Languages and Cultures On the Move

Two case studies on the role of mobile devices as resources for language-and-culture teaching and learning

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Research Areas & Issues

- Writing, listening and speaking skills
- Old and new media literacies
- Intercultural dialogue
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case 1. Ensemble</th>
<th>Case 2. Piagge Mobili</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>European project</td>
<td>Local project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>School program</td>
<td>After school program</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Target</strong></td>
<td><strong>Target</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students aged 13-15 (native speakers and second generations)</td>
<td>Teens aged 13-16 (native speakers and second generations)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening &amp; speaking skills Digital production Intercultural dialogue</td>
<td>Writing skills Digital production Intercultural dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Media &amp; Technologies</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly podcast</td>
<td>Mobile phones, videocamera, Facebook</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Case 1 – Ensemble: the Context

Who Department of Education, University of Florence (IT), the French District of Yvelines (FR), the Town Council of Prato (IT) and the English section of GiuntiLabs (UK)

When 2008-2010

What Testing mobile learning with disadvantaged people to promote European citizenship through the use of very common mobile technologies such as ‘old generation’ mobile phones and MP3 players
Welcome to PRATO

made in Cina

[Translation: “Welcome to PRATO”]
Case 1 – Ensemble: the Testing phase

Participants In Prato 66 students aged 13-15, 10 teachers and 60 parents. Students mainly from Chinese family, but also North Africa, South America and Eastern Europe.

Time February-May 2010

Aims To encourage socio-cultural integration of second generation students and improve their ability of self-expression (especially, oral and digital communication) and understand contents provided in Italian.
Case 1 – Ensemble: Podcasting

• It provides increased flexibility, user control, and portability (e.g., McGarr, 2009)

• It contributes to student learning by augmenting student motivation and engagement (Oliver, 2005)

• It provides access to authentic contents (Khaniya, 2006)

• It is particularly effective in supporting language teaching and learning (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). Beres (2011) notes that “smart phones and MP3 players can become language learning tools, allowing students to easily and immediately access materials from a variety of sources and to engage with those materials where and when they please.”
## Case 1 – Ensemble: the Instructional Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Podcast 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Create the context and stimulate interest through the use of a short-Radio Drama. Activation of pre-existing knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podcast 2</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Presentation of the key issues. Explanation of the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podcast 3</td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>More specific disclosures. Questions to stimulate discussion with students in the classroom or on the Web forum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podcast 4</td>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>Summary of the concepts and information previously provided to students and help to focalize on the key issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s podcast</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Product made out of the incentives offered by episodes heard in discussion and small group work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 1 – Ensemble: some Examples
Students appreciated the project, especially the opportunity to create with classmates their products since this gave them the opportunity to confront with peers and understand, as one student wrote, "What they really think". At the same time, most of the students indicated that they had difficulties in listening to the podcasts and estimated this activity too challenging.
Case 1 – Ensemble: some Results

Teachers found it useful the use of podcasts and PC to improve understanding of contents and reduce barriers to learning, stressing the potential of these tools and topics to motivate students. Only a few teachers were doubtful about the effectiveness of the experience because of the difficulties of some students with low levels of proficiency in Italian language and for the weak technological capacities of some students.
Case 2 – Piagge Mobili: the Context

**Who** The project was carried out in Le Piagge, a low-income district of Florence (IT) with a considerable number of young people who are at risk of social exclusion. It was part of the Re.T.e. programme, one of the several initiatives promoted at informal level by the local community of Le Piagge.

**When** 2011

**What** Testing the potential of mobile phones as personal resources to develop narrative skills, self esteems and self-representation through the technique of mobile story telling.
Case 2 – Piagge mobili: Mobile Story Telling

Mobile storytelling is a subset of 'digital storytelling' and it is based on the use of mobile phones to create digital narratives where learners collaboratively plan a story, either fictional or non-fictional, then create and edit the story using mobile phones, finally sharing the story through social networking sites (Ranieri & Bruni, 2012; McGreen & Arnedillo Sanchez, 2005).

Digital storytelling was used in California in the late 1980s to connect communities through stories. Nowadays, it is adopted for educational purposes as a technique to produce multimedia narratives.
Case 2 – Piagge mobili: the Action-Research

Participants 15 children aged 11-15, most of them being second generation immigrants. The socio-economic status of the participants’ families was low, with many single parent families.

