages

Studies on child language brokering belong to a quite young area of research that combines works from different disciplines and whose development can be subdivided into different stages, as reported by Harris (2008).

CLB studies began with the publication of work by Harris (1973) and Harris and Sherwood (1978) on the concept of natural translation. In the preceding decades, child language brokering had been examined by sociolinguistic and educational scholars only as a sub-component of bilingualism, and not as the main research topic. Harris notes that "the precursors made valuable and sometimes copious observations, [but] they did not realise the significance of what they were observing" (Harris 2008). In 1978, Harris and Sherwood investigated non-professional translation and interpreting studies in their own right. They defined the translation activities carried out by family members and friends as "natural translation" or "naïve translation" (Harris 1992: 1-2), and they argued that data on translation studies "should come primarily from natural translation rather than from literary, technical and other professional or semi-professional branches of translation" (Harris and Sherwood 1978: 155). They considered translation as an innate skill, "a specialized predisposition in children to learn how to speak from the language they hear in their environment" (Harris and Sherwood 1978: 168). This assumption argued in favour of the study of bilingual children's natural translating activities as the starting point for empirical and academic studies of professional translation. It thus laid the foundation for the acknowledgement of NPIT as a field of research.

The natural origins of this practice were also stressed by Wadensjö (1998: 49) who contended that dialogic interpreting and mediation were the most common forms of interpreting performed only by volunteers, friends and relatives, while nowadays "this type of interpreting has, during the last few decades, been developing into a profession." During the two decades following the 1970s, multiple disciplines, such as education, psychology, sociology and linguistics, started to investigate CLB by focussing on those

aspects that were relevant for their research fields. They mainly examined the who, where, and what of this practice and the feelings about it (Tse 1995; McQuillan and Tse 1995; Buriel *et al.* 1998). These studies came almost exclusively from the US and the UK and were published in different specialized journals related to each specific discipline that was dealing with CLB (Antonini 2016).

From the beginning of the 2000s, new issues related to CLB began to be examined, such as the frequency and purpose of this activity (Weisskirch and Alva 2002; Orellana *et al.* 2003a), its effects on the educational and psychological development of child language brokers (Dorner *et al.* 2007; Love and Buriel 2007), and its impact on family relationships (Chao 2006; Tilghman-Osborne *et al.* 2015). These studies used a wide array of methodologies, from qualitative (case studies, interviews and focus groups, e.g. Vasquez *et al.* 1994; Guo 2014; Bauer 2017; Ceccoli 2021) to quantitative (surveys, e.g. Acoach and Webb 2004; Weisskirch 2007; Titzman and Michel 2017), and mixed-methodology approaches (Dorner *et al.* 2007; Guan *et al.* 2014; Antonini 2014; Antonini *et al.* 2017).

Over the past decade, the fragmented academic output from different fields of research have begun to converge, going beyond disciplinary and methodological boundaries to examine in detail those aspects of CLB still unexplored. As Antonini (2016: 714) argues, this new shift in the studies of CLB has helped the practice to become "more visible to those 'political, educational, research, policy and, inevitably, adult perspectives' (Hall and Guéry 2010: 29) that until a few years ago were not aware of its existence, even though they were benefiting from it."

The organisation of the first international conference on non-professional interpreting and translation in Forlì in 2012 (followed by Germersheim in 2014, Winterthur in 2016, and Stellenbosch in 2018), was a clear recognition of this new academic convergence. These conferences have helped to draw new attention to this activity and to establish the study of ad-hoc interpreting and child language brokering as a field of research *per se* (Angelelli 2016).

However, despite this growing attention, CLB studies in particular, and NPIT studies more in general, have been and still are relatively disregarded within the field of translation and interpreting studies (TIS).

The scepticism and low level of interest within TIS regarding non-professional practices could have coincided with the limited attention that TIS has also paid to community interpreting, the professional counterpart of many NPIT practices.

Traditionally, TIS have placed special emphasis on the study of conference interpreting and on the simultaneous mode in particular (Angelelli 2000). Until the 1990s, the field of interpretation focused on the role of the interpreter as a "conduit", a neutral participant who transfers the message between two languages without distortions and by being invisible (Kaufert *et al.* 2009).

Only during the last decade of the twentieth century has, TIS also started to focus on community interpreting, and as Garzone and Viezzi (2002: 5) reported "the most single element of novelty in the field is the recognition that interpreting in not only conference interpreting." In particular, the seminal studies conducted by Berk-Seligson (1988), Roy (1993), Wadensjö (1998), and Angelelli (2000) contributed significantly to the growing attention towards community interpreting and to an analysis of the interactional and active role of the interpreter.

The greater recognition achieved by community interpreting during the 1990s could have been among the main factors contributing to the growing attention paid to NPIT and CLB within TIS studies in the last decade.

However, despite the increasing interest in community interpreting in academia, many countries are still struggling to implement adequate linguistic services that would allow foreigners to access public services. In those countries with a longer tradition of immigration, such as the UK, the US, Sweden, and Australia, community interpreting services are well established and available in a wide array of languages in most public offices and institutions (Roberts 1997). In contrast, in countries with more recent immigration movements, such as Italy and Spain, the provision of these services is still not adequate, and NPIT practices remain very common (Valero-Garcés and Martin 2008; O'Rourke and Castillo 2009).

Within this framework, this book aims to contribute to and expand the analysis of CLB within the field of TIS by focussing on the active role and significant contribution of child language brokers within the interaction. The rationale behind this choice follows Harris' assumption, according to which:

> the risk that observation of reality may become biased by prescriptive attitudes is particularly virulent for us who teach translation, because in order to teach effectively we are forced to be prescriptive to some degree. We want students to learn good habits so we set up idealized models for them to aim at, knowing there are real-life constraints which will eventually prevent them from adhering to them perfectly. The danger is, though, that idealism may degenerate into dogmatism. (Harris 1988: 95)

The study of non-professional practices, such as CLB, should not fuel suspicion, but should be considered the starting point in providing new insights into the studies and training of professional forms of interpreting and encouraging the development of adequate community interpreting services (Antonini *et al.* 2017).

2.5. A detailed overview of the "who", "where", and "what" of CLB

CLB has been the object of investigation of many disciplines that have focussed on various perspectives, including cognitive, relational, sociological, educational, linguistic, psychological and cultural approaches. They have all helped to outline the main features of this practice from different points of view.

Studies focussing on the relationship between CLB and bilingualism (Malakoff and Hakuta 1991; Valdés *et al.* 2000; Valdés *et al.* 2003), for example, have looked at the metalinguistic skills developed in child language brokers as well as at the life experiences of bilingual children and at the communicative needs of their multilingual communities. Research from education and sociology has analysed the social and interpersonal impact of CLB by focussing on how language brokers negotiate new cultural identities (Cline *et al.* 2014). Linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics have proposed a framework to analyse the interactional relationships between identities and ideologies in family interpreting (Del Torto 2008), while the feminist analysis of citizenship provided the groundwork to explore the active citizenship undertaken by language brokers (Bauer 2010). The recent attention within translation and interpreting studies (Antonini 2010; Napier 2016) has also helped shed light on language brokers' metalinguistic awareness (Bucaria and Rossato 2010) and on their interactional power responsibilities (Torresi 2017).

All of these studies have jointly contributed to focussing attention on this phenomenon and to outlining the main characteristics of language brokers, the settings in which they broker, the people for whom they broker and the documents they usually broker.

2.5.1. Who are child language brokers?
By building on the results of previous research on CLB, it is possible to draw a general profile of child language brokers, mainly focussing on their age and gender.

The majority of studies revealed that 57% to 100% of migrant bilingual children surveyed admitted having been involved in CLB (Straits 2010; Weiss-kirch 2017).

These studies mainly focussed on specific communities, such as the Latino (Acoach and Webb 2004; Benner 2011; Niehaus and Kumpiene 2014) and the Asian communities (Hall 2004; Hua and Costigan 2012; Shen *et al.* 2014) in the US and the UK, and the Moroccan and Sub-Saharan communities in Spain (Valero-Garcés 2001; García-Sánchez 2007). The seminal work conducted in Italy (Antonini 2014; Antonini *et al.* 2017) was among the few examples of research that did not single out a specific ethnic and linguistic group, but focussed on all the migrant communities present in the area under investigation.

Child language brokers usually begin to broker soon after they have moved to the host country, since they are able to acquire the societal language very rapidly. They can start as young as eight or nine years of age (McQuillan and Tse 1995), and the average age is usually between eight and twelve years old (Tse 1995; 1996b; Morales and Hanson 2005). Normally, first-born children are appointed to translate, because they may have spent more years at school and master the societal language better than their younger siblings (Angelelli 2010). However, when first-born children are not available to broker because of school commitments or other activities, their younger siblings are called to replace them (Dorner *et al.* 2008; Orellana 2009). Language brokering may also carry on after adolescence, as happened to the college students interviewed by DeMent *et al.* (2005) who continued to broker for their parents when they felt unsure about their English skills.

As far as gender is concerned, opinions vary considerably. According to some studies, children are asked to take on this role irrespective of their gender. This is highlighted, for example, by Jones and Trickett (2005), who investigated the acculturation and adaptation of family refugees from the former Soviet Union and focussed on how the demographic variables related to language brokering.

Other research reveals that parents may prefer their daughters to play this role, since they develop greater communicative skills compared to boys and usually spend more time with their mothers, who are often the members of the family most in need of help (Valtolina 2010). This view was shared by Valenzuela (1999), who explored the gendered ways in which boys and girls contribute to the settlement of their Mexican immigrant families. The same perspective was also suggested in the surveys conducted in Latino communities (Buriel *et al.* 1998; 2006) focussing on the relationships between CLB and biculturalism, self-efficacy, and academic performance, which reported that those daughters

who master the societal language and have great social skills are more likely to be elected as language brokers by their family members. Studies on CLB in deaf communities (Singleton and Tittle 2000; Napier 2017) too have confirmed the greater incidence of females as language brokers.

In their longitudinal study, Orellana *et al.* (2003b) observed that gender-related differences are more evident when child language brokers grow older, since girls are more likely to continue this practice than boys.

Further studies have revealed that other characteristics prevail over gender in the choice of language brokers, such as children's willingness to help their families, their linguistic skills and the ability to be precise and convey feelings at the same time (Tse 1995; Morales and Hanson 2005; Martinez *et al.* 2009).

These findings have all contributed to the collection of relevant data to identify who child language brokers are. However, given the specific feature of CLB as a family and community activity, it is not an easy task to draw a precise profile of child language brokers, since they all have different personal experiences. For this reason, further research is needed to outline more precisely the characteristics of child language brokers that determine the circumstances leading to this practice.

2.5.2. The "where" and "what" of child language brokering

Child language brokers report brokering mainly for family members, and, within this category, parents rank first (Tse 1996a; Weisskirch and Alva 2002; Bucaria and Rossato 2010; Cirillo 2017). Besides relatives, the other people for whom children broker more frequently are their friends, neighbours, schoolmates and teachers (Cirillo 2017; Napier 2017; Ceccoli 2018). Along with teachers and schoolmates, in institutional settings, they also broker for, among others, public service providers, doctors and hospital staff (Free *et al.* 2003; Green *et al.* 2005), police officers (Cirillo *et al.* 2010) and jail officers and detainees (Rossato 2017).

The most frequently brokered written documents (either orally or in writing) include both informal texts, such as labels, shop signs, hoardings, books and newspapers (Tse 1995; Degener 2010; Cirillo 2017), and formal material, such as teachers' notes, medical prescriptions, job-related documents for their parents, bank documents, tax and immigration forms (Buriel *et al.* 1998; Acoach and Webb 2004; Villanueva and Buriel 2010).

The same distinction between formal and informal can be applied to the settings in which child language brokers usually take part. They may broker in various situations, including at home, on the street, in shops, at restaurants (informal contexts), and in public offices, at the police station, at courthouses, in

hospitals or at school (formal contexts) (Dorner *et al.* 2007; Pimentel and Sevin 2009; Cirillo 2017). New evidence also points to brokering in digital spaces and online (Guan 2017).

Among all these settings, the situation in which language brokers most frequently undertake brokering is at home, followed by hospitals and doctors' offices and schools.

Hall and Guéry aptly described the wide array of situations in which CLB can occur by maintaining that:

> The demands made upon children when literacy brokering can range from the relatively trivial, maybe just writing out a note for the milkman, to the massively complex, like helping a father fill out a tax form, but at the higher level the children are responding to challenges that their fellow students are unlikely to meet until they are adults. (Hall and Guéry 2010: 41)

The majority of these studies examine healthcare and school settings, because of the high frequency of CLB activities that take place in these situations, as well as the controversial issues raised by this activity when carried out in these delicate and complex circumstances.

2.6. Consequences of child language brokering on children

There is no agreement among researchers on the impact of CLB on children and adolescents, since studies have reported both advantageous and damaging effects.

Some research has suggested that child language brokers may be burdened or emotionally charged by CLB (Jacobs *et al.* 1995; Oznobishin and Kurman 2009), whereas others have provided strong support for children's socio-emotional and cognitive development (Valdés *et al.* 2003; Dorner *et al.* 2007).

These different positions depend on multiple factors, such as family relations (Love and Buriel 2007; Weisskirch 2007), children's willingness to help, but also the neighbourhood where the immigrant family has settled or the community in which they live (Valdés *et al.* 2003; Chao 2006). Child language brokering might also have different consequences on children depending on their age. Younger brokers tend to feel more inadequate whereas older language brokers learn to seize and appreciate the positive aspects of the practice thanks to the improvement in their linguistic skills and the greater experience they might gain (Weisskirch and Alva 2002).

2.6.1. Beneficial effects

A positive impact of child language brokering, which has been measured in multiple studies (*inter alia*, Buriel *et al.* 1998; Valenzuela 1999; Orellana *et al.* 2003a), is the correlation between language brokering and academic achievement.

When children translate or mediate, they have to understand and interpret messages using a specific terminology and technical concepts that may be complex for individuals of their age (Buriel and DeMent 1993). Language brokers tend to translate documents that require a high level of understanding, such as school notes, bank documents and job application forms (DeMent and Buriel 1999; Dorner *et al.* 2007). This experience may prove demanding, since it involves the use of various metalinguistic strategies (Malakoff and Hakuta 1991; Bucaria and Rossato 2010). For example, child language brokers might learn to paraphrase, to use synonyms or to detect and grasp the main concepts of a text (Orellana and Reynolds 2008). They learn to focus their attention on particular information, develop their vocabulary and use higher cognitive skills to solve problems and understand and interpret this type of document. Additionally, CLB requires children to be able to convey concepts and reformulate messages so that they have the same meaning in the target language. All these activities facilitate the development of metalinguistic and cognitive abilities that ultimately help the children obtain better academic scores. In their study on immigrants in Chicago, for example, Dorner *et al.* (2007) showed that students who translated for friends or family members got a higher score in their reading tests. This research confirmed the data collected by Orellana *et al.* (2003b) that showed a positive relation between language brokering and scores in maths test. Acoach and Webb (2004) also reported that child language brokers showed greater self-efficacy and obtained higher Grade Point Averages (GPA) than their non-brokering peers, while Halgunseth (2003) found that brokering school-related vocabulary at school enriched students' lexicons.

From a linguistic point of view, the continuous contact between the two languages may enrich child language brokers' first language and improve the acquisition of their second one (Flores *et al.* 2003; Angelelli 2016), thus strengthening their bilingualism and biculturalism.

It has also been suggested that CLB may produce positive socio-emotional results. The relationships that child language brokers establish with adults and professionals and their need to represent their parents' point of view in the best possible way help them to develop better interpersonal skills, to strengthen their social self-efficacy and self-esteem (McQuillan and Tse 1995; Weisskirch 2007),

and to maintain socio-cultural competence both in the culture of origin and in the culture of their host country (Acoach and Webb 2004).

Similarly, some studies have reported a positive correlation between CLB and interpersonal relationships. For example, frequent involvement in CLB has been positively associated with child language brokers' greater respect for one of their parents (Chao 2006), while increased parent-child bonding have been correlated with positive feelings about CLB (Buriel *et al.* 2006).

These research findings have contributed to highlighting how children may benefit from CLB, and they may partially support Bullock and Harris's (1995: 234) assumption that "a well-guided child community interpreting service becomes not only a service to others but also a means of personal development and socialization for the interpreters themselves."

However, as suggested in the previous sections, this practice is challenging and complex and may also result in harmful consequences for the children involved.

2.6.2. Negative effects

The beneficial impacts of CLB on the previous dimensions (e.g. academic, socio-emotional, and relational domains) are also often coupled with adverse effects.

Child language brokers, for example, may perceive this role as stressful and embarrassing and they may not want to take on the burdens and responsibilities related to the task. The fear of making mistakes and the desire to accomplish this role in the best way possible can cause frustration and anxiety and may lead to a psychophysical decline in the children (Dorner *et al.* 2008). Child language brokers might also feel isolated, marginalized and not fully accepted by their families or by the hosting society, thus causing identity issues. Depression, loneliness, low self-esteem, and low self-efficacy have also been identified in correlation with CLB (Love and Buriel 2007; Oznobishin and Kurman 2009; Benner 2011). As Hall and Sham (2007) acknowledged, child language brokers' desire not to deceive their relatives could put them under pressure, as one of their informants reported:

> I grow up with fear, worry and uncertainty. Every time when I need to help our parents to translate letters or do interpreting because I get all stressed up and worry if I have done the correct translation or interpretation. (Hall and Sham 2007: 23)

Very often children are reprimanded by their parents for their inaccuracy instead of being rewarded for their efforts and help, and this may cause not only negative socio-emotional consequences but also disruptive behaviours. For example, adolescents in high language brokering contexts reported a greater likelihood of

alcohol, tobacco or substance abuse than their peers in low language brokering contexts (Martinez *et al.* 2009).

Many negative impacts are often related to the performance of child language brokering activities in sensitive settings, such as healthcare. Corona *et al.* (2012), for instance, reported the example of a 12-year-old girl who became nervous because she could not understand the doctor and was confused by the words. They also described another example in which a child language broker had to go with her mother to the gynaecologist's office and interpret for her without having received any proper training beforehand. These experiences may negatively influence the child's life, and both parents and doctors should be aware of these negative repercussions. Ebden *et al.* (1988: 347) focussed on the problem related to embarrassment, stating that children "found it embarrassing to translate questions about menstruation or bowel movements to their parents."

The Health Education Authority of London (1994) also maintained that child language brokers might feel ashamed or inhibited, as described in the following extract:

> Patients who use informal interpreters report difficulties. These include inhibitions in talking about women's health issues via the husband or son or daughter, as well as problems with inaccuracy and interpretation. (Health Education Authority 1994: 66)

These negative consequences can also affect the development of child language brokers' linguistic skills. They are asked to report information accurately, without neglecting the different nuances that each language may have. However, child language brokers may not master the specific terminology of the context in which they are asked to broker, thus facing linguistic and psychological challenges. In this regard, Villanueva and Buriel (2010) identified the use of appropriate vocabulary as one of the most difficult issues for family mediators.

Furthermore, despite the positive outcomes associated with better academic results reported in some research, other studies have shown that there is not a direct correlation between child language brokering and academic achievement. CLB may increase school stress, lead to poorer academic performance, e.g. in homework quality (Martinez *et al.* 2009) and damage children's school careers (Morales and Hanson 2005).

Additionally, CLB was correlated with family conflicts and problematic family relationships, such as low levels of mother-adolescent agreement (Hua and Costigan 2012; Kim *et al.* 2014; Titzmann *et al.* 2015).

Academic studies have also revealed the presence of some moderator variables that can mitigate the presence of these deleterious effects. The first moderating element that can minimize the disadvantages related to CLB is child language brokers' age (Titzmann and Michel 2017). Negative outcomes are more likely to be found when child language brokers are very young, whereas favourable consequences can be found in older language brokers who may have developed better problem-solving competence, social skills and brokering strategies. The second moderating element is parent-child relationships. When positive parenting practices and high parental support were reported, CLB had low detrimental influences on children (Hua and Costigan 2012).

2.7. Emotional impact of child language brokering

The benefits of CLB are often coupled with disadvantages, and the same holds true for child language brokers' feelings. Their emotions regarding the practice may vary considerably from positive to negative according to multiple factors, such as the local contexts in which CLB takes place and the relationship between the parties involved in the brokered event.

2.7.1. Positive, negative or mixed feelings?

Child language brokers' feelings about CLB is a complex question and different emotions can be related to this practice (Ceccoli 2021).

Multiple studies (McQuillan and Tse 1995; Valdés *et al.* 2003; Weisskirch 2006; Orellana 2009) have observed positive feelings associated with language brokering experiences.

