

## Research Project

### Speaking in public: Social interactions within large groups (SpIP-2)

#### Third-party funded project

**Project title** Speaking in public: Social interactions within large groups (SpIP-2)

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**Organisation / Research unit**

Departement Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaften / Französische und Allgemeine Linguistik (Mondada)

**Department**

**Project start** 01.03.2016

**Probable end** 31.08.2017

**Status** Completed

This project (called SpIP-2, 2016-2017, 18 months) constitutes the continuation of the previous one, still on-going (called SpIP-1, 2013-2016, 3 years). SpIP-1 is being currently developed with success and very rich outputs, and 2 dissertations are being written. SpIP-1 also has represented considerable work of the team on an evolving corpus: this opens up new exciting topics of study, to be developed in SpIP-2. Importantly, SpIP-2 also concerns the completion of the 2 dissertations, which, given the amount of work and outputs of SpIP-1, will be almost finished but not entirely completed at the end of SpIP-1.

SpIP-1 has offered an extensive study of a video corpus documenting a participatory project in urban planning concerning the transformation of a military site into a public park in the centre of the city of Lyon in France. This form of participatory democracy involves meetings with citizens, associations, and interest groups, the sharing of information gathered among various kinds of experts, exchanges with political representatives at various levels, discussions, and brainstorming sessions with the citizens, in which they elaborate proposals for the park, discuss plans and critically inspect the work in progress on the construction site.

This kind of public and civic process represents an exemplary site for the study of institutional social interactions, of public speech both by novices and professionals, and of the collective elaboration of ideas. Adopting the approach of Conversation Analysis, the SpIP-1 project, according to the initial plan, has investigated the specific organization of these meetings, by focusing on turn-taking procedures (the way in which the right to talk is orchestrated among the numerous participants of the meetings) and on practices through which citizen elaborate proposals, discuss them, express and negotiate agreements and disagreements.

These analyses also raise and respond to more general and innovative issues, such as the organization of talk in interaction in larger groups of participants; the institutional organization of opportunities to participate and the local and interactional definition of what 'participation' means; the multimodal (i.e. taking into account language, gesture, gaze, body postures, embodied manipulation of objects, and the arrangements of bodies in the environment) analysis of meetings including the embodied and visible practices for grasping turns and organizing actions, and the collective manipulation of texts and plans. Moreover, SpIP-1 has offered innovative insights about the longitudinal study of interactional processes, since the corpus studied covers 8 years of debates.

The success of SpIP-1 has opened new important avenues for researching these phenomena, thanks to the collection of new data. SpIP-1 began as a project based on an initial video corpus collected by the PI between 2008 and 2012, covering the launching of the participatory consultation of citizens, the initial debates and collective *ateliers* on the plans with the architect. During SpIP-1 new data were collected in 2013-2014, concerning an important new phase of the project, the implementation of the plans in an

emerging construction site, until its partial opening.ă This evolution of the corpus, following the evolution of a long-time urban project, opens up new interesting questions: the participatory procedure has evolved from debating about the park as a discursive object (2008-2009), to the park as an object 'in the planning' (2012 on) and as a built environment critically inspected by the citizens (2013 on).

On this basis, SpIP-2 aims first at completing the data collection in such a way to produce a total video interactional documentation of a participatory process lasting for almost 10 years – which represents an absolute *novum* not only in Conversation Analysis but broadly in the social sciences. Second, SpIP-2 aims at the study – not yet conceivable in SpIP-1 - of how discussions about the park evolve during its appropriation by the citizens not only as an idea, but as an emerging material object. More precisely, these new analyses concern a) different facets of the longitudinal development of the debates, b) an important focus on the various materialities and spatialities involved in the collective elaboration of the urban project, such asă plans and other visualizations, and the *in fieri* material architectural realization, c) the mobile apprehension of the park in the critical inspections by the citizens in visits of construction site with the architect, in historical visits organized by and for citizens, as well as in their everyday use of the partially – and then totally – opened park. These new foci constitute innovative contributions to contemporary important topics in Conversation Analysis and more broadly in linguistics, sociology and anthropology, concerning the interactional organization of institutionality, history, multimodality and mobility.

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