Research issues
• How to help teenagers exploit their being familiar with mobile phones and SNS to become more active and aware users of digital media?
• How to develop participants’ new media literacies, particularly referring to multimedia production and connectivity?
• How to improve participants’ capacity for self-expression, and their narrative and writing skills?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approaching mobile functions and narratives</td>
<td>How to stimulate self-expression?</td>
<td>Discovering multimedia practices</td>
<td>Sharing and commenting personal contents</td>
<td>Projective tests Observation Videorecording</td>
<td>Difficulties in narratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being on the Net to share micro-stories created by SMSs</td>
<td>How to prompt teens to create stories through collaboration</td>
<td>Using social media and group work</td>
<td>Creation of mobile stories thorough sms and written story</td>
<td>Observation Videorecording Product analysis</td>
<td>From participation divide to involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventing and representing stories</td>
<td>How to increase teens involvement in creating stories</td>
<td>Video production and public event</td>
<td>Dramatization and videorecordings</td>
<td>Observation Videorecording Product analysis</td>
<td>High level of involvement and media exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria of analysis</td>
<td>Self-representation; Self-expression; Interaction; Narrative; New media literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Projective tests</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Case 2 – Piagge mobili: the Action-Research**
Case 2 – Piagge mobili: Let’s start with narratives!

The way they see themselves and their environment
Case 2 – Piagge mobili: the Facebook Profile

**Il Pozzo della Rete**
- Vive a Firenze
- Città natale: Firenze
- Data di nascita: 27 febbraio
- Aggiungi dove lavori
- Aggiungi la tua scuola

**Stato**
- Foto/video

A cosa stai pensando?

**Il Pozzo della Rete** ha aggiunto 2 nuove foto all'album Album senza titolo.

**Mi piace** · **Commenta** · **Condividi** · sabato alle 19.37

**Il Pozzo della Rete**...non c'è l'ho fatta a non pubblicarla!!!!

sabato alle 19.38 · **Mi piace**

Scrivi un commento...
### Case 2 – Piagge mobili: Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Italian Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proviamo a fare una storia...</td>
<td>Let's try to make a story...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerano una volta dei ragazzi</td>
<td>Once upon a time there were some guys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tre belle ragazze con fantastici capelli lunghi e due ragazzi pazzerelli, ma molto simpatici:)</td>
<td>Three pretty girls with beautiful long hair and two crazy boys, really nice :)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Una ragazza bionda e due more. Erano fidanzate tutte e tre. Andavano al mare con la macchina</td>
<td>One girl had blonde hair and two had brown hair. They all were in a relationship. They were going to the sea by car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I 2 ragazzi erano sporchi</td>
<td>The two boys were dirty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Che facevano l'aUTOSTop per andare al mare a darsi una pulita? Non ho niente per te.</td>
<td>Maybe were they hitchhiking to go to the sea and wash themselves? I have nothing to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pur non avendo niente x loro, arrivarono al mare e fecero il bagno... Nudi!</td>
<td>While not having anything for them, they arrived to the sea and bathed...naked!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C’era una volta un bambino rumeno non integrato nella comunità per colpa di un vecchio.

Il vecchio si approfittava della sua stupidità e pensava che le cose che diceva fossero giuste.

Spesso il bambino litigava con il vecchio, prendeva e andava via, ma poi tornava per chiedere delle spiegazioni: “ma perché mi tratti così?”

perché io non o mai avuto dei figli perció ti tatuto in questa magniera

“ma fai male a comportarti così con me“.

(e alla fine morì d’infarto).

Ma poi andò al ospedale e i medici lo salvarono con una cura miracolosa per i vecchi solo per i vecchi.

Il bambino lo andò a salutare all’ospedale portandogli dei fiori.

There was once a Romanian child who was not integrated into the community because of an old man.

The old man took advantage of his stupidity and thought to say the right things.

Often the child argued with the old man, and he went away, but after he came back to ask for some explanations, he said: “Why are you treating me so badly?”

“Because I never had children, so I treat you like this”.

“But you are wrong to treat me like this”

(and eventually he died of a heart attack).

But then he went to the hospital and the doctors saved him with a miraculous cure, just for old people.

The child went to visit him in the hospital, bringing some flowers.
Case 2 – Piagge mobili: Final production

The Young and the Old Men
Case 2 – Piagge mobili: main Results

• From non-visibility to exploitation of the camera to shoot each other, to investigate their bodies, to reflect and be reflected;

• From silence to the use of mobile phones to take pictures, write sentences and discover cell phone’s affordances;

• Laconicism and misspelling testifies children’s linguistic difficulties. In certain situations, the use of digital media can reinforce pre-existing divides and this suggests that there is a strong requirement for public education to take a much more active role (both in formal and informal contexts) in balancing inequalities.
What did we learn?

Writing, listening and speaking skills
- Increased motivation but still difficulties in second language learning due to pre-existing lack of skills

Old and new media literacies
- Positive influence on collaborative skills, creativity and self-expression

Intercultural dialogue
- Supported new ways of confronting with others
References


Kukulska-Hulme, A., & Shield, L. (2008). An overview of mobile assisted language learning: from content delivery to supported collaboration and interaction. ReCALL, 20(03), 271–289.


Ranieri M., Bruni I. (2012), Mobile storytelling and informal education in a suburban area: A qualitative study on the potential of digital narratives for young second generation of immigrants. Learning, Media and Technology.
Thank you!

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