Corona *et al.* (2012: 792), for example, reported that language brokers felt "great" or "bien" and they were happy to help their families: "I felt great… because I mean I could do something for my mom." Such confident attitudes were often related to the feeling of being responsible towards their families and to the belief that it is their duty to assist their parents and meet their expectations, as reported by a participant in the study conducted by Hall and Sham:

> I feel I am useful. I can help my parents and that is a son's responsibility. With my peer group I can speak and understand two languages, so I feel I am better than my friends. My "gweilo" friends also think I am so clever because I can speak two languages. (Hall and Sham 2007: 26)

Child language brokers also contended that CLB helped them become more mature and independent and promoted greater self-esteem and sense of belonging to their community of origin (McQuillan and Tse 1995; Weisskirch 2006).

Positive feelings were usually associated with the awareness that by translating and interpreting for others, child language brokers could learn new vocabulary, foster their literacy skills, and maintain and improve their bilingual language skills (McQuillan and Tse 1995; Orellana *et al.* 2003b; Valdés *et al.* 2003). They were also pleased to support those people who needed their assistance (Napier 2013), following the natural instincts that children often have to help others (Hepach *et al.* 2012).

Angelelli (2016) identified pride and satisfaction as the most positive feelings. The participants she interviewed reported enjoying the feeling of being satisfied with the good brokering job they performed and they felt proud of their abilities. She reported the child language broker Anita describing her feelings in the following terms: "…when the doctors took breaks… I did feel a sense of relief, I thought I had done a good job… and I also noticed my Mom's reaction 'aha, ok, ok' as if she were understanding what I was saying… but seldom did I feel really really great…" (Angelelli 2016: 18).

By examining this last sentence, Anita's description also helps to reveal that positive feelings were often also coupled with less satisfying perceptions that were mainly linked to feelings of anxiety, embarrassment, and worry.

Puig (2002), for example, interviewed some Cuban children who reported feeling humiliated by their parents because they could not speak English fluently, while participants in the study carried out by Orellana *et al.* (2003a; 2003b) revealed that they felt embarrassed and ashamed when they needed to broker in public commercial environments. Jones and Trickett (2005) highlighted a correlation between language brokering and high levels of emotional stress in those circumstances in which there were family discussions or troubled relationships between language brokers and their schoolmates. Guske (2008) carried out a study in which he interviewed students of Turkish, Italian and Greek origins who expressed their dissatisfaction in having to translate for their family members and who admitted feeling embarrassed because of both their lack of fluency in the dominant language and their lack of knowledge of the social habits of the hosting country. Other language brokers perceived this practice as counter-productive and as a source of stress and depression (Buriel *et al.* 2006). They also felt inadequate in taking on the interactional responsibilities related to this activity (Hall and Sham 2007), especially when they did not know the concepts or the technical issues they were asked to broker (Angelelli 2016: 18).

Negative associations were also observed between CLB and parent–child relationships. Weisskirch and Alva (2002) queried some students who admitted feeling uncomfortable brokering for their parents and other family members, while Weisskirch (2006) revealed that negative perceptions about language brokering were more likely to be related to problematic family relationships. He observed that his sample of college students reported feeling anxious, frustrated or guilty when their score on the Family Relations Index, which was applied for this study, revealed significant disharmony within the family. Cline *et al.* (2017) expanded this analysis by examining the situations that influenced such feelings. Their results confirmed that family dynamics affect the perspectives of child language brokers, who assess the practice in function of how they perceive their family situation and their parents' position in the host country at that time. One of their informants, for example, belittled her mother because she was struggling to learn English, and she offered a negative view of brokering for her.

Weisskirch (2007) also argued that in Latino adolescents positive emotions when language brokering were positively correlated with self-esteem, while negative feelings were negatively correlated.

Oznobishin and Kurman (2017) revealed that the frequency of CLB and the pressure to assimilate into the host society were related to negative feelings, such as burden and resentment. Hua and Costigan (2017) suggested that language brokering for fathers could pose greater challenges than language brokering for mothers. Such challenges might include adjustment difficulties, more depressive symptoms, and more father-child conflicts.

Other researchers (Morales and Hanson 2005; Love and Buriel 2007; Weisskirch 2007) examined the impact of family relations on child language brokers' feelings about CLB by showing that positive emotions were related to stronger parent-child bonds, whereas anxiety and shame were associated with problematic family relations.

This analysis has clearly suggested the presence of mixed reactions in which feelings of greater confidence and self-esteem are often coupled with negative perceptions.

Orellana (2009) explained and justified the presence of these ambivalent emotions by highlighting the peculiarities of each context in which child language brokering may occur, and by stressing the diversity of factors that can influence this activity.

Dorner *et al.* (2007) reported that children were usually happy and proud to help their family members, except in those settings that they considered as more demanding and in which they tended to be stressed and anxious.

Bucaria and Rossato (2010) conducted four individual interviews and four focus groups with former child language brokers who expressed divided opinions. Some of them perceived CLB as a normal activity especially when performed within a family context. Others reported feeling frustrated or annoyed, mainly because they considered the activity time-consuming. Contradictory relational impacts were also suggested by the results of a questionnaire-based survey administered in junior high schools in the Emilia Romagna region in Italy (Cirillo 2017). Respondents described their brokering experience both at school and for their family members and despite preferring brokering in the family rather than in a school environment, they expressed pride, enjoyment, but also a sense of obligation and dislike in both contexts.

Similar divergent opinions were noted by Torresi (2017) when analysing the writings and drawings collected during a contest organized for primary and secondary schoolchildren. By examining space arrangements and the use of colours, the author found that participants perceived language brokering as an everyday experience during which they support their peers or family members. At the same time, the lack of bright colours in some drawings may also reveal "cold and repressed, brooding and moody" attitudes (Van Leeuwen 2011: 61, in Torresi 2017: 350). Within the same school competition, written narratives were also obtained and analysed (Antonini 2017: 329). They revealed that students experienced mixed feelings, with more positive attitudes shown by those participants who benefited from language brokering themselves when they first arrived in Italy.

The presence of mixed feelings can also change over time. Bauer (2017: 377) maintained that earlier feelings regarding language brokering as stressful and cumbersome were replaced by feelings of self-confidence and maturity when language brokers got older. Antonini (2017: 330) argued that as language brokers grow up, their language brokering tasks become more complex and demanding and they perceive the burden of the activity more intensively.

This review of extant literature has shown that the wide array of feelings and emotions that child language brokers experience is often strictly related to the multiple and heterogeneous factors that characterise CLB. On the one hand, assuming greater responsibilities and addressing adult-related issues may be a reason for confidence and self-esteem when child language brokers are happy to take on this role. On the other hand, negative feelings may be the cause of difficult family relationships and of adverse consequences on child socio-emotional development. Hence, it is no wonder that posi-

tive and negative perceptions may also coexist and are often described by the same child language broker.

The academic studies conducted to date belong to different fields of research, have implemented different methodologies and are focussed on different aspects related to CLB, so producing the heterogeneous results described above.

In particular, the studies that considered the outcomes and feelings related to CLB were primarily conducted within the field of psychology (e.g. Hua and Costigan 2012; 2017; Crafter *et al.* 2017) and human and child development (Weisskirch 2007; 2017; Kim *et al.* 2014), using surveys as the main methodological tool.

The contribution of other disciplines, such as TIS, and the implementation of other methodologies, such as the analysis of authentic data, could be of value in furthering the understanding of the feelings and consequences associated with CLB. In particular, in order to verify the impact of these aspects on the perceived feelings and outcomes, they could focus on the analysis of the complex brokering strategies implemented by children, on the different degrees of agency that children could take on, and on their varying participation status within the interaction brokered.

Indeed, the combination of different approaches and methods is encouraged to obtain new in-depth insights into this complex practice, and to address issues that remain unexplored.

2.8. Brokering strategies

Child language brokering is a multifaceted activity that implies not only interpreting or translating, but also bridging cultural gaps and assuming family responsibilities. When children act as language brokers, they take on different roles and they act in order to reach their desired outcomes by displaying full agency within the interaction (Shannon 1990; Bauer 2010; Hall and Guery 2010).

Through the analysis of the potential strategies implemented by children when brokering, it is possible to examine whether they are aware of the tasks they perform and to identify the cognitive and metalinguistic skills they apply to perform such an active role.

In 1991, Malakoff and Hakuta conducted two studies of bilingual elementary students showing that bilingual children have the metalinguistic skills necessary to allow them to monitor meaning, even when they may not have reached full bilingual proficiency. Bialystok and Hakuta (1999) also examined the ability of

child language brokers to transfer cultural meaning across linguistic forms. The use of paraphrase was identified among the communicative strategies adopted to overcome linguistic barriers (Irujo 1986).

Valdés *et al.* (2003) maintained that children are able to communicate meaning even if they use poor sentence structures. The elementary-school students who took part in their study were able to convey the message of the source speech despite some minor mistakes in the target-language syntax. Additionally, as Angelelli (2010) pointed out, child language brokers are able to anticipate potential conflicts and to monitor, repair, and assess their production while they continue to render new utterances. They develop cognitive and metalinguistic skills, such as greater cognitive abilities and social skills (McQuillan and Tse 1995; DeMent and Buriel 1999; Halgunseth 2003), and when they transfer a message into another language, they take into consideration multiple factors, such the context and the intention of the speaker.

Dirim (2005) undertook two case studies in which she analysed the translation skills of bilingual children. Her respondents were able to translate a story that was read to them in a comprehensible and grammatically correct way.

More recently, Bucaria and Rossato (2010) investigated if and how child language brokers develop a system of brokering and translation strategies. Their informants revealed they were aware of the meaning of language brokering and of its complexities. Among the brokering strategies they mentioned, they included simplifying sentences, giving examples, and omitting unnecessary details. They also reported using gestures to communicate and asking for help when they were having difficulties. The most common strategies they preferred to use were translating what they could understand and asking for clarification (Bucaria 2014).

Bauer (2017) referenced the skills that child language brokers need to have when they broker, such as being able to reformulate the message and judging their own reformulations before rendering the message. The use of paraphrase and the ability to reformulate by relying on cultural tools were also among the strategies highlighted in the seminal work carried out by Orellana (2009).

Research conducted so far has suggested that child language brokers do not usually translate literally what they hear or read, but they mainly paraphrase, summarise, edit, and even censor or omit certain information. In so doing they display remarkable metalinguistic and cognitive skills.

Apart from a few exceptions (Valdés *et al.* 2003; Dirim 2005; Del Torto 2008), the studies focussing on brokering strategies have relied on the informa-

tion reported by child language brokers through interviews, narratives, or simulated child-language-brokered encounters. The analysis of real-life child-language-brokered interactions is still unresearched, both because of the difficulties in recording such a spontaneous activity and in view of the ethical issues regulating the collection of data from minors.

However, the study of authentic data by means of new methodologies, such as conversation analysis or discourse analysis, especially within the theoretical framework of interactional studies, could be a suitable way to complement past research findings by examining key issues that are still unexplored, such as child language brokers' conversational moves and interactional agency while in action.

2.9. Is Child Language Brokering a controversial issue?

The studies carried out so far have suggested that CLB is quite an established practice performed in many multilingual areas. The development of the activity can either be related to the lack of professional interpreting services to help migrants to communicate, or to migrant families' desire to rely on their children's help rather than on external professionals (Rhodes and Nocon 2003).

Migrant families may prefer to resort to the assistance provided by their children because they are more quickly available in the here-and-now, they understand the family's needs and they defend the family's interests and confidentiality (Abreu and Lambert 2003; Free *et al.* 2003).

However, professionals and researchers alike disagree on the appropriateness of this practice. Those scholars who cogently argue against child language brokering emphasise results showing that this activity can be stressful and burdensome. They believe that, as all non-professional interpreters, child language brokers are more likely to make translation mistakes (Pöchhacker and Kadric 1999; Flores *et al.* 2003). This could happen for multiple reasons, such as the misunderstanding of technical words, the absence of an equivalent translation in the target language, or the discussion of sensitive issues (Ebden *et al.* 1988).

According to other professionals, public sector staff and civil servants, children should not be asked to play the role of brokers in those situations that are more delicate and from which they should be protected. Rack (1982: 199-200), for example, issued a clear statement on the complete inadequacy of the linguistic support provided by child language brokers, especially in the medical setting: "Under no circumstances should children be asked to interpret medical details for their parents. It appears to us to be unethical, unprofessional, uncivilised

and totally unacceptable." In 2008, the British Psychological Society (BPS) published some guidelines for psychologists on the use of interpreters in the medical setting, arguing that:

> As a general rule, it is not appropriate to ask family members or other professionals to "help out" because they appear to speak the same language as the client or have sign language skills. Interpreting is a highly skilled role and not something that any person or even any professional can just slip into. The use of family members also creates difficulties with regard to confidentiality although some clients may insist upon it. This should be discussed with them. Children, however, should never be used as interpreters as this places them in a difficult and prematurely adult role towards their parent or relative. (BPS 2008: 6)

This position is not shared by other researchers (e.g. Cohen *et al.* 1999) and healthcare professionals who have reported that many doctors rely on children to communicate with their sick relatives especially when the patient asks for this support.

A number of studies have suggested that not only in the medical setting, but also in other contexts, migrant parents prefer a language broker who belongs to their own family rather than a professional interpreter. This is mainly due to the fact that they are more easily available than professionals (Free *et al.* 1999), they understand the family's needs more fully and they respect the family's privacy (Cohen *et al.* 1999).

It is evident, then, that there is disagreement between academia and local institutions, on the one hand, and the perspective of migrant families, on the other, while researchers themselves also hold differing positions.

However, even though CLB fuels these controversies, it is important that academia and public institutions acknowledge Antonini's apt argument:

> Because of cultural reasons, and for a host of other motives, immigrant parents will continue to ask their children to translate and interpret for them regardless of the law and of other resources available to them, such as professional interpreters and language mediators. Therefore, before ruling out completely the possibility and appropriateness of having their children mediating for them, it would be useful for these children, for their families and for the institutions they need to communicate with, to assess how this "invisible" area of childhood affects these children. (Antonini 2010: 10)

Ignoring the presence of CLB or studying it only as a marginal phenomenon because of its non-professional nature and its theoretical inappropriateness is not

the most adequate strategy to reduce the negative effects of the practice and to produce scientific evidence in favour of the development of better community interpreting services.

Wide gaps still exist in understanding the complexities of CLB that may be perceived differently by the various ethnic and linguistic groups within today's highly diverse societies. A wider variety of immigrant communities should therefore be included in the studies of child language brokering, which should also develop new methodologies suitable to carry out research with minors and to reveal those aspects that are still under-researched.

From this perspective, further contributions from translation and interpreting studies would be of paramount importance to integrate and expand prior work. Specifically, these could provide new insights, such as the impact of child language brokers on the unfolding of the interaction, their perceived responsibilities when performing this activity, and the brokering skills they implement while in action. A close inspection of these elements could yield significant findings that may be useful to leverage child language brokers' skills in the development of better academic results or to influence their future occupational choices towards becoming professional interpreters, thus bridging the gap caused by the lack of professionals speaking less common languages. They would also provide valuable authentic data for the training of professional interpreters. Such new studies adopting different methodologies and implementing new theoretical frameworks are necessary in order to investigate the breadth and depth of this phenomenon.

THREE THEORETICAL LENSES TO EXAMINE CLB

3.1. Introduction

In order to gain a robust understanding of child language brokers' contributions, different theoretical frameworks were adopted: the new sociology of childhood, the sociology of interaction and conversation analysis. Together, all these perspectives provide the tools for a comprehensive analysis of CLB and a thorough study of children's behaviours as active agents who enable multilingual and intercultural communication. They also highlight the complexity of the role that these children are asked to play when they language broker.

3.2. The Sociology of childhood

Over the last century and until very recently, childhood in Western societies has been perceived as a period of immaturity and dependency during which children are viewed as incapable of assuming major responsibilities (Crafter *et al.* 2009).

This perspective was founded on two main assumptions: (i) children were vulnerable and incompetent, and (ii) childhood was considered as a powerless period during which children's voices have rarely been heard. Furthermore, children were also regarded as immature, irrational, and asocial (MacKay 1973). Therefore, they were marginalized, and their contribution to the economy of the family was often undervalued (Qvortrup 1994; Morrow 1996; Solberg 1996).

The perception of children as passive agents prevailed until the late twentieth century, which marked a turning point in the studies of childhood by highlighting the position of children as social actors in their own right and by refusing to consider them as passive and invisible agents, especially when in institutions rather than homes or schools (Orellana 2009).

The recognition of childhood as a social construct began in the 1980s and gained momentum in the 1990s, when social and historical changes occurred

and led to the contemporary understanding of children as having their own voice, status and competencies (Neale and Flowerdew 2007).

The shift towards this new perspective was also promoted by the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989. Article 12 stipulates that "States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child" (UNCRC 1989). Children are thus entitled to enjoy the right to express themselves and to participate in decision-making processes that affect them, while receiving protection from adults. Hence, the UNCRC has contributed to the development of the new sociology of childhood by acknowledging children's rights to express their own opinions. This new sociology argued for the recognition of children's agency and of childhood as a social structural form (Qvortrup 1994; Mayall 2002) by stressing children's social competence.

In particular, this new paradigm emerged with the double task of creating a space for childhood and of dealing with the complex issues that characterize this state and period of an individual's life. The paradigm was based on three main assumptions (James and Prout 1990): (1) children should be perceived as active social agents; (2) childhood is considered as a social construction and as an object of social analysis; (3) childhood should be studied in its own right, and ethnography could be a useful method to do so.

The advocates for this new turn in the sociology of childhood argued for the recognition of children's agency and for childhood as a social structural form (Qvortrup 1994; Mayall 2002), by emphasizing that children possess social competence.

From this perspective, children are active agents with specific competence that they implement in the multiple arenas of social actions (James and Prout 1990; Qvortrup 1994; Mayall 2002). This social competence leads to children's "agentic" participation in society (Prout 2011) and it is exercised in social activities

> involving struggles for power, contested meanings and negotiated relationships, rather than the linear picture of development and maturation made popular by traditional sociology and developmental psychology. (Prout 2011: 9)

The development of the new sociology of childhood has led to the acknowledgement that children are agents able to contribute powerfully to the society in which they live.

3.3. The Sociology of childhood and child language brokering

Within the frame of reference described in the section above, the actions and contributions performed by child language brokers can be analysed by considering these children as fully-fledged social actors who are competent participants in their family and social activities. From this point of view, they are active social players who challenge the traditional expectations about childhood and the normative perspective that prevailed until the last decades of the twentieth century, and, on occasion, still persists (Crafter *et al.* 2009).

This partially explains why CLB often raises controversial issues. The active participation and the interactional power of child language brokers seem to alter the family hierarchy and the distribution of roles between children and their parents.

CLB is often deemed as inappropriate because children are believed not to have the necessary skills, and because the normative expectation is that adults speak on behalf of children rather than the opposite. Consequently, as de Abreu and O'Dell (2017: 197) have said, "child language brokers' activities are seen as non-normative and constructed in many research papers as burdensome for the child."

This view struggles to accept and value the complex tasks performed by child language brokers who are far from being passive and immature, but, rather, active players within their families and the society in which they live.

3.4. Children's agency and participation

In the context of the new sociology of childhood, James and Prout (1990: 8) introduced the concept of children's participation in social activities, describing children as agents who are "active in the construction of their own lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live." This description emphasizes the contribution that children make and the active role they play in their personal and social development and recognizes children's agency in the promotion of social interactions.

When referring to children's agency, various scholars have provided different definitions that highlight the multifaceted nature of this interdisciplinary concept. Below the interpretations of agency that are consistent with and that help to define the agentic role of child language brokers will be reported.

In 1998, Emirbayer and Mische, for example, defined agency as "the capacity of actors to critically shape their own responsiveness to problematic situations" (Emirbayer and Mische 1998: 971). This interpretation underlined the ability of agentic individuals to react promptly to any difficulty they might encounter.

Additionally, the authors highlighted the importance of both the temporal orientation of agency and the contexts in which it is promoted, arguing that agency is a temporal phenomenon achieved in dynamic contexts. They termed it "a temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments – the temporal – relational contexts of action – which, through the interplay of habit, imagination and judgement, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations" (Emirbayer and Mische 1998: 970). The different temporal contexts can orient the behaviours of agents "toward the past, the future, and the present at any given moment, although they may primarily be orientated toward one or another of these within any one emergent situation" (Emirbayer and Mische 1998: 964). Furthermore, the "key to grasping the dynamic possibilities of human agency is to view it as composed of variable and changing orientations within the flow of time" (*ibid.*). Based on these assumptions, they maintained that it is possible to explain "how the structural environments of action are both dynamically sustained by and also altered through human agency – by actors capable of formulating projects for the future and realizing them, even if only in small part, and with unforeseen outcomes, in the present" (*ibid.*). Emirbayer and Mische's representation provides a powerful insight into the concept of agency as temporally and context oriented and into the ability of agentic individuals to change their relationships according to the structure of the situation in which they act. Their interpretation of agency is of help in investigating child language brokers' contributions in a situated social context in which context-related conditions influence the way in which child language brokers act and react during the unfolding of the conversation.

In 2006, Biesta and Tedder (2006: 18) further developed Emirbayer and Mische's representation of agency by applying a transactional approach. In their view, agency may be promoted only in specific situations depending on the interactional contexts and on other parties' reactions.

Focussing more on the concept of agency in children, Moosa-Mitha (2005) defined it as the ability of children to "respond, mitigate, resist, have views about and interact with the social conditions in which they find themselves" (Moosa-Mitha 2005: 380). As Baraldi (2014: 65) argued, this definition reflects the three main features of children' active participation, namely their action (they

respond to, mitigate, and resist social conditions), their perspective (they have views), and their social conditions (they are able to socially interact).

James and James (2008) expanded Moosa-Mitha's definition by stressing the independence of children's action from the inputs that they receive from adults. In their view, "the concept of agency draws attention to children's subjectivity as independent social actors within the social, moral, political and economic constraints of society" (James and James 2008: 11).

The representations of children's agency described above are very useful for the study of child language brokers' contribution and participation in the encounter they broker. By sharing the concept of agency as a temporally constructed phenomenon in dynamic contexts (Emirbayer and Mische 1998) and by considering children as agents who are able to think, perceive, act, and interact (Biesta and Tedder 2006; Baraldi 2014), child language brokers can be considered as fully-fledged active agents. They are able to negotiate and manage challenging brokering situations, they apply specific brokering strategies to adapt to the different contexts in which they are, and they act to benefit themselves, their parents and their communities (Bauer 2010; 2017).

3.5. Towards the interactional and participatory role of child language brokers

The new sociology of childhood has contributed to defining and recognizing children's agency accurately. Their active participation has also been confirmed by the review of the relevant literature on CLB that has suggested children's agency by virtue of their role as language brokers.

In order to examine such an active role thoroughly, the perspectives offered by the sociology of interaction and conversation analysis (CA) will be adopted. These two theoretical frameworks will allow us to observe the contribution of child language brokers by focussing on the conversational sequences that enable participants to construct their contributions and on the interactive roles that each participant assumes as the interaction unfolds.

Over the past three decades, studies on community interpreting have been implementing these two approaches to examine the visibility of interpreters and the active and social role they play (Berk-Seligson 1988; Wadensjö 1998; Davidson 2000; Angelelli 2004b). CLB has recently gained official recognition within translation and interpreting studies[1], and child language brokers' performance as ad hoc mediators has started to be acknowledged.

On that premise, this book discusses the CLB paradigm as part of the broader field of dialogue interpreting studies and of the specific body of research exploring interpreter-mediated encounters as interactional dialogic social activities.

The role of the interpreter as a co-participant and the study of interpreting as an interactional activity or communicative "pas de trois" (Wadensjö 1998: 152) have brought to the fore the notion of a visible and participatory interpreter (Metzger 1999; Angelelli 2004a; 2004b; 2011; 2012). The factors that determine such visibility and participation have now begun to be examined, and they include, for example, the concept of "social turn" (Pöchhacker 2008; 2012) and the acknowledgement of interpreters' power relationships and social responsibilities (Inghilleri 2003). As Angelelli argues:

> the interpreter brings not only the knowledge of languages and the ability to language-switch or assign turns, but also the self. Through the self, the interpreter exercises agency and power, which materialize through different behaviours that may alter the outcome of the interaction. (Angelelli 2008: 149)

The active role of child language brokers will therefore be explored by following this new awareness regarding the visibility and agency displayed and enacted by interpreters, and by building on conversation analysis and the sociology of interaction. These two disciplines will help to focus on the participatory and interactive framework of CLB rather than on the correctness of child language broker's contributions, with the final aim of treating CLB as "an interactional phenomenon to be explored and described, rather than a form of unprofessional behaviour" (Wadensjö 1998: 61).

In order to conceptualise more clearly the active contributions of child language brokers, it is also essential to acknowledge the interactional and interpersonal nature of CLB as a situated social event. To this end, it is helpful to draw on Kam and Lazarevic's (2014) conceptualization of interpersonal communication applied to language brokering. They maintained that language brokering is a complex and situated social process that aims to produce shared meaning and to achieve social goals. In their view, language brokering is thereby both a social practice (since it includes two or more parties) and a situated activity that occurs in specific settings. Hence, the context of child language brokering is an important element that affects the outcomes of this practice and influences children's contribution within the interaction.

Conversation analysis (CA) pays special attention to the context, an approach that provides the methodological tools to explore how participants en-

gage in the ongoing interaction and how they interpret one another's actions by performing specific conversational moves. In so doing, CA also allows the social world of children to be observed from their own perspectives, while the children's understanding of the interaction can be examined *in situ,* as it is constructed and negotiated as the conversation unfolds. By applying CA, some researchers have also suggested that children are sometimes able to express their agency freely and their interactional participation can be neither pre-established by social structures nor supervised by adults (Baraldi 2014).

When interacting with adults, child language brokers manage to act as fully-fledged participants who are able to open, negotiate or close interactions. They might also conflict with or fail to respect adults' requests by ignoring their attempts to control their actions or by not displaying compliance (Hutchby 2007).

3.6. Conversation analysis as the theoretical foundation to examine child language brokered interactions

Children's active participation in the interactions they broker can be thoroughly explored by drawing on CA, a theoretical approach aiming to explore the unfolding of conversation through the analysis of real-life naturally occurring data. CA allows children's agency to be highlighted by mainly focussing on the sequences of turns that both child language brokers and the other parties involved in the interaction produce.

CA emerged in the early 1970s in California through the work of Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson (Sacks *et al.* 1974). The scholars developed a research program that drew on ethnomethodology (Cicourel 1964) and was influenced by the works of the sociologist Erving Goffman (1983), sharing the latter's idea that social interaction is a form of social organization in its own right, with its own order and structure.

Goffman (1971) considered everyday interpersonal interaction as a site of social order and contended that interlocutors present their social selves and affect the way in which other participants orient towards them. CA developed these assumptions and started to examine the interactional organization of naturally occurring talk-in interactions considered as social activities and accomplishments (Hutchby and Wooffitt 2008).

Analysing interaction as a social organization implies considering it as a context-related structure. In CA terms, context is a structure in action that evolves continually and cannot be represented by any pre-arranged frame-

work. As Heritage (1995) argued, "CA works with a dynamic conception of social context which is treated as both the project and product of the participants' own actions and therefore as inherently locally produced and transformable at any moment" (Heritage 1995: 407). Actions always depend on their social context (Goodwin and Duranti 1992) and they are therefore "context-shaped" and "context-renewing" (Heritage 1984: 280). According to this conversational representation of context, interlocutors orient their utterances to the preceding talk (Schegloff and Sacks 1973; Sacks and Jefferson 1992), and they also demonstrate their understanding of the previous talk by producing the next action.

In order to explore more fully the unfolding of these dynamics, CA "has placed a primary focus on the sequential organization of interaction" (Heritage 2009: 304) and on conversation as a sequence of turn-taking moves.

3.6.1. Turn-taking and sequential organization

As mentioned in the previous section, actions accomplished by talking are performed through the succession of turns-at-talk (Heritage 2009).

Turns are pragmatic units consisting of Turn Constructional Units (TCU) that can be represented by grammatical, phraseological or lexical items and can be produced either phonetically or non-verbally (Ten Have 1999). The point in which the turn could be taken by another interlocutor – located at the end of the unit that constructs the turn – is called the "transition relevant place" (TRP). It is in this position that the turn could be allocated to a next speaker according to three main possibilities: the next interlocutor may be selected by the previous one (as mainly happens in institutional interactions), an interlocutor can self-select (as often happens in ordinary conversation), or the interlocutor holding the turn can continue speaking.

Turns are usually sequentially ordered (Hutchby and Wooffitt 2008) and each sequence of turns correspond to a sequence of actions. The meaning of each action is thereby heavily shaped by the sequence of previous actions or turns from which it emerges, while the action that an utterance performs strictly depends on its sequential position.

This concept of sequencing is also helpful in establishing and aligning the exchange of roles between speaker and hearer during the interaction, and it reveals participants' status and coordination within the conversation (Schegloff 2007).

The interplay between turn-taking and sequential organization is at the heart of CA and is primarily explored by analysing the concepts of adjacency pair and conditional relevance.

Adjacency pairs are paired actions that represent the minimal sequential turns, such as question-answer, greeting-greeting, offer-acceptance or declination. Schegloff and Sacks (1973: 295) defined adjacency pairs as "sequences which properly have the following features: (1) two utterance length, (2) adjacent positioning of component utterances, (3) different speakers producing each utterance."

Conditional relevance indicates the situation in which a second item or speaker following a first item or speaker is expectable. When this item does not occur or this speaker does not take the floor, they are officially singled out as absent (Schegloff 2007).

The two conversational features of adjacency pair and conditional relevance contribute to monitoring the flow of interaction and its coordination, as well as the participatory statuses that interlocutors assume within the conversation.

The next section will look in greater detail at the organization of adjacency pairs, which can be expanded in different positions. These expansions will be useful in showing child language brokers' conversational participation and their contribution to the interaction.

3.6.2. Side sequences

Adjacency pairs are usually composed of two turns that are ordered respectively into "first pair parts" (FPPs) and "second pair parts" (SPPs).

First pair parts include utterances such as requests, offers, invitations; second pair parts are utterances such as answers, accepts, or declines (Schegloff 2007). This construction is the typical structure of the minimal adjacency pair, which, however, can also be expanded in three different positions: before the first pair part (pre-expansion), between the first and the projected second pair part (insert expansions) and after the second pair part (post-expansions).

These expansions constitute side (or insertion) sequences and reveal how participants contribute to the construction of talk and to the direction-giving activity.

The analysis of side sequences can be instrumental in examining child language brokered sequences as collaboratively-built actions and in highlighting child language brokers' initiatives and contribution to the direction of the talk.

3.6.3. Repair

The previous section has shown that speakers can work together to build interactional actions and realise a successful conversation. Similarly, when speakers intend to display their mutual understanding, they can align with each other by

using feedback tokens, continuers, minimal answers, and other devices showing positive assessment. However, miscommunication may also occur, and, in this case, participants can disalign to each other or they may resort to conversational repair to manifest their disagreement.

Repairs are communicative actions performed to solve trouble in the progress of interaction such as, for example, problems of hearing, misunderstanding, disagreements or rejections. As Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008: 62) reported, there are four varieties of repair: (i) self-initiated self-repair, which takes place when the speaker of the repairable source takes the initiative to repair that source; (ii) other-initiated self-repair when others take such an initiative; (iii) self-initiated other-repair when the speaker of a problematic source may initiate the repair of that source which is then carried out by the recipient of the problematic source; and (iv) other-initiated other-repair when the recipient of a problematic source takes the initiative and carries out the repair.

The analysis of repairs is relevant to understand whether an interlocutor has understood what the previous utterance sought to accomplish and it can help to check whether participants are receiving each other's intended meanings and if they are connected to the context in which they are communicating.

3.6.4. Conversational analysis and institutional talk

The analysis of conversational moves, such as turn-taking, side-sequences or repair, can be of use to examine daily life interactions in informal contexts and also institutional talks.

Interactions can occur within family or informal settings, thus leading to ordinary conversation; or they may occur within social institutions, so producing institutional conversation, which usually "involves an orientation by at least one of the participants to some core goal, task or identity (or set of them) conventionally associated with the institution in question" (Drew and Heritage 1992: 22).

Institutional interactions are highly influenced by encounter-specific constraints and they are characterised by goal-oriented actions. Drew and Heritage (1992: 36) identified six elements constituting the main framework for institutional conversation:

- turn-taking organization;
- overall structural organization of the interaction;
- sequence organization;
- turn design;
- lexical or word choice;
- epistemological and other forms of asymmetry.

Both the presence of a turn-taking organisation and of a well-structured sequence organization highlight the interactional and contextual order of conversation, whereas the use of precise lexical choices refers to a specific terminology that characterises each institutional encounter. The reference to asymmetries reveals the presence of interactional power relationships.

Institutional conversation usually occurs in institutional settings where

> one primary participant is typically a professional – a police officer, a lawyer, a doctor, a psychologist, a professor, a social worker, etc. – with a certain amount of power, while the other primary participant is typically a non-professional (and a member of a linguistic minority) with only a limited amount of power. (Jacobsen 2008: 159-160)

The unequal knowledge between those participants who are members of the institution they represent and have command of the language and the rituals of that institution, and lay participants who act on their own behalf and are unfamiliar with the rules and rituals of the setting and often belong to a minority community, causes unbalanced interactional relationships in which people have unequal cultural and social capital.

Child language brokered interactions may occur both in everyday contexts and in institutional settings. In this latter case, the migrant family and the child language brokers themselves are the lay participants who need to communicate with the members of the public institution.

The rationale for choosing CA as the method to analyse child language brokered events lies in its effectiveness in examining institutional social interactions and in studying how child language brokers organize the sequences of turn-taking that may favour or hamper the communication.

Through the analysis of sequential orientations, child language brokers may also demonstrate to hold a sufficient epistemic status, to have enough knowledge to be among the more knowledgeable participants in the interaction, and to be actively engaged in the construction of talk.

3.7. Erving Goffman and the sociology of interaction

CA studies have developed further over the years, exploring and transforming the interactive and social psychology theories developed by the sociologist Erving Goffman in his sociology of interaction (Goffman 1981).

The sociology of interaction plays an important role, since it takes account of both the context and the interactive dimension of spoken events. It sets out to explore face-to-face interactions, their dialogic relations as well as the mutual influence that all parties exercise on one another (Goffman 1959). This provides a valuable participation framework for the analysis of child language brokered events.

Erving Goffman developed an interactionist approach that adopted a dramaturgical perspective to describe the different behaviours people assume in everyday life.

He used the metaphor of theatrical production with its different components to describe situated social interactions and to explain how individuals change their actions according to the image of the self they want to convey. He introduced the concept of social performance, described as "the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (Goffman 1959: 26). The individuals who take part in a social performance often collaborate as if they were part of a team. This is the reason why Goffman used the term performance team to refer to people engaged in social interactions. This approach allowed him to stress the importance of three factors: the context or setting, the role that people play, or their appearance, and their behaviour or manner during social performances (Goffman 1959). This perspective also recognized the influence of other relevant elements that affect social interactions, such as the time and place in which they occur, the audience present, and the norms and beliefs shared by the social groups to which participants belong.

Goffman also identified three different positions that participants can take up during a performance: front stage, back stage and off-stage. Front stage behaviour is engaged when participants know that there is an audience watching and listening to them. The actions performed reflect the norms and expectations envisaged by the setting and the role played in such an interaction. This behaviour is shaped by a social routine ordered by cultural norms. Back stage behaviour is adopted when people think they do not have an audience listening or watching to them and thus it is considered as the place where "the performer can relax; he can drop his front, forgo speaking in his lines, and step out of character" (Goffman 1959: 488). The expectations and norms that characterize front stage behaviours are different from those that influence back stage behaviours. People are thought to express their true selves when on back stage. Off stage, or outside, refers to those situations during which individuals are not involved in the performance.

Similarly, Goffman also identified three categories of people in function of their right of access and responsibility in the performance: the performers, who

have access to both front and back stages, the audience, who only appears in the front stage, and the outsiders, who are excluded from both the front stage and the back stage.

Goffman further highlighted the importance of the concept of role, which he subdivided into four categories: "normative role", "typical role", "activity role" and "role performance." The normative role refers to the expected role that a speaker should play according to a set of codes and normative role expectations; the typical role refers to the role played when acting under the influence of specific circumstances; the activity role refers to the role performed in particular contexts, such as the role of the "broker" or of the "representative of public institutions" in a child language brokered event; and the role performance refers to the actual behaviour presented by the person in accordance with his/her social role and personal style. The emphasis of Goffman's analysis was on the concept of role performance, since he believed that the way in which participants perform their social roles is strictly related to the other performers and to the different elements of the face-to-face interaction. The different role-sets that a person may play are related to the roles of the other participants in the interaction. These roles constitute what Goffman called a "situated activity system", "a face-to-face interaction with others for the performance of a single joint activity, a somewhat closed, self-compensating, self-terminating circuit of interdependent actions" (Goffman 1961: 96).

This situated system is described as an interaction with a set of rules that governs it: "the workings of the interaction order can easily be viewed as the consequences of systems of enabling conventions, in the sense of the ground rules for a game, the provisions of a traffic code or the rules of syntax of a language" (Goffman 1983: 3).

Goffman also underlined the influence of participants' cultural background when they have to select, organize and handle different roles: "since norms regarding the management of one's multiple identifications derive in part from the general culture, we should expect differences in this regard from society to society and this is certainly the case" (Goffman 1961: 140). Sometimes, however, there should be divergences between a role and its role performance. As Goffman pointed out:

> the individual must be seen as someone who organizes his expressive situational behaviour in relation to situated activity roles, but that in doing this he uses whatever means are at hand to introduce a margin of freedom and manoeuvrability. (Goffman 1961: 132-133)

Such a margin of freedom can be related to the concept of role distance, which is seen as one part of the role that does not belong to its associated normative framework (Goffman 1961: 115). The role distance has a significant influence on the analysis of role, since it allows individuals' personalities to be examined by means of the way in which they handle, co-ordinate and organize their roles, but without changing their images in other people's eyes.

This dramaturgical model developed by Goffman can also be applied to the analysis of the role of child language brokers. Goffman's idea of role as something that is to be performed and that can change according to the expectations of the people surrounding the participant who is speaking is an idea that can be studied within child language brokered situations, where the child language broker is surrounded by other parties playing different roles and with different expectations.

All the elements described above constitute what Goffman defined as the social situation, a "full physical arena in which persons present are in sight and sound of one another" (Goffman 1981: 136). Such a strategic arena is related to the concept of a participation framework. As Goffman (Goffman 1981: 3) contended: "when a word is spoken, all those who happen to be in perceptual range of the event will have some sort of participation status relative to it." The different participation status and the roles that individuals can assume influence the organization of the communicative event and the distribution of responsibility in face-to-face interactions (Wadensjö 1998: 86).

According to Goffman, participating in a communication act implies taking on specific but variable roles within the dynamics of that interaction. This is one of the reasons why he argued in favour of the term participants instead of the simple speaker-hearer dyad that is inadequate to describe real interactive discourse.

Following this same logic, he further elaborated the concept of speaker and hearer. Based on their levels of participation in the conversation, listeners could be identified as listeners, hearers or recipients. They could also be ratified or unratified addressees (depending on their official status in the interaction), or addressed or unaddressed recipients, or bystanders. As for the speakers, they could be animators, authors or principals. In Goffman's terms (1981: 226), the animator is a "sounding box from which utterances come", the author is the person who composes the words uttered by the animator, and the principal is the person whose beliefs and ideas are represented by the words uttered. By breaking down the role of speaker into these three categories, Goffman provided a useful tool to analyse where the words originate, and which viewpoint they represent.

In 1998 Wadensjö complemented Goffman's production format by proposing a reception format, including three different modes of listening: reporter, responder, and recapitulator (Wadensjö 1998: 91).

Reporters memorize and report words uttered by another speaker, responders are the recipients of the speech and they are expected to develop the discourse addressed to them, and recapitulators recapitulate what was said by a previous speaker giving him/her an "authorized voice."

Depending on which of these roles is performed, the production format and the reception format change, while the participation framework and status of each individual are constantly negotiated and re-evaluated during the interaction.

These distinctions within the production format and the reception format offer a way to analyse participants' alignment, or footing, with other interlocutors.

Goffman (1981: 128) defined footing as "the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present." Participants' footings can also change over the course of their speaking. This may happen, for example, when someone who has given up a floor in a conversation and taken up the footing of a recipient, is asked to re-enter the speaker role on the same footing with which s/he left. Speaker and hearer are two statuses that can be interchanged rapidly during a conversation, thereby changing the level of participation of the interlocutor.

The multiple roles and footings that participants assume may also be affected by participants' expectations about how their face, or public image, may be perceived by others. When introducing the concept of face, Goffman (1971) referred to "the positive claim on social value made by an individual and the line he or she takes."

Participants adopt specific behaviours or roles in order to handle their own and each other's face and to protect it from being threatened by face-threatening acts (FTA). FTA can question the interactional moves of the previous speakers, and can lead to the performance of face-saving acts by the participant whose face was threatened. Both face-threatening acts and face-saving acts influence the construction of the interaction and the relationship between participants.

3.8. Interpreting as a form of social interaction: Cecilia Wadensjö's taxonomy

Drawing on the sociology of interaction developed by Erving Goffman, Wadensjö (1998) applied the concepts of the participation framework and footing to the study of interpreters' participation in interpreter-mediated interactions. In

particular, she adopted the notion of a participation framework to compare the ideal status of interpreters, traditionally considered as mechanical conduits, with their actual role performance in which they fully participate in the interaction.

The participatory role of interpreters is largely related to the interactional power that they hold in terms of linguistic and cultural competence. They represent the only party in a multilingual three-party interaction with access to the cultures and languages of both primary participants, thus controlling and coordinating the interaction.

Interpreters' position, linguistic repertoire and translating and coordinating activities are the key elements that reveal interpreters' full participation and can also be pivotal in enabling, promoting or hampering the participation of other participants (Pöchhacker 2012). As Wadensjö (1998: 42) argued, interpreters perform "on others' behalf various activities, such as persuading, agreeing, lying, questioning, claiming, explaining, comforting, accusing, denying, coordinating interaction, and so forth."

These activities show that interpreters' tasks include both "relaying", that is rendering what a participant says in the source language into the target language, and "coordinating" the talk, which means managing the turn-taking system and co-constructing the meaning (Wadensjö 1998; Metzger 1999). Interpreting is thus perceived as interaction (Wadensjö 1998) and can be studied by taking into account both the text that needs to be translated (defined by Wadensjö talk as text) and the interactive and social aims that participants intend to achieve (defined by Wadensjö talk as activity).

In order to analyse interpreters' participation and contributions in greater depth, Wadensjö (1998) developed a taxonomy based on two types of texts: those produced by primary participants and those produced by interpreters (defined as renditions). She identified the following seven types of renditions:

- close rendition: the rendition produced by the interpreter is similar in content and style to the original utterance;
- divergent rendition: the rendition produced by the interpreter differs substantially from the original in form and/or style;
- expanded rendition: the rendition produced by the interpreter adds information that was not present in the original utterance, such as explanations or clarifications;
- reduced rendition: the rendition produced by the interpreter is less fully expressed than in the original utterance;
- substituted rendition: a combination of reduction and expansion of information;

- zero renditions: the interpreter does not produce any rendition of the primary participants' utterances;
- non-renditions: the rendition is produced by the interpreter who takes the initiative and produces an utterance which is not the translation of someone else's utterance.

This taxonomy acknowledges the nature of interpreter-mediated encounters as authentic interactions that go beyond the text-to-text relationship and contributes to displaying the interpersonal nature of interpreting encounters considered as "communicative pas de trois" (Wadensjö 1998: 152).

By applying Wadensjö's taxonomy to child language brokered interactions, it is possible to reveal the active participation of child language brokers, which is not limited to the rendition of the source utterance into the target utterance, but includes challenging interactional activities, such as negotiating the meaning and managing the turn-taking system.

3.9. Relevant studies on the interactional nature of non-professional interpreting and brokering

CA and the sociology of interaction have been applied by researchers investigating interpreting studies in order to highlight professional interpreters' visibility and agency. The same approach has been implemented in studies on non-professional or ad-hoc interpreting activities by analysing real-life data.

For example, in 1999, Pöchhacker examined the behaviour of a hospital cleaner acting as an ad-hoc interpreter for a patient of non-German-speaking background in a hospital in Vienna. Through the analysis of the ad-hoc interpreter's renditions, the author suggested that the non-professional interpreter often failed to provide renditions and tended to adopt a passive attitude. This study suggested that untrained interpreters fail to concentrate on their translation tasks and often introduce shifts in the gist of communication (Pöchhacker and Kadric 1999: 177).

The behaviours of ad-hoc interpreters were also examined by Baraldi (2016), who explored interactions during educational activities in international camps for children where English was used as a lingua franca. Italian educators acted as ad hoc interpreters for those Italian children experiencing difficulties in understanding and speaking English. Conversation analysis helped the author determine that despite the linguistic assistance provided by ad hoc interpreters, their renditions often tended to limit children's active participation, mainly because of how ad hoc interpreters oriented their gatekeeping activities.

Ticca (2008) analysed the interpreting activities performed by bilingual speakers acting as untrained interpreters during face-to-face medical consultations in a rural Mexican village. She showed the challenges that non-professional interpreters face when translating linguistic meanings and bridging cultural differences. She also described ad hoc interpreters' identities as they emerged during the medical consultation in which they were mediating. The findings of these studies revealed that participants' identity is not static nor pre-established, but it is locally constituted and related to the activity that needs to be accomplished. The identity of the interpreter can be negotiated and can turn into multiple other identities, such as that of a peer or co-participant.

In 2017, Hlavac carried out a micro and macro level examination of three mediated Macedonian-English interactions that also included the presence of a non-professional interpreter, whom he defines as a broker. The results of his study suggested that any possible mistake or translation failure made by the broker could lead to tension and ambiguity. It also emerged that non-professional interpreters take up multiple roles, such as those of reporter, responder and recapitulator, while they perceive a sense of responsibility towards other participants' intentions and towards the interaction as a social situation (Hlavac 2017).

These studies are instrumental in highlighting the contributions of non-professional interpreters by observing their actions through the analysis of authentic data. They suggest the multiple roles that non-professionals take on and also report some of the limitations that may result from a reliance on ad hoc interpreters, e.g. "lack of renditions" or "non renditions" (Pöchhacker and Kadric 1999: 175), as well as their influence in limiting the participation in the social interaction of the recipients of ad-hoc interpreting (Baraldi 2016).

However, these studies focussed on the help provided by non-professional interpreters who are adults and who are not relatives of the beneficiaries of their help. The situation could be different when the non-professional is a child who brokers for his or her own family members.

Consequently, it can be helpful to also report the findings of other studies that have looked at real-life interactions to explore the contribution provided by child language brokers.

In 2004, Hall examined how Pakistani immigrant children in the UK handled and brokered the interaction during parent-teacher meetings. The author organised simulated encounters with actors playing the roles of mothers and teachers and authentic child language brokers. The analysis of these mock child language brokered interactions revealed that brokering was a multi-level interactive activity in which child language brokers were aware of the local and global

contexts in which they interacted (Hall 2004). Despite providing useful insight into child language brokers' contributions, it is important to note that this study relied on simulated interactions, which might not correspond to how the participants would behave in real-life situations.

García-Sánchez and Orellana (2006) observed child language brokers interactions by examining how immigrant children co-construct their moral and social identities during real-life parent-teacher meetings; while García-Sánchez (2010) examined Moroccan child language brokers' role and active participation in negotiating cultural and generational habits between the host country and the migrant family. These two studies were among the first attempts to document authentic data involving the presence of minors whose participation was examined in terms of descriptive analysis and by focussing on their moral, social, and cultural identities.

Study of the conversational contributions of child language brokers using CA only began in 2010 with the work of Del Torto, who explored conversational and social aspects of CLB by focussing on linguistic shift and maintenance in a multi-generational North American Immigrant community. By recording and analysing sixty-five hours of family conversations, the author identified recurrent patterns in interpreting in the interactions of a multi-generational Italian-Canadian family. The focus was, *inter alia*, on triggered interpretation (when family interpreters interpreted because of perceived problems in the conversation) and non-triggered interpretation (when they interpreted even though it was not requested nor triggered by any turn-sequence problem) and on linguistic shift and maintenance: shift to English to interpret for older relatives, and maintenance of Italian with the other family members (Del Torto 2010).

A similar approach was adopted by Pugliese (2017), who analysed eighteen sequences of CLB between two schoolchildren in the same classroom using CA and by focussing on their translation strategies, paraphrasing and conceptual explanations. This study revealed that CLB for peers may correspond to peer teaching and may represent an example of "constructive classroom conversation."

Del Torto's (2010) and Pugliese's (2017) work was relevant to suggest the value of exploring such a complex phenomenon by means of CA. However, the two authors focussed on specific topics, such as linguistic shift and maintenance, and peer teaching. Further research should follow their examples to examine new aspects of CLB, such as child language brokers' ability to interact with the unfolding conversation and their agency within the brokered interaction.

These studies have relied on the analysis of real-life data and on the application of an interactional approach. They have all contributed to a better overview

of the role and help of ad-hoc interpreters and child language brokers. However, only two of these studies used CA as a methodological approach to explore the conversational moves that child language brokers perform. Since CA is devoted to the study of authentic data, in particular of naturally-occurring talk-in interactions and highlights how participants relate to each other to bring social actions into being, it would be a valuable tool in the study of all those aspects of CLB that remain unexplored, e.g. child language brokers' interactional contribution and participation.

METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research with minors: ethical considerations

The assumption underlying the aim of this book is that minors, and migrant children and adolescents in this type of case, are fully-fledged social actors who are competent participants in research activities.

This approach takes a stand against the once predominant perspective according to which "researching children's experiences is grounded in 'research on' rather than 'research with' or 'research for' children" (Darbyshire *et al.* 2005: 419). This dominant perspective prevailed until the 1990s and was based on two main assumptions: children were vulnerable and incompetent, and childhood was a period of powerlessness during which children's voices are rarely heard. Adults were considered mature and competent, while children are invisible and "less than fully human, unfinished or incomplete" (Jenks 1996: 10).

A profound change in the perception of children and childhood took place during the last decades of the twentieth century and a major turning point was marked by the publication of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989), which stipulated that "States parties assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

The decades following the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child witnessed the development of a new sociology of childhood, which was characterised by an increasing awareness of the need to acknowledge children's rights to express their own opinion, and of children as competent social actors. This was an advocate for acknowledging children's agency and for children to be perceived as active participants and holders of rights (Qvortrup 1994; Mayall 2002).

Given this new perspective aimed at giving children their voice, new considerable challenges arise and are still present in methodological and ethical issues about how to conduct research with or on children. Some researchers argue that different or specific methods are not needed because children are able to participate in almost all data collection methods applied with adult informants (Christensen and James 2000), whereas other researchers adopt new methods tailored to the child's age and skills, that should be more familiar to them. Innovative and adapted techniques were thus developed, such as the use of pictures and diaries (Nesbitt 2000), sentence completion and writing (Morrow 1999), and drawings and narratives (Cline *et al.* 2011; Antonini 2017).

Additionally, scrupulous attention should be paid to the ways of collecting, analysing and interpreting data, and to protect the respondents from any uncomfortable situation (Morrow and Richards 1996). When conducting studies with minors, enough time for the completion of the research should also be planned, since the development of a relationship of trust and familiarity between the researcher and the researched is often a prerequisite for obtaining a child's consent to take part in the research activities. Establishing a strong connection with child participants is also essential for a thorough exploration of their inner thoughts.

In relation to the ethical issues about researching with or on minors, "the application of a system of moral principles to prevent harming or wronging others, to promote the good, to be respectful, and to be fair" (Sieber 1993: 14) needs to be guaranteed and safeguarded. Specifically, when research is carried out with children, two major elements should be ensured: informed consent and data protection. The informed consent, which is given by anyone who "voluntarily agrees to participate in a research project, based on a full disclosure of pertinent information" (Tymchuk 1992: 128), is usually obtained from adult gatekeepers, who could also potentially limit the researcher's access to the children. Parental consent is a key requisite in ethical research and it should be obtained even though child respondents are entitled to refuse to participate in the study by giving their informed dissent. Besides obtaining both parent and child consent, data protection must also be guaranteed and information about how the data is processed must be provided to the informants.

For the purposes of this research, both the child language brokers' and their parental consents were required before recording of child language brokered interactions. A rapport of trust and confidence was also built between myself, the researcher, and some of the children being studied, through the close collaboration we established during my time as a volunteer at the Welcome Youth Centre in Forlì, the youth centre attended by most of the respondents that were audio-recorded while brokering.

4.2. The research instruments

The research instrument used for the scope of this research were the recordings of real-life interactions brokered by migrant children. This choice was driven by the need to identify how migrant children and adolescents behave and interact while brokering, focussing on CLB as an interactive and socially situated practice.

4.2.1. The Welcome Youth Centre

The qualitative data collected and analysed were gathered through the collaboration of the Welcome Youth Centre located in Forlì, Italy. This youth centre was established in 2010 as a meeting place providing educational and recreational services, mainly for migrant families.

On average, about eighty children, ranging from primary school to middle school students, attend the centre each year and are enrolled in the activities and laboratories that are regularly organised. All these students are supported by the help of about thirty volunteers who help them do their homework, and who organize the after-school laboratories and the recreational activities.

The strong interest of the head organisers of the Welcome Youth Centre for my research topic, together with the high number of migrant students enrolled in its activities, were the two main assets for this centre to be the most suitable venue to collect qualitative data by means of recordings of naturally-occurring interactions brokered by children.

4.2.2. Naturally-occurring data: child language-brokered interactions

Documenting naturally-occurring language brokering communications was quite challenging since CLB is very often a daily and unplanned family experience. The limited number of interactions recorded shows the difficulty in collecting data about CLB, an activity that is challenging to record for two reasons: because it happens spontaneously and is difficult to predict, and because it involves the presence of minors.

However, this was possible thanks to the enormous help provided by the "Welcome Youth Centre" in Forlì. The recordings were made during the meetings organised by the educators of the Welcome Youth Centre and the families of the children who wanted to be enrolled in the after-school laboratories organized by this centre.

I chose to collect naturally occurring data because actual brokered events can shed light on a comprehensive understanding of child language brokers' role and responsibility into the interaction.

These elements were examined through the lenses of Conversation Analysis. This choice was driven by the main assumption informing conversation analysis, which is that ordinary talk is highly organized and ordered. As Ten Have reports, "conversation analysis studies the order/organization/orderliness of social action, particularly those social actions that are located in everyday interaction, in discursive practices in the sayings/tellings/doings of members of society" (Ten Have 2007: 41). More specifically, the social actions and discursive practices that were the focus of the analysis of these interactions were the use of repetitions, anticipations, expansions, repairs and disalignments.

The Conversation analysis approach was therefore applied in order to highlight the interactive and participative structures of child language brokered events, focussing on how child language brokers actively participate in the co-construction of communicative events.

4.3. Description of the corpus of recorded authentic data

The corpus of real-life data includes four child language brokered interactions, which took place at the Welcome Youth Centre in Forlì.

These interactions were recorded during the meetings organised by the educators of the Welcome Youth Centre and the families of the children applying for the after-school laboratories organized by this centre. In order to register their children, migrant parents had to fix an appointment with the head responsible of the centre and complete the registration procedure.

Each of these interactions thus involved the presence of three or four participants: an institutional representative, the Italian educator, and two laypeople, the migrant parent, who was always the mother, and her child. In all four interactions, the educator was an Italian monolingual, the mothers were native speakers of either Chinese or Urdu with different levels of proficiency in Italian, whereas the children were the interlocutors who had good competence in both Italian and their parents' native languages.

The four meetings can be comparable not only in terms of number of participants but also of their structure, since the procedure of enrolment was fixed and pre-organized.

All four interactions were audio-recorded and transcribed according to conversation analysis conventions. The turns uttered in Chinese and Urdu were transcribed and then translated by professional translators into Italian, and then back-translated into English by myself, as were the turns spoken in Italian.

Regarding the approach to the back-translation, an effort was made to convey the register and style of the source, and to reflect discursive aspects such as hesitations, false starts and other types of hedging. The back-translation is presented in italics under the source utterance. A consent form was signed by both migrant parents and their children to be audio-recorded.

4.4. Transcription

The transcription of data is a core procedure for a systematic and detailed analysis. Transcripts are considered as a representation of recorded data, but they only represent a selective rendering of the recordings, thus being incomplete compared with the real-life interactions.

For this reason, an accurate and meaningful transcription should imply the selections of the elements that are deemed important to be transcribed according to the aims of the research. As Ochs pointed out, one should avoid:

> a transcript that is too detailed is difficult to follow and assess. A more useful transcript is a more selective one. Selectivity, then, is to be encouraged. But selectivity should not be random and implicit. Rather, the transcriber should be conscious of the filtering process. (Ochs 1979: 44)

The transcription mode applied to examine the child-language-brokered interaction was adapted in order to identify and analyse the conversation and interactional patterns that could highlight child language brokers' agency and participation, such as, for example, the turn-taking system and the location of interactional actions.

In particular, an orthographic transcription method was chosen, which entailed the verbatim record of what the speakers said without including any detail about the pronunciation of their speech, and the main conventions of transcription adopted were based on the model developed by Gail Jefferson (1974) (see Appendix). This model was designed in order to examine the sequential organization of talks and to represent as many interactional details as possible, such as overlaps, pauses, vocalizations, and laughter. The information available in the transcript files include the following elements:

- time, date, and place of the original recording;
- participants' identification;
- incomprehensible sounds or words;

- silences and pauses;
- overlapped speech and sounds;
- stresses and volume.

The transcriptions were typed by myself, without the support of any annotation software, and the sensitive data was anonymised or altered in order to protect the informants' privacy, as agreed in the consent form that all the participants signed before the beginning of the recordings.

CHILD LANGUAGE BROKERS IN ACTION: ANALYSIS OF REAL-LIFE DATA

5.1. Setting the scene: the participation framework

In the four child-language-brokered interactions analysed, the educator is an Italian monolingual speaker, the mothers are native speakers of either Chinese or Urdu and they show different levels of proficiency in Italian, and the children are the interlocutors who have good competence in both Italian and their parents' native languages. Each interaction is referred to as a Meeting and participants are identified as E or E2 (Italian educators), M (mother), and C (child).

In Meeting 1, the Italian educator is a woman and she meets a Chinese mother and her daughter. The aim of this meeting is to enrol both the daughter and her brother in the after-school laboratories. The mother speaks basic Italian and she relies on her daughter's help to communicate with the Italian educator throughout the whole meeting. The daughter is 8 years old and she was born in Italy as her older brother and sister, who are respectively 11 and 14 years old, and who are not present at the meeting. The children are thus second-generation migrants and, since they were born in Italy, they are likely to have attended school in this country. The child who is present at the meeting and who assists her mother is the last-born.

This Meeting lasts 23'52" and the turns are allocated as follows:
- Italian educator: 206 turns;
- Chinese mother: 154 turns;
- Child: 133 turns.

The Italian educator produces the highest number of turns, followed by the Chinese mother and then by the child. However, it is worth noting that the number of turns produced by the child and the mother are almost equal.

In Meeting 2, the Italian educator is a woman and she meets a Chinese mother and her daughter. The aim of this meeting is to enrol both the daughter and her brother in the after-school laboratories. The mother speaks

very little Italian and she relies on her daughter's help to communicate with the Italian educator throughout the whole meeting. The daughter is 12 years old and she was born in Italy as her younger brother, who is 9, and who is not present at the meeting. Both children are thus second-generation migrants. The child who helps the mother communicate at the meeting is the first-born.

This Meeting lasts 15'91" and the turns are allocated as follows:

- Italian educator: 102 turns;
- Chinese mother: 54 turns;
- Child: 78 turns.

As in Meeting 1, the Italian educator produces the highest number of turns, but, in this case, she is followed first by the child (78 turns) and then by the Chinese mother (54 turns).

In Meeting 3, there is one Italian educator, who is a woman and who meets a Chinese mother and her daughter. The aim of this meeting is to enrol the daughter's brother in the after-school laboratories. The mother speaks very little Italian and relies on her daughter's help to communicate with the Italian educator throughout the whole meeting. The daughter is 11 years old and was born in Italy as her younger brother who is 6, and who is not present at the meeting. Both children are thus second-generation migrants. The child who helps the mother communicate at the meeting is the first-born and helps her mother even though she is not involved in the meeting first-hand (they need to enrol her brother).

This Meeting lasts 21'10" and the turns are allocated as follows:

- Italian educator: 95 turns;
- Chinese mother: 57 turns;
- Child: 64 turns.

As in Meetings 1 and 2, the Italian educator produces the highest number of turns, and, in this Meeting, she is followed first by the child (64 turns) and then by the Chinese mother (57 turns).

In Meeting 4, there are two Italian educators, both women, who meet a Pakistani mother and her daughter. The aim of this meeting is to enrol both the daughter and her brother in the after-school laboratories. The mother speaks Italian at a sufficient level and she relies on her daughter's help to communicate only when she has difficulty in expressing herself. The daughter is 12 years old and she was born in Pakistan as was her younger brother who is 10, and who is not present at the meeting. The child who helps the mother communicate at the meeting is the first-born.

This Meeting lasts 29'27" and the turns are allocated as follows:

- Italian educator 1: 306 turns;
- Italian educator 2: 74 turns;
- Pakistani mother: 300 turns;
- Child: 96 turns.

In this Meeting, Italian educator 1 and the mother produce a similar number of turns and they take the floor more frequently than the child and Italian educator 2. The mother and the daughter already know the Italian educators, and this is an important element for this conversation, since the mother, differently from what happens in the other Meetings, dominates the interaction together with one of the Italian educators.

In this corpus of four Meetings, the high number of turns produced by the children in each interaction compared to the other participants is a first indication of their full and active participation into the conversation. Particularly, in Meetings 2 and 3, the mothers show only marginal engagement and this is confirmed by the lower number of turns they produce compared with the other two participants.

5.2. Meetings: structure and language

Each Meeting can be subdivided into four phases corresponding to the four sections of the registration form that the educator has to fill in order to enrol the children in the activities organised by the centre.

The first section of the application form deals with the child personal information; the second section is related to family members' personal details (name, age and profession of parents and/or of other relatives); the third section includes questions regarding allergies and diseases that may affect the child and it inquiries about whether the family is assisted and helped by any social services; whereas in the last section the parents are asked to give their authorisation to allow the publication of photos of their children.

The first two sections are characterised by a more colloquial and informal language than the last two parts, which require a more specific and technical terminology.

The type of communication of the four Meetings can be considered as a particular kind of institutional talk (Heritage 1997), which is usually characterized by two parties: the representative of the public institution, who is the Italian educator in this specific case, and the layperson, who is represented by the migrant mothers together with their children.

Despite the institutional and goal-oriented nature of these Meetings, they can be defined as semi-formal since they combine institutional talk with ordinary conversation.

As the analysis will show, during the four Meetings, monolingual sequences in Italian alternate with monolingual sequences in Chinese or Urdu and bilingual sequences in Chinese or Urdu and Italian.

Monolingual sequences in Italian prevail over the monolingual sequences in the families' native languages. These latter sequences involve children and their mothers and are used to clarify the meanings and functions of Italian contributions and to secure mutual understanding between the members of the migrant family.

Bilingual sequences involve child language brokered sequences that are performed only when one of the three participants deem them to be necessary. Child language brokered renditions do not follow each turn accomplished by adult participants but they are produced during specific situations based on the perceived communicative needs emerging from the interaction. Additionally, they are bidirectional: child language brokers may broker from Italian into their parents' native language or the other way around.

This shifting between monolingual and child language brokered sequences was observed as a typical characteristic of ad-hoc interpreting by Müller (1989) and Meyer (2012), who argued that direct and mediated passages can be found within the same interaction since the language barrier is not completely impermeable for migrant families.

In all four transcriptions, the participants' personal details were altered to protect their anonymity and an indicative translation into English is provided in italics below each turn.

5.3. Children's role performances as language brokers and active agents

In all four Meetings, children's participatory statuses and roles vary along the construction of talk, since the presence of child-language-brokered sequences is intermittent and alternates with monolingual direct sequences. By assessing the interactional needs of each conversational turn, children are able to fulfil their role performance as both language brokers and active social agents.

As to their role performance as language brokers, the initiation of child-language-brokered sequences and child language brokers' renditions will be analysed; as to their role performance as active social agents, their non-renditions

will be considered as strategies they adopt to exercise their interactional power (Wadensjö 1998; Baraldi 2016).

Participants' reactions to the presence and help of child language brokers will also be observed.

5.4. Children's role performance as language brokers

The children's role performance as language brokers will be examined by focussing on the initiation of child language brokered sequences, and on the use of reduced, expanded, and collaboratively built renditions.

As the next sections will show, child language brokered sequences can be selected either by the adult participants or by the child herself through self-selection. In particular, the analysis of self-selection is of great significance to highlight children's interactional competence in obtaining conversational turns and in assessing the need for their assistance.

Once they have taken the turn, children in their capacity as brokers can produce different types of renditions (Wadensjö 1998). The analysis will delve into the presence of expanded, reduced and collaboratively-built renditions since they clearly represent meaningful examples of children's interactional agency. By selecting the information to broker or by adding significance to the gist, child language brokers fully express their power over the conversation (Baraldi 2016).

For the purposes of this work, the analysis does not provide any data on the use of close renditions and does not aim to express any considerations about the quality of brokering.

5.4.1. Selecting children in their role as language brokers as the next speaker: self-selection

The first step to examine children's role performance as language brokers consists in exploring the moves adopted by participants to initiate child language brokered sequences. All the participants in the interaction may initiate these sequences. They can be solicited by the Italian educator, by the migrant parent, by the migrant parent together with the child language broker, or by the child herself.

Since each participant's contribution to the ongoing interaction is strictly intertwined with the contributions of the other participants, language brokered sequences can be considered as the result of a joined performance (Valdés *et al.* 2003).

The different possibilities available to select language brokers as the next speakers seem to depend not only on the adequacy of their parents' linguistic skills to interact in Italian, but they are also negotiated by the three participants who both jointly and individually assess the need for brokering. This is also the main reason why child language brokered renditions do not always follow the turns produced by the other interlocutors, but they are produced when either the child language brokers themselves or the other participants perceive the need for communicative assistance (Müller 1989).

In this corpus of four Meetings, self-selection (Sacks *et al.* 1974) is a strategy adopted by all four language brokers, who engage in brokering on their own initiative.

Children switch from being interlocutors to being language brokers by taking the turn to provide renditions of previous participants' utterances. In so doing, they take up the responsibility for initiating triadic bilingual sequences and help their mothers gain full understanding of the meaning of the talk.

A telling example of this practice is provided by Extract 1 from Meeting 1.

```
Extract 1, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

207    E    °fratello:° okay (.) allora (.) lavoro
             (.) il babbo lavora?
             °brother:° okay (.) then (.) job (.) does
             your dad work?
208    M    sì
             yes
209    C    sì
             yes
210    E    cosa fa?
             what does he do?
211    C    他 做 什 么 的?
             che lavoro fa?
             what is his job?
```

In this extract, the educator asks questions related to the job of the child's father. First of all, the educator asks whether the father has a job (line 207), the mother takes the next turn to answer affirmatively and her daughter takes the following turn to repeat her mother's answer (line 209). Then, the educator asks

about the child's father occupation (line 210). On this occasion, the daughter takes the turn before her mother to broker the question in Chinese without being invited to do so by anyone.

A possible interpretation of the reason why the child deems it necessary to broker the educator's question is that the educator uses an informal expression to ask for her father's job ("What does he do?", line 210). In the rendition made by the child, the question is formulated more explicitly by pronouncing the word "job" ("what is his job?"). It is thus possible that the child tries to anticipate her mother's doubts about the correct contextual meaning of that question, which could have also been interpreted differently (such as, for example, as "what is your father doing right now?").

A second example of a self-initiated brokered sequence can be found in Extract 2 from Meeting 2. In this Meeting, the number of turns taken on by the child is higher than her mother's turns (78 and 58 respectively). This reveals that the young girl fully participates in the conversation, and her active contribution is also suggested by the turns preceding this Extract, in which the girl directly answered the educator's questions in Italian without consulting her mother (line 225).

In this sequence, however, the child feels the need to broker the educator's question to her mother before providing an answer. The question under investigation enquires about whether the child's brother can go to the Welcome Youth Centre by himself. The child may opt for brokering this question because she considers its content as a matter of parental authority, to which she cannot provide an answer by herself. This may be the reason why she takes the initiative to broker the educator's question in Chinese to her mother, allowing her mother to exercise her parental decision-making power.

```
Extract 2, E: educator; C: child

224    E    le firme AH EH piero può venire da solo?
            the signatures AH EH can piero come by
            himself?
225    C    他自己过来啊?
            does he go by himself?
```

Another example of self-selection can be observed in Extract 3 from Meeting 3. In this passage, the Italian educator asks for the parents' phone numbers and this is the first information the Chinese young girl is not able to

provide by herself. In the preceding turns, as happened in Extract 2 from Meeting 2, the child language broker answered all the educator's questions without consulting her mother, but, at this point, she feels obliged to take the turn not to answer directly the question but to broker it into Chinese (line 16).

In this Extract, brokering is not performed to include the parent into the interaction, as happens in the previous examples. In this instance, brokering is the only strategy the child can pursue to satisfy the educator's request since she does not have enough information to answer the question by herself.

```
Extract 3, E: educator; C: child

15      E    a forlì (2,0) ((scrive)) mi serve il
             cellulare della mamma e del babbo (.) se
             a volte abbiamo (.) delle comunicazioni
             in forlì (2.0) ((writing)) I need your
             mum's and dad's mobile phone (.) if
             sometimes we have (.) some communications
16      C    你们的电话号码
             your mobile phone's number
```

The last example of self-selection performed to initiate a language brokered sequence is illustrated in Extract 4 from Meeting 4. In this instance, the child takes on the turn to broker into Urdu the educator's question because of a dispreferred answer given by the mother to the same question (line 272). The child realises that her mother is having difficulties either in understanding Italian or in providing an answer in Italian. She thus assumes the responsibility to help her by taking the control of this sequence and brokering the question in Urdu (line 273).

```
Extract 4, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

271     E    allora adesso eh: la mamma quanti anni ha?
             then now eh: how old is your mother?
272     M    è questo è
             it's this is
273     C    ماما کتنے سال دے آؤ؟
             mum how old are you?
```

The four extracts described above have provided examples of child language brokers' self-selections. Different contextual conditions appear to trigger the brokers' self-selection moves, including the following: i) anticipation of possible parents' misunderstanding (Extract 1); ii) the necessity to respect the parent's authority when decision-making processes are involved (Extract 2); iii) the lack of information from the child who has taken on the role of main interlocutor during the preceding turns (Extract 3); iv) and the presence of dispreferred answer given by the mother (Extract 4).

In all these circumstances, children feel the need to take on the turn to broker the educators' utterances to their mothers. They undertake the initiative of brokering in a circumstance in which they are not being allocated the floor by any other participant. In two instances (Extract 1 and Extract 4), self-selection may reflect their desire to help their family members gain full access to the conversation. In Extracts 2 and 3, contrariwise, child language brokers resort to language brokering because they do not have enough authority or power to provide the content of the answers needed.

Child language brokers' self-selection corresponds to what Del Torto (2010: 160) identified as "non-triggered interpretations", i.e. sequences in which family members broker without receiving any request to do so by other participants or without facing any irregularities in the construction of the talk. According to the author, non-triggered interpretations suggest child language brokers' skill to anticipate not only linguistic barriers but also socio-cultural difficulties, thus suggesting that "linguistic and cultural brokering go hand in hand" (Del Torto 2010: 161).

Similarly, in these examples, child language brokers self-select to broker not only when they perceive the presence of possible linguistic barriers, but also when they do not have enough epistemic knowledge (Heritage 1997) or authority to provide the information needed. These examples also suggest that child language brokers use self-selection to broker in order to prevent their mothers' face from being threatened by her own dispreferred answers. As Orellana highlighted, they seek to convey a better image of their parents, and they "successfully deployed their skills to secure information, goods, and services for their families, as well as to make things happen in the social world" (Orellana 2009: 77).

Irrespective of the reasons why child language brokers adopt this strategy, self-selection reveals the children's active involvement in the interaction, it displays the typical behaviour of a powerful participant, and it indicates that brokering may also be a voluntary choice.

5.4.2. Selecting children in their role as language brokers as the next speaker: other-selection

Self-selection is a common strategy implemented to initiate child-language-brokered sequences. However, other-initiated brokered sequences are produced as well. Both the educator and the mother initiate these sequences by allocating the turn to the child in order for her to broker the previous utterance(s).

The first example is provided by Extract 5 from Meeting 3, in which the language brokered sequence is initiated by the Italian educator. In line 36, the Italian educator is asking some questions related to the food habits and allergies of the child's brother. The Chinese child answers the questions by herself without consulting her mother (line 37). However, the educator must deem these questions very important, and for this reason, she invites the child to broker the questions to her mother (line 38). The child has taken on the parental role by answering the questions by herself without including her mother into the construction of the talk (line 37). Nonetheless, because they are dealing with health conditions, the educator deems it essential to empower the mother by giving her back the control of the interaction and by making sure that she is informed about the question asked. This may be the reason why the Italian educator encourages the child to report what she has just said to the Chinese mother (line 38).

```
Extract 5, E: educator; C: child

36      E     no (2,0) ehm: noi qui ehm: (.) lo sai
              che facciamo anche la merenda (.) eh
              diciamo può mangiare tutto? è allergico
              a qualcosa (.) marco? mangia tutto di
              solito?
              no (2,0) ehm: we here ehm: (.) you know
              we also have a snack break (.) eh can he
              eat everything? is (.) marco allergic
              to something? does he usually eat
              everything?
37      C     sì
              yes
38      E     tutto eh? (.) magari chiedi dì alla mamma
              che ti sto chiedendo questa cosa (.)
              diglielo adesso che ti ho chiesto
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```
                  everything eh? (.) maybe ask tell your
                  mum what I am asking you (.) tell her now
                  what I've asked
39      C    °她说(.)要给他吃点什么东西(.)还是什么都吃的?°
                  °she says that (.) what do you give him
                  to eat (.) or does he eat everything?°
```

Another example of other-initiated brokered sequence is provided by Extract 6 from Meeting 4. The Italian educator is asking the Pakistani mother to sign a written authorisation to let her children go back home by themselves. The Pakistani mother reacts to the educator's request first by using the backchannel "mmm" (line 427) and then by answering "understood" (line 430) to indicate that she is understanding the meaning of the educator's utterance. However, afterwards, she addresses her daughter and asks her what the Italian educator is actually saying (line 431), showing that she did not fully understand what the educator was telling her. On this occasion, it is thus the Pakistani mother who initiates the child-language-brokered sequence (line 431).

```
Extract 6, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

426     E    okay? oppure un'autorizzazione scritta e
                  firmata da un genitore perché se no noi
                  non possiamo mandarli via da soli
                  okay? or a written authorisation signed
                  by a parent because otherwise we can't
                  let them go by themselves
427     M    mmm
                  mmm
428          (.)
429     E    capito?
                  understood?
430     M    capito
                  understood
431     M    کے پی آکھدی اے ؟
                  what is she saying?
432     C    آؤ پی آندی اے: کدےُتساں ڈاکٹر کول پہلے نکلنا ہووے یا ڈاکٹر کولُجلڑاں
                  ہووے فرُتساں ۔۔۔۔۔ماں آوے تے تاں چھوڑساں۔۔۔۔۔
                  ماں آوے یا فرُتساں دے ڈیڈ نے لکھیاہووے تے فرما ہویا ہووے
```

> *she is saying that if you need to go out*
> *earlier to go to the doctor either the*
> *mum or the dad go to the centre, write*
> *and sign down*

Extract 7 from Meetings 3 provides an example in which the child-language-brokered sequence is selected by both the educator and the mother quite simultaneously. The educator is explaining to the family when the after-school laboratory will begin. Within the same turn, the Italian educator encourages twice the daughter to report to her mother what she is saying (line 146). Once the Italian educator has finished her turn, the Chinese mother immediately takes the next turn to ask her daughter what the educator has just said (line 147). In this example, both adult participants allocate the turn to the child to initiate a brokered sequence.

```
Extract 7, E: educator; C: child; M: mother
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```
146     E    AH! in questo momento non è qui eh arriva
             dopo (.) cia:o! ehm::m allora (.) inizia
             (.) il: (.) dopo scuo:la (.) te lo scrivo
             qui (.) dunque (.) lunedì (.) martedì (.)
             mercoledì mercoledì (.) il (.) dodici
             (.) dieci (.) duemila (.) e sedici ecco
             lo dici alla mamma (.) il doposcuola
             inizia (.) mercoledì (.) dodici ottobre
             (.) glielo dici (.) eh? allora (.) il
             dodici(.) ottobre (.) duemila (.) e
             sedici (.) ventinove (.) [zero nove]
```
> *AH! she's not here right now eh she's*
> *coming later (.) by:e! ehm::m so (.) the*
> *youth centre (.) starts (.) I'll write*
> *it here (.) so (.) monday (.) tuesday*
> *(.) wednesday* <u>*wednesday*</u> *(.) the (.)*
> *twelveth (.) october (.) two thousand (.)*
> *and sixteen here it is can you tell it to*
> *your mum (.) that the youth centre starts*
> *(.) on wednesday (.) the twelveth of*
> *october (.) can you tell her (.) eh? so*

```
                  (.) the twelveth (.) of october (.) two
                  thousand (.) and  sixteen (.) twenty nine
                  (.) [zero nine]
147     M             [什么啊?]
                      [what?]
148     C         就是写作业(.)10月12号(.)星期三
                  to do my homework (.) on 12 october (.)
                  wednesday
```

These Extracts describe some examples of other-initiated brokered sequences. The educator, the mother, or both of them, can decide to give the floor to the child in order for her to broker the previous utterance(s).

The educator initiates these sequences when she is dealing with sensitive topics, such as the presence of any food allergies (Extract 5). In these circumstances, she does not trust the answers provided by the child, who is expected to occupy a less knowledgeable position compared to her mother. For this reason, she tries to give the voice back to the mother, who is supposed to be a more knowledgeable participant (Heritage 2012).

The mother resorts to her daughter's help when she realises that she does not understand what the Italian educator is saying (Extract 6). Both these circumstances can also coincide, as shown in Extract 7.

The examples related to both self-selection and other-initiated selection show how child language brokering is negotiated by all the participants who, either individually or jointly, assess the need for the children's assistance.

5.4.3. Child language brokers' contributions: brokered renditions

Following the analysis related to the initiation of child language brokered sequences, this section discusses child language brokers' contributions by analysing both discursive and conversational features. To this end, the taxonomy of renditions developed by Wadensjö (1998) will be taken as a point of reference.

Renditions correspond to the versions of original utterances translated in the target language. They can be fully consistent with the source message (close renditions), but they may also include changes, additions or omissions.

This analysis will focus on child language brokers reduced renditions (which reduce other participants' utterances) and expanded renditions (which expand other participants' utterances). These two categories of renditions belong to what Heritage (1995) defined "formulations" that modify previous utterances by "making something explicit that was previously im-

plicit, making inferences about its presuppositions or implications" (Heritage 1995: 104). Together with these categories, collaboratively-built renditions will also be discussed.

The analysis of these renditions was chosen since they help highlight the visibility of children's agency in the ways in which they modify the gist of the utterance, either by simplifying it or by adding further information.

5.4.3.1. Formulations: reduced and expanded renditions

Formulations are modified renditions that can summarise or develop the gist of a previous utterance or can adapt the content of the talk according to the context and the recipients of that message (Baraldi and Gavioli 2016).

The analysis of formulations produced by child language brokers may help gain insight into their contributions to the interaction and may highlight the responsibility they take on in managing the construction and the flow of the talk. Two types of formulations, namely reduced and expanded renditions, will be analysed.

5.4.3.1.1. Reduced renditions

Reduced renditions are defined by Wadensjö as renditions that include "less explicitly expressed information than the preceding 'original utterance'" (Wadensjö 1998: 107). Reduced renditions usually report the gist of the preceding sequence and they are thus the result of a selection of information made by child language brokers.

In Extracts 8 and 9 from Meetings 1 and 3, two examples of reduced renditions are observed.

In Extract 8 the Italian educator is presenting the timetable of the laboratory activities. Besides providing the activities' beginning and ending time, she specifies that it is important for the children not to go to the centre too long before the beginning of the activities since the educators may not be there, it could be cold outside, and the children may not be supervised. She ends her turn with the prolonged filler "eh::" (line 296) as if waiting for an acknowledgment token by the mother or maybe also by the child. Since the mother does not take the turn, the child intervenes and takes the floor to summarise the educator's utterance to her mother in Chinese (line 297). However, as line 297 displays, the child only renders the gist of the message by telling her mother that the timetable reported on the registration form corresponds to the beginning and end of their activities at the centre, omitting all the information related to the recommendation about arriving and leaving on time.

```
Extract 8, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

296    E    e:: (.) il centro apre alle tre (.) alle
            quindici (.) e chiude alle sei (.) nel
            nel pre (.) cioè prima delle tre (.) non
            c'è nessuno qui (.) quindi no- non state
            a venire perché non c'è nessuno (.) e (.)
            se poi succede qualcosa perché magari è
            freddo:: insomma (.) eh dal- dalle tre eh
            (.) iniziamo prima (.) eh: non non venite
            non fateli venire perché non c'è nessuno
            (.) e alle sei però finiamo (.) quindi
            alle sei chiudiamo (.) e andiamo via (.)
            gli operatori (.) e quindi andranno via
            anche loro okay? (.) eh::
            and:: (.) the centre opens at three (.)
            at three p.m. (.) and it closes at six
            (.) before three (.) nobody is here (.)
            therefore don't come because nobody is
            here (.) and (.) if something happens
            because it may be cold:: (.) eh from
            three eh (.) we begin earlier (.) eh:
            don't let them come here earlier because
            nobody is here (.) and at six we finish
            (.) so at six we close (.) and go away
            (.) the educators (.) and so they go away
            as well okay? (.) eh::
297    C    (xxx)这是时间(.)时间::
            (xxx)this is the timetable(.) the
            timetable::
298    M    ho capito ho capito ah ah!
            I understood I understood ah ah!
299    E    hai capito?
            did you understand?
300    M    哦(.)哦
            ah(.) ah
301    C    她说在哪个学校
            she is referring to school
```

302	M	ho capito ho capito!
		I understood I understood!
303	E	okay (.) se non capisci qualcosa dimmelo che:
		okay (.) if you don't understand something let me know that:
304	M	sì capito! ih ih!
		yes understood! ih ih!
[…]		
306	A	io ti posso ri- provare a spiegare (1,0) e:: NON È (.) permesso non è possibile fare uscite prima delle sei
		I can re-try to explain (1.0) and:: IT IS NOT (.) permitted it is not possible to go out before six
307	C	mmm sì
		mmm yes
308	A	se per caso (.) dovete anda- lei deve andare dal dottore (.) dovete andare via: voi eh (.) bisogna che mi scrivete
		if by any chance (.) you have to- you have to go to the doctor (.) you have to go away: you eh (.) you have to write to me
309	C	°mmm°
		°mmm°
310	A	sul diario
		in the school diary
311	C	°mmm°
		°mmm°
312	A	oppure chiamate (.) e mi dite guarda (.) mio figlio (.) o mia figlia (.) devono uscire prima
		otherwise you call (.) and tell me look (.) my son (.) or my daughter (.) have to go out earlier
313	C	°mmm°
		°mmm°

```
314    A    okay?
            okay?
315    C    sì sì sì
            yes yes yes
316    A    quindi bisogna che avvisiate
            so you have to inform us
317    C    °mmm°
            °mmm°
```

One explanation for this choice could be that either she (the child language broker) never arrives at the centre before the beginning of the activities or that she considers herself as the intended addressee of this information and she thinks it is not important for her mother to be informed about it. Irrespective of the reason why she makes this choice, she only reports on the gist of the information that she deems essential for her mother to know, by censoring part of the information that the Italian educator has tried to convey.

It is also interesting to notice that the mother immediately answers her daughter's turn by saying in Italian that she has understood (line 298) and she repeats it in line 302 and 304 when the educator invites the mother to tell her if she does not understand something.

By repeating "I have understood" several times, the mother tries to show that she understands the content of the interaction and she tries to preserve her role as active participant who is able to take part into the interaction without needing the assistance of her child, who has self-selected to broker. From that moment onwards, since her ability to understand Italian has been threatened, the mother always replies with acknowledgment tokens, such as "mm", to each utterance produced by the Italian educator to show her understanding (lines 307, 309, 311, 313, 317).

Extract 9 from Meeting 3 provides another example of reduced renditions.

```
Extract 9, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

149    E    duemila e sedici (.) allora (.) qui
            abbiamo scritto che (.) ehm:: (.) lei
            iscrive: ehm: (.) iscrive: (.)
            eh:: yu zhang (.) al doposcuola (.) che
            inizia (.) il dodici ottobre (.) okay?
            va bene? e la mamma deve firmare (.) poi
```

```
           un'altra cosa che devi mmh chiedere alla
           mamma è: con chi ehm (.) allora (.) mmh
           (.) adesso tu dovresti tradurre quello
           che io dico alla mamma allora (.) la
           quota d'iscrizione è (.) dieci (.) euro
           (.) al mese (.) glielo dici? glielo puoi
           dire?
           two thousand and sixteen (.) so (.) here
           we've written that (.) ehm:: (.) she
           enrols: ehm: (.) enrols: (.) eh:: yu zhang
           (.) in the youth centre (.) which starts
           (.) the twelveth october (.) okay? is it
           okay? and your mum has to sign (.) then
           another thing you have to mmh ask your
           mum is: who ehm (.) so (.) mmh (.) now you
           should translate what I'm saying to your
           mum so (.) the registration fee is (.) ten
           (.) euros (.) each month (.) can you tell
           her? can you please tell her?
150    C   一个月10块钱
           ten euros per month
151    E   dieci euro al mese (.) il mese di ottobre
           (.) siccome inizia a metà (.) è cinque
           euro (.) il mese di ottobre (.) glielo
           vuoi dire?
           ten euros a month (.) the month of
           october (.) because it starts in the
           middle of the month (.) it's five euros
           (.) the month of october (.) can you tell
           her?
152    C   她说(.)十月份是一半才开始(.)所以是5块钱(1.00)
           她说因为十月 开已经是一了(.) 所以是5块钱
           she says that (.) october started in the
           middle (.) so it is five euros (1.00) she
           says that since october started from the
           middle (.) so we pay five euros
153    M   在后面10块?
           and then ten euros?
```

154	E	allora ottobre cinque euro per (.) il doposcuola okay? novembre dieci euro (.) dicembre (.) cinque euro (.) perché (.) e: ci sono le vacanze (.) di natale (.) okay? va bene? quindi (.) eh: la mamma può pagare (.) oggi (.) ma può pagare entro ottobre (.) il mese di ottobre (.) glielo puoi dire? *so october five euros for (.) the after school activities okay? november ten euros (.) december (.) five euros (.) because (.) e: it's christmas (.) holidays (.) okay? is it okay? so (.) eh: your mum can pay (.) today (.) but she can pay by the end of october (.) the month of october (.) can you tell her?*
155	C	11月的时候10块 (.) 然后12月的时候是5块(.)因为是那个 (1,00) 诞节的假 *ten euros for november (.) and then december five euros (.) because it's (.) christmas holidays*
156	M	那就是(.)三个月(.)10(.)11(.)12(.) 三个月一共20块钱 *so (.) three months (.) october (.) november (.) december (.) three months twenty euros in total*
157	E	[un mese (.) un mese solo (.) anche cinque euro solo] *[one month (.) only one month (.) also only five euros]*
158	C	[可以现在给(.)也可以到的时候再给] *[you can pay now (.) or you can pay later]*
159	M	那先付给她呗(.)20块 *in this case we pay earlier (.) twenty euros*
160	E	cosa ha detto la mamma? *what did your mum say?*

```
161    C    ha detto pagare adesso
            she said we pay now
```

In this Extract, the educator is informing the Chinese family about the fees they have to pay for the after-school activities. Either at the end or in the middle of each turn, the Italian educator invites the child to report what she has just said in Italian to her mother in Chinese (lines 149, 151, 154). In so doing, the Italian educator shows that she believes it is important for the mother to fully understand and be involved in this sequence related to the fees to pay. In line 163, the Italian educator also uses the verb "translate" for the first time ("you should translate what I am saying to your mother").

After a first turn in which the Italian educator invites the child to broker her message to her mother (line 149), in line 150 the young Chinese girl takes the turn to broker in Chinese the educator's utterance. However, she only renders the last information provided by the educator and omits the previous part where the educator has summarised what they have just done, that is registering the child, and reported the activities' starting date.

The child omits the whole preceding stretch talk and only brokers the information related to the amount of the monthly fee they have to pay. In line 151, the educator keeps on explaining how much they have to pay for the month of October and she asks again the young girl to report that information to her mother. In line 152 the young Chinese child correctly repeats the information concerning the payment for the month of October by producing a close rendition. Her mother shows to have understood her daughter's rendition by taking the following turn to expand on the payment and by adding that in November they will have to pay 10 euros again (line 153).

In the following turn, the Italian educator repeats the information she has just provided, adds the amount of the fee related to the month of December, and mentions the deadline of the payment, which can be made that same day or by the end of that month.

The child, in line 155, brokers the educator's utterance but only repeats the amount of the fees for the month of December omitting the information related to the deadline of the payment. The mother takes the following turn (line 156) to recapitulate the total amount they have to pay.

However, since the young girl has not brokered anything back to the educator in Italian, the educator cannot understand what the two Chinese participants are saying in Chinese. She thus overlaps with the mother's answer

to tell the child in Italian that they can start by paying just one month. In so doing, the Italian educator must suppose that they may be arguing because of money issues. The real reason why the Italian educator is not receiving any answer is that the child language broker did not broker to her mother the question related to the deadline of payment.

The educator keeps on repeating that they can only pay just one month (line 157), until the child realises that she did not broker all the information of the previous utterance. She repairs such omission by brokering the missing information to her mother in line 158. This repair allows the mother to provide an answer that is then brokered back into Italian to the educator (line 161), and the sequence can end successfully.

These two examples have shown that child language brokers produce reduced renditions when the previous utterance is quite long and contains more than one piece of information. In these cases, since they may not be used to retain long turns, they might tend to broker only some information, which may be the information they think is more important or the information they remember. In the first example the reduced rendition does not affect the flow of the interaction, while in the second example, it blocks the flow of the talk, which can be resumed only when the child language broker also brokers the information she has first omitted.

5.4.3.1.2. Expanded renditions

Expanded renditions are defined by Wadensjö as renditions which include "more explicitly expressed information than the preceding 'original utterance'" (Wadensjö 1998: 107). They may be used to add explanations or clarifications to the original utterance.

The following two examples are taken from Meeting 1 and they show the use of expanded renditions both when rendering the educator's question to the mother and when rendering the mother's answer to the educator.

In Extract 10 the Italian educator is asking whether the children can go to the centre by themselves (line 360).

```
Extract 10, E: educator; C: child


360     E     mm (.) i tuoi figli possono venire al
              centro da soli? (.) qui?
              mm (.) can your children come to the
              centre by themselves? (.) here?
```

```
361    C    我们可以自己走吗？可以自己走还是你们送我？
            can we go by ourselves? can we go by
            ourselves or do I go with you?
362    E    possono venire il pomeriggio qui da soli
            o li accompagnate voi?
            can they come here in the afternoon by
            themselves or do they come with you?
```

In line 361 the child takes the turn to broker the educator's question. In her rendition she adds an alternative suggestion "or you take me here?" She may opt for this choice because she knows that her mother does not let them go anywhere by themselves, but she takes her children where they need to go or asks other people to take them there.

This assumption is confirmed by Extract 10 which shows what happens a few turns after that and from which it is possible to realize that the child will go to the centre either accompanied by her mother or by other people. In this example, the child provides two expanded renditions.

The first one is displayed in line 301 where she renders the educator's question to her mother by adding the clarification: "if you can't." With this addition, the child may want to respect her mother's status as the person who mainly takes care of her children and avoid any possible threats to this role.

The second expanded rendition is provided in line 387, where the child renders her mother's answer to the Italian educator by adding an explanation to the answer given by her mother. It seems that the child feels the need to explain to the educator why her mother cannot always go and pick them up from the centre.

In order to protect the reputation of her mother as a good mother, the child language broker specifies that sometimes her mother has to work, she cannot go to the centre and therefore other people may go and pick them up (line 387).

```
Extract 11, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

384    E    viene solo la mamma o puoi anche andare
            via anche con qualcun altro?
            can you go back home only with your mum
            or can you go home with someone else too?
385    C    我可以跟别人一起出来吗？ 如果不 在
```

		can I go back home with someone else? if
		you can't
386	M	可以的
		that's fine
387	C	eh: si può (.) solo delle volte che (.)
		la mia mamma ha: del lavoro da fare a
		casa (.) e quindi (.) esco con qualcun
		altro
		eh: I can (.) only sometimes that (.) my
		mum has: to do some work at home (.) and
		then (.) I go home with someone else
388	E	con qualcun altro
		with someone else
389	C	sì
		yes

These examples of expanded renditions show that the child language brokers may deem it necessary to add some information either to make the content clearer or to defend her mother's role as a caring parent. Both cases show how child language brokers can edit the information not only by omitting part of the content when they are dealing with linguistic barriers or when they lack specific knowledge (Bauer 2017), but also by expanding the content with the aim to promote their parents' understanding and to preserve their parental status.

Additionally, these Extracts display the personal initiatives taken on by child language brokers in order to favour the flow of interaction. Expanded renditions represent the agency, responsibility and power assumed by child language brokers. They not only try to make the content available and clear into the target language but they also try to preserve the parental status of their mothers.

5.4.4. Child language brokers' contributions: collaboratively-built renditions

Building on Wadensjö taxonomy, the category of "collaboratively-built renditions" was formulated to analyse some specific renditions observed in this dataset. When migrant mothers have sufficient knowledge of Italian to understand the educator and to reply to her questions, they rely on their children's help only when they are not able to fully convey the meaning of what they want to say. However, since they can speak and understand Italian, in these circumstances,

they also help their children formulate both their brokered renditions and their own utterances, by keeping control over their children's sequences.

On these occasions, children and mothers collaborate together to construct sequences and to convey the meaning to the educator, by performing what Valdés *et al.* (2003) identified as a performance team.

Extract 12 from Meeting 4 shows an example of collaboratively-built renditions. The Italian educator is explaining to the two Pakistani interlocutors that mobile phone use is not allowed during the after-school laboratory. This topic reminds the mother of when she wanted to call the centre but no one answered her phone call.

```
Extract 12, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

438   E    non è permesso l'utilizzo del cellulare
           the use of mobile phones is forbidden
439   M    no cellulare
           no mobile phone
440   E    cellulare non ce l'hanno?
           do they have a mobile phone?
441   M    no no
           no no
442   E    no (.) se c'è bisogno usiamo il telefono
           del centro
           no (.) if we need it we use the phone of
           the centre
443   M    sì sì
           yes yes
444   E    gli operatori prendono contatto con la
           scuola (.) per (.) definire gli obbiettivi
           didattici dell'anno (.) okay?
           the educators get in contact with the
           school (.) to (.) establish the learning
           goals of the year (.) okay?
445   M    eh aspetta (.) io: eh: problema: luca:
           oggi no scuola: eh ehm: tutti problemi
           (.) io: telefonato: adela no
           telefonato:
           eh wait (.) I: eh: problem: luca: today
```

		no school: eh ehm: all problems (.) I:
		called adela no phoned:
446	M	آکھ ماما کتنی واری فون کیتا اے ُتسی نیں چاندیں ِفر میری ماما آؤ کہندی اے
		ُنومیرو ُجوستو نیں اے ُتساں کول
		tell her that your mum called many times
		but they did not answer
447	C	mia mamma ha telefonato qui in centro e::
		voi=
		my mum phoned here the centre and:: you=
448	M	=a ufficio=
		=the office=
449	C	=non c'era nessuno=
		=no one was there=
450	M	=no
		=no
451	C	non le avete
		you don't
452	I	dove qui?
		where here?
453	C	[sì]
		[yes]
454	M	[sì]
		[yes]
455	I	ah quando?
		ah when?
456	E	no non ha chiamato il numero giusto perché
		io non ho nessuna chiamata al cellulare
		no she didn't call the right number because
		I don't have any call on my mobile phone
457		(.)
458	M	NO [[NO!
		NO [[NO!
459	C	[[io numero giusto eh آؤ پی کہندی اے کہ ُنومیرو
		ُجوستو نیں ُتساں کیتا
		[[I the right number eh she is saying
		you didn't call the right number
460	M	internet telefonato internet (.) a ufficio
		internet called internet (.) the office

```
461        (1,0)
462   I    il numero che forse è su internet che ha
           trovato
           the number that maybe she found on the
           internet
463   M    sì sì
           yes yes
464   E    ah no no adesso io do un numero alla
           mamma che deve chiamare quello li (.)
           okay?
           ah no no now I give your mum a number and
           she has to call that number (.) okay?
465   C    okay
           okay
466   M    کے پی آکھدی اے؟
           what is she saying?
467   C    آؤ کہندی اے کہ ہُنڑ میں ماما کیں نمبر دے ساں
           she is saying that now she gives the
           right number to the mum
468   M    ah va bene
           ah that's fine
469   E    ah
           ah
```

In line 445 the Pakistani mother tries to inform the educator that she has called the centre because she has had a problem with her son. However, her Italian is not good enough to convey the meaning of the concept she wants to express. For this reason, she decides to code-switch and she conveys the content of the message in Urdu to her daughter asking her to broker it into Italian (line 446).

The daughter takes the next turn to broker her mother's utterance, but she cannot report all the information because her mother interrupts her rendition and latches on what her daughter is saying either to better specify what her daughter is saying (the daughter says "here" and the mother specifies "the office" in line 448) or to stress the same concept (line 450).

A whole collaboratively-built sequence emerges from this passage where the child language broker and her mother alternate their turns contributing to the rendition of the message.

Extract 13 from Meeting 1 shows another example in which the child acts as a language broker without rendering the whole utterance into the target language, but collaborating with her mother to convey the message the mother wants to express.

In this example, the educator is asking whether the child's brother, who is going to be registered at the centre, suffers from any allergies. The mother takes the next turn to answer yes (line 478), but she is not able to say pollen in Italian. She then resorts to code switching to ask her daughter how to say pollen in Italian (line 479). The child does not know how to translate the word pollen into Italian, but she promptly starts explaining in Italian to the educator the consequences of the allergy ("his eyes hurt") and in which period her brother suffers from it ("in spring") (line 481). These few key words are sufficient for the Italian educator to understand that the brother is allergic to pollen. Thanks to the help of her daughter who collaborates with her mother the message is conveyed.

```
Extract 13, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

477    E    no? (.) allergie?
            no? (.) any allergies?
478    M    sì eh:: ha l'allergia: ehm::
            yes eh:: he is allergic: ehm::
479    M    °花粉怎么说啊(.)花粉啊°
            °how do you say pollen (.) pollen°
480    M    eh::
            eh::
481    C    ha mal di occhi (.) che:: in primavera
            cade
            his eyes hurt (.) that:: during the
            spring falls
482    E    okay (.) al polline?
            okay (.) to the pollen?
483    M    SÌ SÌ [sì]
            YES YES [yes]
484    C          [sì]
                  [yes]
485    M    al polline ih ih
            to the pollen ih ih
486    E    anch'io
            me too
```

Extract 14 provides a last example from Meeting 2 in which the mother and the daughter work together to provide a correct answer to the educator's question.

```
Extract 14, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

183    E    scusami (.) nato a forlì?
             sorry (.) born in forlì?
184    C    sì sì sì
             yes yes yes
185    E    quando?
             when?
186    M    eh:: (.) due:mila: e sette
             eh:: (.) two: thousand: and seven
187         (1,00)
188    C    他说日
             she means the day
189    M    ven- ven-
             fri- fri-
190         (2,0)
191    E    duemila e sette
             two thousand and seven
192    M    [ven]
             [twen]
193    C    [vent]icinque novembre
             [twen]ty-fifth november
194    E    venticinque novembre
             twenty-fifth november
```

In this extract, the educator asks for the date of birth of the child's brother and the child and the mother use five turns (from line 189 to line 193) where they both intervene to provide pieces of information to produce a full answer to this question, which is eventually answered.

Collaboratively-built renditions is the term adopted to refer to a sequence of turns where the mother and the child work together in order to provide an answer to the educator's question. This collaboration may be prompted by the mothers through code-switching or by the children themselves who understand their parents' need for assistance. The renditions produced by child

language brokers do not correspond to a faithful rendition of their parent's message in the target language, but to a contribution that children produce in their role as *principals* (Goffman 1981). The mothers rely on their children's help by asking them to provide meaningful content and not simply by mediating their message.

Collaboratively-built renditions confirm Orellana's (2009: 55) assumption that "children do not perform "solo" as translators" and that all the family members work together to successfully reach their communicative aims. Child language brokering can thus be considered as a shared family activity.

5.5. Children's role performance as active agents

After having explored child language brokers' renditions in the target language, this section sets out to highlight the conversational features applied by children when they take part in the interaction in their role performance as active agents.

The discourse features that will be analysed in this section can be related to what Wadensjö (1998) defined "non-renditions", i.e. the renditions produced by the interpreter who takes the initiative and produce an utterance which is not the translation of someone else's utterance.

These non-renditions highlight the potential interactional power that children have also when they do not render other parties' turns into the target language, but still act as language brokers.

These examples help us understand that children feel entitled to accomplish such conversational actions because of the power that brokering confers to them in the interaction. More specifically, the following sections provide evidence and support for the children's active role, by focussing on the following instances: i) when they open side sequences to add insert expansions and negotiate meaning; ii) when they use repetitions and anticipations to show their proactive participation; iii) when they repair elements; and iv) when they disalign from the role they are expected to perform.

5.5.1. Insert expansion: dyadic talk securing understanding

A first feature identified in the four Meetings is the use of insert expansions. As described in Chapter 4, sequences in talk-in-interaction may be constituted by a single adjacency pair (such as question-answer), which can be expanded before the first-pair part (pre-expansion), after the first-pair part (insert

expansion), or after the second-pair part (post-expansion) (Schegloff 2007). This section will focus on insert expansions, i.e. expansions between the first part and the projected second pair part (also defined by Wadensjö (1998) as "multi-part renditions").

In child language brokered interactions insert expansions are used to open side sequences that are usually monolingual, in which child language brokers and their mothers collaborate and negotiate their meanings. Monolingual talk in the language of the migrant family is thus used to secure mutual understanding. The two examples below are taken respectively from Meeting 1 and 2 and show the use of monolingual dyadic talk in insert expansions produced by child language brokers to negotiate the content to be conveyed to the Italian educator.

In Extract 15, from Meeting 1, the educator is asking the Chinese mother whether her children can go to the centre by themselves. The child takes the next turn to broker the question (line 361).

```
Extract 15, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

360    E    mm (.) i tuoi figli possono venire al
            centro da soli? (.) qui?
            mm (.) can your children come to the
            centre by themselves? (.) here?
361    C    我们可以自己走吗？可以自己走还是你们送我？
            can we go by ourselves? can we go by
            ourselves or do you come with us?
362    E    possono venire il pomeriggio qui da soli
            o li accompagnate voi?
            can they come here in the afternoon by
            themselves or do you bring them here?
363    M    妈妈送(.)妈妈接送
            your mum takes you there (.) your mum
            takes you there and takes you back home
364    C    就是你接送啊？
            do you go there with me?
365    M    嗯
            yes
366    C    eh:: viene a prendere la mamma
            eh:: my mum comes to pick up
```

However, when her mother answers in Chinese (line 363), providing an answer to the educator's question, the Chinese girl does not immediately render her mother's answer into Italian, but starts an insert expansion (lines 364 and 365) where she repeats in Chinese her mother's answer (line 364) as if seeking further confirmation from her mother before reporting the information to the educator.

A similar example can be found in Extract 16 from Meeting 2. The Italian educator is asking whether the child's little brother can go to the centre by himself. In line 225 the child language broker produces a close rendition of the educator's utterance in Chinese for her mother. Her mother answers in line 226 with another question in Chinese. She asks her daughter whether the daughter herself can take her brother to the centre, by opening a side sequence through an insert-expansion.

```
Extract 16, E: educator; C: child; M: mother

224    E    le firme AH EH simone può venire da solo?
            the signatures AH EH can simone come by
            himself?
225    C    他自己过来啊
            does he come by himself?
            (1,00)
226    M    你带他过来?
            do you go with him?
227    E    o lo accompagni te?
            or do you go with him?
228    C    嗯(.)我也要写作业的
            en (.) I should also do my homework
229    M    你来这里写嘛
            you come here to write
230    C    不可以的
            it's not good
231    M    不可以的? 那(.)我送他过来(.)接你过来好了
            isn't it good? so (.) I go with him (.)
            that's okay
232    C    反正我作业不写了
            otherwise I can't do my homework
233    E    lo accompagni tu? okay (.) quindi può
            uscire dal centro >oppure con le seguenti
```

```
persone< (2,0) okay (.) solo con mamma
(.) okay?
```
do you go with him? okay (.) so he can leave the centre >or with the following people< (2,0) okay (.) only with the mother (.) okay?

In this extract from line 226 to line 232, except for a turn produced by the Italian educator (line 227), the two Chinese interlocutors start a dyadic sequence in Chinese used to negotiate the answer they need to provide. The child does not want to take her brother to the centre because she has to do her homework and she thinks that she would waste her time taking her brother there. The mother tries to persuade her daughter (line 229), who does not change her mind.

These extracts represent meaningful examples of how insert expansions construct monolingual dyads that are instrumental to prepare subsequent renditions (Baraldi 2012), clarify meanings, and secure mutual understanding (Tebble 2012).

When starting monolingual dyads, the child becomes the *author* (Goffman 1981) of the content, and, as argued by Baraldi and Gavioli (2010: 148), she favours the creation of narrative mediation (Winslade 2006). Narrative mediation produces an alternative narrative to the existing one and gives the parties the opportunity to introduce their own stories in order to express their worries or clarify their doubts. Similarly, during these insert expansions, the Chinese mothers and their daughters engage in parallel narratives during which they deal with their own private family issues.

By developing insert expansions, the child language brokers also display their full agency in the coordination of turns at talk (Wadensjö 1998). They deem it necessary to add turns to clarify private issues before answering the educator's questions and give the educators back the turn. The use of insert expansions thus allows for spaces where reciprocal understanding can be accomplished and promotes child language brokers' interactional agency.

5.5.2. Repetition and anticipation

Repetitions and anticipations are discourse actions that characterise the Meetings analysed in this study. Repeating or anticipating other interlocutors' utterances show both the desire to keep control of the interaction and the active engagement in it.

In the example that follows, Extract 17 from Meeting 1, the child language broker uses the strategy of repetition to confirm the validity of her mother's responses.

In this Extract the educator is asking the name of the street where the Chinese family lives. The child takes the turn after the educator's question (line 26) to answer it, even though she only produces a filler ("eh"), and her mother latches on this filler to start giving the address to the educator. The child, however, takes back the following turn to repeat her mother's answer and to complete the address (line 28). In line 31, the child again repeats her mother's answer. In line 33, it is the mother who terminates the sequence related to the address with a final "yes."

However, during the following minute (line 38) used by the educator to write this information down, the child checks what the educator is writing and corrects her when she realises that the name of the street is not written correctly (line 40).

```
Extract 17, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

25      E    okay (.) dove abitate?
             okay (.) where do you live?
26      C    eh:=
             eh:=
27      M    =marina
             =marina
28      C    via marina mezza
             marina mezza street
             (2,0)
29      E    ma:rina ((scrivendo))
             ma:rina ((writing))
             (1,0)
30      M    me[[zza
             me[[zza
31      C     [[mezza
              [[mezza
32      E    °me:zza:° (.) così?
             °me:zza:° (.) like this?
33      M    sì
             yes
```

```
34            (1,0)
35    C      oh
              oh
36    M      venti- ventidue
              twenty- twenty-two
37    E      ventidue: (.) forlì?
              twenty-two: (.) forlì?
38    M      sì
              yes
              (1,0) ((scrivendo))
                    ((writing))
39    E      forlì
              forlì
40    C      MEZZA
              MEZZA
41    E      mezza scusami
              mezza sorry
42    M      eh eh
              eh eh
```

In this example, the child carefully monitors the construction of talk and repeats her mother's answers in order to confirm their validity and to keep her role as an active participant. Even though the mother apparently closes this sequence (line 38), the child continues to supervise the Italian educator and corrects her in line 40. In so doing, she demonstrates her proactive role and confirms her power within the interaction.

Another discursive action that shows child language brokers' active participation and monitoring of the interaction is the presence of anticipations. Child language brokers anticipate the educators' questions, thus displaying full understanding of the course of action, as well as specific procedural knowledge. Extract 18 from Meeting 1 is a clear example of anticipation.

The Italian educator has just asked the age of the Chinese father and in lines 226 and 227 both the Chinese mother and daughter repeat the father's age.

Before the Italian educator takes the next turn, the young girl also asks her mother her age in Chinese. She thus predicts the question that will follow by asking it in Chinese to her mother even before the educator asks her in Italian (line 228). She does the same with her sister's age anticipating the request of this information as well (line 234).

```
Extract 18, E: educator, C: child, M: mother
```

```
226    C    eh [qualantuno]
             eh [forty-one]
227    M       [qualantuno]
                [forty-one]
228    C    你呢(.)妈妈?
             and you (.) and you mum?
229    M    t:tlentasette
             thirthy-seven
230    E    tu trentasette?
             you thirty-seven?
231    M    sì
             yes
232         (.)
233    E    sei giovane!
             you're young!
234    C    姐姐呢?
             and my sister?
235    E    la tua sorella (.) angela?
             your sister (.) angela?
236    C    eh [quattoldici]
             eh [fourteen]
237    M       [quattordici]
                [fourteen]
```

Both the use of repetition and anticipation show that child language brokers are fully aware of the unfolding of the conversation and play an active role by monitoring other participants' utterances and actions.

Additionally, the use of repetition contributes to building up rapport between the parties by showing their active listenership (Tannen 2007), and by bringing about cohesive ties (Angermeyer 2003). The use of anticipation indicates that child language brokers are able to predict the end of a turn constructional unit and to use the transition relevance place to take the floor (Sacks *et al.* 1974), thus suggesting their active interactional participation.

These two discursive moves also suggest that child language brokers are familiar with formal situations where personal family information is requested by representatives of public authorities. This could also be interpreted as a sign that they have already brokered in similar circumstances in the past.

5.5.3. Code-switching used to initiate repair

Another recurring pattern identified in the interactions is the use of code switching to initiate other-repair. Child language brokers initiate or perform repair to solve their mother-initiated repairable items.

Extract 19 from Meeting 1 shows an example of this practice. The Italian educator has just asked where the child's brother was born. The mother answers in Forlì and the child self-selects and takes the next turn to repair her mother's mistake (lines 439 and 440). The young girl first says "no" (line 439), then switches to Chinese to reiterate that her brother was not born in Forlì but in Bologna. Her mother confirms Bologna at the following turn (line 441).

```
Extract 19, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

437    E    dove? (.) a forlì?
            where? (.) in forlì?
438    M    a forlì
            in forlì
439    C    no!
            no!
440    C    没有！我们在 [bologna!]
            no! we live in [bologna!]
441    M                   [bologna]
                           [bologna]
442    E    bologna
            bologna
```

A similar circumstance occurs in Meeting 2, Extract 20. In this case, the Italian educator has asked the date of birth of the child's brother. The mother takes the turn to answer, but first she hesitates and then she tells the year of birth (line 186). The child language broker uses the pause (line 187) to take the floor and explain in Chinese that the educator wants to know the birth date. In so doing, the child initiates repair, which is then completed by the mother who tries to give the correct answer by starting to utter the day in which the child's little brother was born (lines 189 and 192). However, the repair is fully completed only when the child tells the full date in line 193.

```
Extract 20, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

183    E    scusami (.) nato a forlì?
            sorry (.) born in forlì?
184    C    sì sì sì
            yes yes yes
185    E    quando?
            when?
186    M    eh:: (.) due:mila: e sette
            eh:: (.) two: thousand: and seven
187         (1.00)
188    C    他说日
            she means the day
189    M    ven- ven-
            fri- fri-
190         (2.0)
191    E    duemila e sette
            two thousand and seven
192    M    [ven]
            [twen]
193    C    [vent]icinque novembre
            [twen]ty-fifth november
194    E    venticinque novembre
            twenty-fifth november
```

These examples are useful to show the use of both repair and code switching by child language brokers.

In the two extracts, each time the children plan to initiate repair, they resort to code switching, thus confirming Anderson's (2012) analysis according to which code-switching is functional to achieving the institutional aims of the encounter. The child language brokers switch to their mothers' native languages to make sure that the information provided to the Italian educator is correct and that the aim of that specific part of the interaction is successfully achieved.

Additionally, as in Anderson's study, the use of code-switching is unflagged (Poplack and Sankoff 1988: 1176), that is none of the participants comments on it or notes it.

Once they have switched to their mothers' languages, the children feel entitled to initiate repairs. This initiative suggests their interactional agency and the

sense of responsibility that encourages them to repair their mothers' utterances. In so doing, they aim to report the correct information and they show they can monitor the construction of the talk.

Child language brokers' repair can be seen as indicative of their power within the interaction and of the responsibilities they have towards both their parents and the Italian educators. The use of this conversational move can thus be interpreted as an example of the parentification process (Weisskirch 2007; Peris *et al.* 2008) that may result from CLB, and as a sign of children's empowerment within the interaction.

5.5.4. Disalignment: refusal to broker

Child language brokers' interactional empowerment is also displayed on those occasions where they disalign from other participants' requests and do not immediately mediate despite the invitation to do so by their interlocutors. Extract 21 from Meeting 2 provides an insightful example.

The educator has just asked the child whether she attended the Chinese course at the Welcome Youth Centre the year before (line 240). The child answers by saying "no" (line 241) and the educator asks the child again whether they have ever met before (line 242). In line 243, the mother takes the turn to ask her daughter what the educator is saying (line 243) but the daughter does not answer her mother immediately and goes on talking in Italian with the educator (244). The mother does not give up and asks again in Chinese what they have just said (line 247) and her daughter finally translates the educator's question to her mother (248).

```
Extract 21, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

240    A    è lo stesso (1,0) per il progetto (19,0)
            giulia l'anno scorso però venivi a fare
            il corso di cinese vero? (1,00) no?
            it's the same (1.0) for the project
            (19.0) but giulia last year you came here
            to take the chinese classes, din't you?
            (1.00) didn't you?
241    B    mmm no
            mmm no
242    A    non ti ho mai visto?
            haven't we ever met?
```

```
243    C    什么?
            what?
244    B    no
            no
245    A    il pomeriggio? no?
            in the afternoon? no?
246    B    no
            no
247    C    什么?
            what?
248    B    就是上一年我没有过来学中文的哦?
            she is asking whether last year I came to
            study chinese no?
249    C    没有
            no
```

In this example, the child disaligns from the expected behaviour of answering her mother's question immediately. By declining her mother's invitation to tell her what the educator is saying, the child excludes the mother from the interaction and disobeys a parental request.

A similar circumstance can be studied in Extract 22, from Meeting 3. The Italian educator is asking the place and date of birth of the child's little brother. In this example, it is the Italian educator who invites the child to report her question to her mother (line 5), since the child has been answering all the educator's questions in Italian without consulting her mother.

However, even after the educator's invitation to broker the question, the child repeats the answer in Italian without rendering the question in Chinese to her mother as the educator has asked (line 6).

```
Extract 22, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

3      A    luca (.) è nato (.) quando? dove? dove è
            nato luca
            luca (.) when (.) was he born? where?
            where was luca born?
4      B    bolonia
            bologna
5      A    a bologna (5,0) ((scrive)) quando? ti
```

		ricordi? chiedi alla mamma quando è nato se non ti ricordi proprio bene
		in bologna (5.0) ((writing)) when? do you remember? ask your mum when he was born if you can't remember really well
6	B	il ventiquattro di agosto (.) duemila e dieci
		the twenty-fourth of august (.) two thousand and ten
7	A	il ventiquattro (5,00) ((scrive)) eh: abitate (.) in quale via?
		the twenty-fourth (5,00) ((writing)) eh: you live (.) in which street?
8	B	giorgio pisano
		giorgio pisano

Children's disalignment produced by refusing to mediate is a conversational move that confirms the power that children have in the interaction. When children refuse to broker, a divergence from children's expected role (as brokers), and their actual role performance (as animators, who do not broker) arises. In so doing, child language brokers' role distance (Goffman 1961) can be observed and, as previous studies have shown (Danby and Baker 1998; Hutchby 2007), children refuse to display compliance with adults' requests and limit the control that adults try to exercise on them (Baraldi 2014). By resisting adults' actions children show that their active participation is neither controlled by adults nor established by social or institutional constraints.

Additionally, this conversational move suggests that child language brokers feel empowered to decide whether to include their mothers into the conversation or not. When they exclude their mothers from the interaction, they perform what Martinez *et al.* (2009) and Umaña-Taylor (2003) defined role reversal. They take on the parental role by giving the information that is usually expected from their parents and by making independent interactional decisions.

5.6. Participants' reactions to children's empowered role

The previous sections have highlighted the different discursive and conversational moves that children carry on during the interactions both when

mediating and when performing other interactional actions. All the moves adopted by the children can be considered to be examples of the power they exercise in the interaction and evidence of their active participation. This section aims to examine both children's reactions to such an empowered position and other participants' reactions to children's agency and assistance in the communication.

Extract 23 from Meeting 1 includes an example in which the child's reaction can be read as a positive attitude towards her active role in the interaction. In this extract, the Italian educator has just asked for the parents' phone numbers. The mother starts reporting her phone number (from line 67 to line 77) and despite a little misunderstanding (lines 67 and 68), she reports it correctly. The child, however, self-selects and takes the turn in line 78 to invite her mother to let her tell the phone number. The mother ignores her child's suggestion and keeps on telling her own phone number (lines 79 to 82). When the educator asks if she has written the number correctly (line 83), it is the child who answers "yes" (line 84), as if stressing the importance of her validation. By asking for her mother's permission to give her phone number, the child tries not to be excluded from the interaction and to preserve her active role.

The same attitude is shown when the child closes the sequence by confirming to the educator that she correctly wrote her mother's number. This can be read as a strategy adopted by the child to show that she is participating in the interaction even though she has not taken any turns to interact.

```
Extract 23, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

65     E    cellulare? (.) della mamma
            mobile phone? (.) mother's mobile phone
66     M    sì (1,0) tle (.) venti- eh ven- eh venti
            (.) quattlo (.) quattlo otto
            yes (1.0) three (.) twenty – eh- twen –
            eh twenty (.) four (.) four eight
67     E    quatt- un altro quattro?
            fou- another four?
68     M    no no no
            no no no
69     E    quattro ott-
            four eigh-
```

```
70    M    [otto]
           [eight]
71    E    [otto]
           [eight]
72    M    eh:: (.) uno
           eh:: (.) one
73    E    uno
           one
74    M    nove
           nine
75    E    otto
           eight
76    M    sette
           seven
77    E    sette
           seven
78    C    要不还是我来说?
           or you can let me say it
79    M    due tle
           two three
80    E    sette [nove]
           seven [nine]
81    M          [nove] [tle]
                 [nine] [three]
82    E                 [tre]
                        [three]
83    E    fatto giusto?
           is it right?
84    C    sì
           yes
```

The child's reaction to a possible threat to her participation status suggests her positive attitude towards the active role she is performing throughout the whole meeting.

A similar situation is observed in Extract 24, from Meeting 1, where the child self-selects to tell her mother that she is going to write the piece of information that the educator needs (line 492). The child volunteers to write the information on the registration form, even though the information requested is her mother's name.

In so doing, she shows her desire to help and to participate actively in the Meeting. By making this suggestion the child also reverses a traditional situation in which parents are the family members who write the information required by the representatives of public authorities.

```
Extract 24, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

491   E    allora qui mi fai (.) questo qui lo
           compilo io (.) okay (.) allora qui sempre
           il tuo nome
           then here you write (.) this one I can fill
           it (.) okay (.) then here always your name
492   C    我来写吧(.)
           I'll write it(.)
493   E    tuo di mamma
           yours as mother
```

A further example of children's positive reactions and attitudes towards their active role in the interaction is provided by Extract 25 from Meeting 2. In this Extract, it is possible to observe the child's pride in being able to provide a full and faster answer to the Italian educator's question, by anticipating her mother's response. The Italian educator has just asked for the date of birth of the child's brother. The child and her mother collaborate to provide the correct answer. However, the child manages to report the day and month of her brother's birth faster than her mother (line 194). The ability to answer faster than her mother is a reason for personal satisfaction (line 195).

```
Extract 25, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

191   E    duemila e sette
           two thousand and seven
192   M    [ven-]
           [twen-]
193   C    [vent]icinque novembre
           [twen]ty-fifth november
194   E    venticinque novembre
           [twen]ty-fifth november
195   C    看(.)我比你还知道
           look (.) I know it better than you
```

These three examples have shown children's positive attitudes towards their active engagement in the conversation. These proactive reactions can be interpreted as their desire to preserve their full participation in the construction of the talk.

These positive feelings towards the responsibility they assume during the interaction and their desire to help may also be stimulated by the educators' positive reactions to the children's assistance in the conversation.

As Extract 26 from Meeting 4 and Extract 27 from Meeting 1 show, the educators react positively to the children's help and are surprised by their competence. In both examples, the educators react by congratulating the child on her ability to report the information provided (line 78 Extract 26, and line 191 Extract 27).

```
Extract 26, E: educator, C: child, M: mother; D:
educator

65     E     abbiamo bisogno del numero di telefono
             del papà e della [mamma]
             we need the phone number of your dad and
             of you [mum]
66     M            [sì sì]
                    [yes yes]
67     M     papà
             dad
68     C     tre due sette
             three two seven
69     E     questo chi è?
             whose is it?
70     C     il babbo
             dad's
71     E     okay
             okay
72     D     allora tre due [sette]
             then three two [seven]
73     E                    [sette]
                            [seven]
74     C     uno otto (.) tre otto (.) cinque cinque
             sei (.) e di mamma tre sette (.) tre otto
             otto (.) sei tre uno (.) cinque cinque
```

```
            one eight (.) three eight (.) five five six
            (.) and my mum's three seven (.) three
            eight eight (.) six three one (.) five five
75     E    okay
            okay
76          (1,0)
77     D    come sei brava a sapere tutti questi
            numeri a memoria!
            you're so good at knowing all these
            numbers by heart!
78     E    bravissima!
            very good!

Extract 27, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

188    E    sei bravissima a scrivere
            you are very good at writing
189    M    °哥哥°
            °brother°
190         (4,0) ((B scrive))
            (4.0) ((B writes))
191    E    che brava!
            you are so good!
```

Extract 28 from Meeting 4 provides another example of a positive reaction from the Italian educator who appreciates the assistance received by the child and thanks her for her translation (line 781).

```
Extract 28, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

777    E    oggi abbiamo molte firme ahaha (.)
            queste sono tutte le vostre tessere
            non perdetele va là! (4,0) che sono
            importanti tutte
            today there are a lot of signatures (.)
            these are all your cards don't lose them!
            (4.0) that are all important
778         (4,0)
```

```
779    A    anche qui
            here as well
780    M    grazie (.) molto grazie
            thank you (.) thank you very much
781    A    grazie a voi (.) malyka grazie della
            traduzione (1,0) sei stata molto gentile
            thank you (.) malyka thank you for your
            translation (1.0) you were very nice
```

If the Italian educators are positively impressed by the children's engagement in the Meetings, parents react to their children's active role by showing differing attitudes. They are proud of their children, but they do not want to see their parental authority diminished. They try to show their understanding and involvement even when they do not take the floor to speak directly with the Italian educator. When their children mediate for them or when their children act as principals by answering Italian educators' questions without consulting them, the mothers adopt various strategies in order to preserve their parental roles and to avoid their *face* from being threatened by their children's powerful role in the interaction.

The following extracts provide representative examples of these reactions. In Extract 29, from Meeting 1, the educator asks for the mother's phone number. The mother takes the turn to answer the educator's request and give the educator her phone number. Despite some minor errors (lines 67 and 68), the mother manages to give her phone number by pronouncing one figure at a time, and the number is then repeated by the educator who wants to check whether she has written it correctly.

The child does not intervene for thirteen turns. However, she suddenly takes the turn by self-selecting to ask her mother in Chinese whether she wants her to tell her phone number (line 78). The mother ignores her daughter's proposal and goes on telling the remaining figures of her phone number to the educator.

```
Extract 29, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

65     E    cellulare? (.) della mamma
            mobile phone? (.) mother's mobile phone
66     M    sì (1,0) tle (.) venti- eh ven- eh venti
            (.) quattlo (.) quattlo otto
```

		yes (1.0) three (.) twenty – eh– twen –
		eh twenty (.) four (.) four eight
67	E	quatt- un altro quattro?
		fou- another four?
68	M	no no no
		no no no
69	E	quattro ott-
		four eigh-
70	M	[otto]
		[eight]
71	E	[otto]
		[eight]
72	M	eh:: (.) uno
		eh:: (.) one
73	E	uno
		one
74	M	otto
		eight
75	E	sette
		seven
76	M	sei
		six
77	E	sette
		seven
78	C	要不还是我来说?
		or you can let me say it
79	M	nove tle
		nine three
80	E	sette [nove]
		seven [nine]
81	M	[nove] [tle]
		[nine] [three]
82	E	[tre]
		[three]

This example illustrates how the child's desire to take part in the conversation threatens her mother's *face* as a parent. The mother tries to preserve her parental role and does not cede her turn easily to her daughter. She does not answer her

daughter's suggestion and continues relaying her phone number to the Italian educator, thus demonstrating that she does not want to renounce her role even though her competence in Italian is not very good.

Extract 30 from Meeting 2 provides another example that displays the mother's reaction to her daughter's active role in the conversation. In this extract, the educator has just asked the father's job and the mother has taken the turn in Chinese to give the permission to her daughter to report her father's job to the educator (line 92). The daughter tries to explain her father's job by stating where he works, and the educator shows that she has understood the occupation of the child's father by saying it correctly in Italian (lines 93 and 94).

After the educator's turn, the Chinese mother takes the next relevant turn to repeat and confirm her husband's job by saying it in Italian as well. She then immediately switches to Chinese to tell her daughter that she must inform the educator that she is a housekeeper. The mother pronounces the word housekeeper in Italian, in order for the educator to understand, even though the question about her job has not been asked yet.

Before complying with her mother's request, in line 97, the daughter explains to her mother in Chinese the meaning of the Italian word *casalinga* (housekeeper) and through her mother's answer (line 87) it is possible to understand why the daughter felt the need to explain the meaning of this word. The Chinese mother runs a shop, but she does not want the Italian educator to know it. Since the whole conversation is managed by her daughter, she intervenes into the interaction when it becomes necessary to state the parents' occupations, saying the word "casalinga" (housekeeper) in Italian. The mother anticipates the question related to her job, and she warns her daughter in Chinese to say that her mother is a housekeeper without mentioning that she owns a shop.

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Extract 30, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

91      E    uh::: che errore! (2,00) allora papà cosa
             fa? che lavoro fa? (.) lavora?
             uh::: what a mistake! (2.00) so what does
             your dad do? what's his job? (.) does he
             work?
92      M    嗯(.)你跟他说
             yes (.) tell her
93      C    eh::: (.) fabbrica di carta
             eh::: (.) paper factory
```

```
94    E    operaio
           workman
95    M    opelaio sì 你说妈妈没有工作好了(.) casalinga
           workman yes tell her your mum doesn't
           work (.) housewife
96    E    casalinga
           housewife
97    C    casalinga 是去带孩子
           housewife means looking after children
98    M    是(.)就是带孩子 (.)我不是带你们两个吗？不要说开店
           yes (.) it means looking after children
           (.) don't I look after you two? don't say
           that I own a shop
99    B    ahahah
           ahahah
```

Even though the whole interaction is mainly managed by her daughter, it is possible to presume that the mother is able to understand and follow the conversation since she never asks for explications and she intervenes when she deems it necessary.

The last example is provided by Extract 31 from Meeting 1, which shows the mother's reaction to her child's request for clarification.

In this Extract, the educator is telling the Chinese family that they have to pay the fees to the secretary or to Adele (one of the Italian educators). The mother uses a minimal response ("mmm", line 292) to confirm her understanding and to allow the conversation to continue.

In line 293, however, the child asks for clarification, and, as soon as the educator ends her turn to answer the child's doubt, the mother takes back the turn to confirm that she has understood ("yes yes yes", line 295) and to close the sequence. She wants to show the educator that, unlike her child, she has correctly understood what the educator said.

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Extract 31, E: educator, C: child, M: mother

291    E    non la date a me (.) come educatore ma
            la dovete portare in segreteria (.) o al
            massimo all'adele
            you don't give it to me (.) as an educator
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                but you give it to the administrative
                office (.) or to adele at most
292    M        °mmm°
                °mmm°
293    C        cosa?
                what?
294    E        i dieci euro mensili
                ten euros per month
295    M        sì sì sì
                yes yes yes
```

The three examples discussed in this section have shown parents' reactions to their children's active role in the conversation. In the first extract, the mother ignores her child's suggestion and prevents her child from eroding on her parental role in the conversation.

In the second extract, the mother resorts to code switching to keep control over the content of the interaction. She speaks in Chinese to her daughter, telling her to report that she is a housekeeper and she repeats her own job in Italian, in order to be sure that the educator gets she is a housekeeper.

In the last example, the mother uses back-channelling tokens and she closes the sequence to prevent her *face* from being threatened by her daughter's request for clarification.

All these reactions suggest that the Italian educators are positively impressed by the children's engagement in the Meetings, whereas the parents' reactions are more hostile to such an active participation. They are proud of their children's help but at the same time they fear losing their parental power. This is the reason why they adopt the above-mentioned strategies to avoid their *face* from being threatened by their children's empowerment within the interaction.

NEW INSIGHTS INTO CLB

6.1. What is CLB and what is child language brokers' role?

Child language brokering often involves "[interpreting] and [translating] between culturally and linguistically different people and [mediating] interactions in a variety of situations including those found at home and school" (Tse 1996a: 226). The data examined confirm Tse's definition and also support Bolden's interpretation of brokering as an act of mediation:

> to broker a (potential) problem of understanding is to act as an intermediary between the other participants (i.e. between the speaker of the problematic talk and his/her addressed recipient) and to attempt to resolve the problem in a way that would expose and bridge participants' divergent linguistic and/or cultural expertise – for instance, by providing a translation or a simplified paraphrase of the problematic talk. (Bolden 2012: 99)

The analysis of child language brokers' conversational and interactional contributions suggests that they exhibit the role of intermediaries between the other participants and bridge any linguistic or cultural gaps that might surface during the conversation. It also revealed that child language brokers are able to assign and create meaning, and to manage the ongoing flow of information, thus performing all the complex social processes involved in interpersonal communication (Kam *et al.* 2017). In light of this, their actions and participation helped to improve our understanding of CLB as a research field within the realm of translation and interpreting studies.

Additionally this study expands on previous literature by showing that CLB is not limited to linguistic and cultural mediation activities *per se* but also entails other social, interactional and family practices. These could include (i) peer teaching (Pugliese 2017), such as when child language brokers report helping their schoolmates do their homework; (ii) fulfilling their

family's administrative duties, such as when they help their parents at the post office or when they read the mail aloud; (iii) supporting their family's interests, such as when they do not reveal the real job of one of their parents; (iv) working together to construct and convey the meaning of the message, such as when they either explain or paraphrase the concept that they are unable to render in the target language.

All these examples provide evidence of the multifaceted role of child language brokers, who not only act as mediators, but also as family helpers. The multidimensional nature of this practice highlights the complexity of the tasks performed by child language brokers and emphasises their interactional participation and empowerment when CLB is performed both inside and outside the family. These findings also support Orellana's (2009: 123) observation, which reveals that child language brokers "did not simply animate their parents' words […]; and they were not passive objects of adults' socialization efforts. They did not act only as conduit of information, but also as socializing agents who provided access to opportunities in their communities."

By reviewing the key elements of this practice, the expression "child language brokering" is confirmed to be the most appropriate umbrella term to include both linguistic and cultural mediation and all its ancillary activities (e.g. helping the family, negotiating business, or peer teaching).

6.2. Child language brokers' contribution within the interaction

The following sections examine child language brokers' contribution when they act as key players in multilingual and intercultural communicative situation.

6.2.1. How do child language brokers participate in the interaction they broker?

When communicating with migrants, the possible barriers resulting from speaking different languages can be more or less impenetrable depending on the migrants' proficiency in the language of the host country (Baraldi 2012).

Within this framework, the assistance provided by child language brokers can be achieved in different ways, by taking on various roles and statuses of participation. Given that migrant linguistic difficulties do not usually result in a complete lack of communication, multiple ways of interaction emerged between the main speakers, characterised by both dyads and triads.

Four different interactions are observed in the corpus of child language brokered meetings:

- direct interaction in Italian between the migrant mother and the Italian educator;
- direct interaction in Italian between the migrant child and the Italian educator;
- direct interaction in the native language of the migrant family between the mother and her child;
- child language brokered interactions.

During direct interaction with the Italian educators or during child language brokered interactions, children usually display their front stage behaviour, which is the behaviour that participants adopt when they have an audience watching them; whereas in the interaction with their mothers, they display their backstage behaviour, which is usually free of the expectations that influence and shape the front stage behaviour (Goffman 1959).

Additionally, according to the type of interaction that is achieved, child language brokers adopt different statuses of participation and change alignments, by way of footing, in relation to the other participants. By borrowing Goffman's terms (1981), the child language brokers' roles could change from animator to author and principal, whereas by following Wadensjö's (1998) reception format, they could move from reporter to responder and recapitulator. Child language brokers act as animator or author, respectively, when they report what their parents said by simply animating their utterances, and when they create the content and form of their parents' utterances by producing renditions of their speech. They take the role of principal, which is the primary interlocutor responsible for the message, when they speak directly to the Italian educators by answering their questions without consulting their mothers, when they repair their mothers' mistakes, and when they initiate turns to produce expansions and ask for clarifications. Similarly, they do not simply act as reporters or recapitulators by either reporting or recapitulating their mothers' utterances, but they also assume the role of active responders when they are the primary recipients of the Italian educators' speech.

The multiple interaction formats that emerge are continuously negotiated and assessed by each participant during the interaction, depending on the quality of the flow of talk. By considering child language brokered encounters as socially situated, all the participants can hold and exhibit different expectations of both the conversation and of each other. The participation status assumed by child language brokers is strictly interwoven with these expecta-

tions and with the contextual and conversational dynamics that emerge as the interaction unfolds.

The shift between the various production and reception formats also implies that child language brokers assume different roles within the interaction, after evaluating the flow of interaction and their alignments with the other speakers.

In particular, Goffman identifies the concepts of normative role, typical role and role performance which could contribute to better understanding the role or roles performed by child language brokers.

The normative role is considered the role performed according to the rule of conduit and to the normative role expectations. The normative role of child language brokers' would probably be that of family helpers contributing to the interaction only upon request from the adult participants. In monolingual settings, when children take part in institutional interactions together with their parents who need to communicate with representatives of public institutions, they are usually expected to act as secondary participants and to take the floor only when their parents authorise them to do so.

Similarly, the normative role of migrant children would be that of ratified but unadressed or passive participants who can become active agent only when it is deemed necessary by the adult parties. The child language brokers who took part in this study assumed this normative role when they spoke after being given the floor by one of the adult parties and without performing any other interactional activities. However, during the child language brokered meetings that were analysed, the children did not only take on this normative role, but they also often assumed their role performance as language brokers. This position gave them the power to produce renditions for the other participants, and to take the initiative to perform other interactional actions and to act as principals.

By applying Goffman's representation of interaction as a social performance we note that child language brokers act both front stage and back stage, and that they assume different footings and roles according to the other participants, to the context, and to the flow of the talk. Hence, they are active agents within the interaction and are able to assess which behaviour and role they should perform based on contextual and conversational factors.

Furthermore, the different statuses of participation and roles assumed by child language brokers not only display their agentic behaviour but also their full participation in the interaction. In particular, their desire to contribute to the conversation is also suggested by the high number of turns produced by child language brokers in each interaction. During two meetings, the children produced a greater quantity of turns than their mothers, whereas in the other

two meetings they actively participated in the interaction like the two adult parties, thus suggesting a proactive reaction to the role of brokers. The analysis of the moves they adopted to initiate child-language-brokered sequences also revealed another aspect of their active participation. In the corpus of four meetings, all child language brokers adopted self-selection and engaged in brokering on their own initiative. They deemed it necessary to take the floor as language brokers to facilitate the unfolding of the interaction. In so doing, they decided to take up the responsibility given by CLB intentionally, and they revealed both their interactional power and their willingness to act as child language brokers.

The next section will further explore the active contributions of child language brokers in the construction of the brokered interaction.

6.2.2. How do child language brokers contribute to constructing the meaning of the interaction they broker?

After exploring the status of participation of child language brokers, their contribution to the construction of the conversation is analysed.

The discourse and interactional moves analysed in the authentic data shed light on the way in which child language brokers manage to co-construct the interaction. In particular, attention was paid to the analysis of child language brokers' renditions and to the other interactional moves they performed (non-renditions), which were strictly related to their role as brokers. When examining the child language brokers' renditions, the analysis focused on the use of reduced and expanded renditions to highlight the mediating strategies adopted by children.

Reduced renditions were mainly produced when the source message was long and dense with information. On such occasions, the child language brokers only brokered the content they deemed most meaningful or the information they could remember easily, thus either summarising or omitting part of the message.

Expanded renditions were primarily used to make the content either clearer to one of the other two parties or to defend the mothers' role as caring parents. Hence, this strategy was implemented by child language brokers either to favour the flow of the interaction and avoid misunderstandings, or to preserve the parental status of their mothers.

These brokered renditions were coupled with other interactional activities that the child language brokers performed as ratified interlocutors, but without playing the role of mediators and without rendering other parties' utterances. Child language brokers, for example, produced insert expansions to open monolingual side sequences aimed to secure mutual understanding. They also

used repetitions and anticipations to monitor the construction of the talk, and repairs to solve their mother-initiated repairable items and to report the correct information. The use of repair further confirmed the sense of responsibility that child language brokers had in conveying the right information and in constructing a successful message. They also disaligned from other participants' requests to broker, thus excluding them from the interaction.

All these conversational moves that child language brokers performed during the four meetings suggested their active participation and their interactional power both when mediating and when performing other interactional actions. Additionally, they also highlight how child language brokers' activities correspond to the interactional role carried out by community interpreters and how CLB is thus entitled to fall within the field of interpreting studies.

In particular, Wadensjö (1998) identified the coordinating activity of interpreters in performing interaction-orientated translations and in managing turns at talk. Regarding this latter aspect, the author maintained that the interpreters could coordinate the talk either by rendering the source message into the target language (implicit coordination), or by way of other means, such as by asking for clarifications or repetitions, or by stopping the speaker who was having the floor (explicit coordination). Implicit coordination is produced by the interpreters' renditions, whereas explicit coordination is handled by the interpreters' non-renditions, which could include clarifications, comments, or other interactional requests and actions. This approach was ground-breaking in highlighting both the crucial role of non-renditions in the construction of interpreter-mediated talk, since they were considered as functional to the interpreting activities, and to the interactional and active role of interpreters.

Similarly, the analysis of child language brokered interactions carried out by applying both CA and Wadensjö's taxonomy of renditions is of great significance in showing how child language brokers co-construct the talk by means of both renditions (reduced and expanded renditions), and non-renditions (insert-expansions, repetitions, anticipations, and repair). It also produces evidence of the proactive participation and interactional power of child language brokers, who implement the same conversational and interactional actions as community interpreters.

Within this frame of reference, there is enough evidence to emphasise the interactional responsibility given and assumed by child language brokers. Through their CLB actions, they are responsible for the achievement of communication and they strive to meet such responsibilities by using CLB to avoid misunderstandings, to save their families' "face", to speed up the conversation and to achieve its institutional objectives.

6.3. Child language brokering as child empowerment

The above roles and participation statuses that children could take on as interactions unfold are one of the elements that suggest their ability to evaluate each situation and to implement different conversational strategies. The change from animators into principals and their contribution as primary speakers reveal their agentic power. This active participation is also confirmed both when they provide renditions of the source utterances and when they produce non-renditions. By using either reduced or expanded renditions, child language brokers have the power to manipulate and filter the message.

Through non-renditions they act as fully-fledged active agents by performing interactional actions aimed to achieve a conversation. They are able to evaluate when expansions must be added to clarify the message, they realise when the communication will break down due to their mothers' mistakes and promptly react by repairing such mistakes, and they also decide to exclude one of the two participants by disaligning from their requests to broker for them. When they refuse to broker, they have the power to exlude participants from the interaction, and they always opt for this choice because they deem it the best solution to facilitate the flow of the interaction.

All these examples show the role of child language brokers as agents who are able to act, perceive, and interact according to the locally constructed dynamics of the context. They negotiate and handle challenging brokering situations, they implement specific and context-related brokering strategies, and they take what they deem to be the appropriate actions to avoid misunderstandings, to protect their mothers' position, and to achieve a successful communication. CLB is thus an effective tool that empowers children's interactional status and role.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSIONS

This book aimed at producing new insights into how child language brokers perform CLB. A very interesting finding relates to the interactional agency and participation that child language brokers exhibit within the interaction they broker.

The analysis of authentic child-language-brokered interactions by means of CA and Wadensjö's taxonomy of renditions allowed a detailed investigation of child language broker turns at talk and of the sequential organization of interaction to be carried out. In so doing, it was possible to show how child language brokers co-construct and participate in the interaction.

With respect to construction of talk, they contribute by playing a key role in producing both renditions (e.g. reduced and expanded renditions) of the source message into the target language, and non-renditions (e.g. insert-expansions, repetitions, anticipations, and repair). Through this analysis, it was possible to study how child language broker's interactional actions extend beyond mere translation of the source message because they are involved in co-ordinating and social activities, such as peer teaching or fulfilling their family's administrative duties.

This analysis has also highlighted that child language brokers are completely ratified participants who participate fully and have active role of responsibility in achieving communication. They do their best to avoid misunderstandings, to save their families' "face", and to achieve the institutional objectives of the interaction they broker. They are able to negotiate and handle challenging brokering situations by implementing specific and context-related brokering strategies.

All these findings highlight how CLB is an effective tool for empowering children's interactional status and role. Child language brokers can be considered fully-fledged social actors and competent participants in their family and social activities. Such an active participation may be seen as challenging the normative expectations and perspectives about childhood, and this is one of the

reasons why this practice often raises controversial issues both from academia and professionals.

The present analysis of child language brokers' interactional contribution was made possible by implementing the rigorous approach provided by conversation analysis. CA provides adequate tools to stress the complexity of the tasks performed by child language brokers who are far from being passive and who contribute actively to the interaction they broker. Given that CA has been increasingly used to explore the interactions of children in recent years (Baraldi 2014; Bateman and Church 2017), and in light of the interesting results obtained from the analysis of child-language-brokered interactions, it would be inspiring for future research to utilize this conversational approach to elicit new and under-explored aspects of CLB and to focus on what child language brokers do, rather than on what they think or report doing. Additionally, by means of CA it is possible to shed light on what children know and how knowledge is negotiated by participants. Further studies should therefore apply this approach to focus on CLB as an area of competency (Weisskirch 2017) and to offer unique insight into how CLB works for migrant children, their families, the institutions and the communities in the host country.

Notes

Chapter 1. Migration flows and community interpreting in Italy

[1] http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017.pdf.
[2] https://www.istat.it/it/files/2018/02/Indicatoridemografici2017.pdf.
[3] https://www.tuttitalia.it/statistiche/cittadini-stranieri-2019/.
[4] https://www.ismu.org/
[5] https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Rapporto+-+Gli+alunni+con+cittadinanza+-non+italiana_as_2018-2019.pdf/f1af9f21-c-ceb-434e-315e-5b5a7c55c5db?t=1616517692793.
[6] http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/circolari/cm301_89.html.
[7] http://www.istruzione.it/allegati/2014/linee_guida_integrazione_alunni_stranieri.pdf.

Chapter 3. Theoretical framework

[1] In 2011, a chapter devoted to the "natural translator and interpreter" was included in the Handbook of Translation Studies (Antonini 2011: 102-104), and in 2015 the entries "Non-professional interpreting" and "Child language brokering" were included in the Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies (Antonini 2015a; 2015b).

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APPENDIX

Conventions of transcription

>text<	The speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker
<text>	The speech was delivered more slowly than usual for the speaker
text	The speaker is emphasizing or stressing the speech
°text°	Whisper or reduced volume speech
TEXT	Shouted or increased volume speech
tex-	Interruption in utterance
te::xt	Prolongation of an utterance
.	Falling pitch
,	Temporary rise or fall in intonation
?	Rising pitch
!	Exclamation
=	The break and subsequent continuation of a single interrupted utterance
[text]	The start and end points of overlapping speech
[[text	Simultaneous start of speech
(text)	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript
(xxxx)	Inaudible or incomprehensible expressions
((*text*))	Annotation of non-verbal activity
$text$	Smiley voice
/	Interrupted or unfinished speech
(.)	A brief pause, less than 1 second
(1,00)	One-second pause (the number indicates the length of the pause in seconds)
haha hehe hihi	Laughters

α

alphabet **15**

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