



# IMAGES & SOUNDS

*Audiovisual Language*

Carol Lorac

## Chapter 7 Extending Frontiers Participatory Audiovisual Composing

### SaRA: Pathways to Value



Images and Sounds is a  
Papertronic book  
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# Images and Sounds Audiovisual Language

## Chapter 7 Backstory I

### Extending Frontiers: Participatory Audiovisual Composition SaRA: Pathways to Value

This Backstory comprises two parts:

**Part 1** Creative Support for Innovative Decisions  
Patrick Humphreys, Carol Lorac and Marcelo Ramella

**Part 2** Extract from Taking Part Marcelo Ramella

Chapter 7 is about two development projects taking place in marginalized and disadvantaged communities. One in Peru (the SaRA project) Salud Reproductiva Para Adolescentes: using audiovisual composing for social empowerment. The other in the UK, the Positive Futures Project: using audiovisual composing to give a 'voice' to young participants as part of an evaluation of a governmental programme, to support these young people.

This backstory focuses on the SaRA project where audiovisual composing was used to enable community development, create sustainable economic activities and explore personal relationships.

#### Background to the SaRa Project

The SaRA project was based in the Department of Social Psychology, at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), under the leadership of Professor Patrick Humphreys. It was funded by the UK Government Department for International Development (DfID), 1997-1999. Marcelo Ramella was the Project Manager and Carol Lorac was Senior Research Fellow in Audiovisual Language.

The SaRA project team worked with fifteen communities in Peru, distributed as follows: eight in the Department of Ayacucho, in the Southern Andes; five in the Department of Junín, in the Centre of Peru; one in the Department of Ica, in the Coastal Region; and one in the Province of Callao, in the Coastal Region adjoining Lima.

The Ayacucho communities were the rural villages of Coracora, Murancancha, Cangallo, Huanta and Quinoa, and the urban-marginal communities of Artesanos, Carmen Alto and Santa Ana, which were located in the fringes of the city of Huamanga. The Junín communities were the rural Andean villages of Concepcion, Chupaca and Paccha, the rural jungle village of San Martín de Pangoa and the urban-marginal community of La Victoria, on the outskirts of the city of Huancayo. Ica's community was the rural village of El Carmen. Callao's was the urban-marginal community of Gambeta/Santa Rosa.

SaRA clubs were initially set up in each of these communities in 1997. Plenary workshops, in which all the clubs were involved, were held in Lima in March 1998 and in Ayacucho in March 1999. The Ayacucho workshop marked the end of the project funded by DfID, but at this workshop the youngsters unanimously decided to transform the project into a self-organising network of SaRA clubs. At the time of writing the Humphreys, Lorac and Ramella Paper (March 2000) an additional 7 clubs had joined the network: the first SaRA network plenary workshop will take place in Huancayo in September 2000.

The mechanisms for establishing the Clubs varied from community to community, however in all of them two Club Promoters (a man and a woman), were the persons in charge for the actual set up of the Club. They belonged to the society within which they were working, had experience working with young people and were well respected by the community's members and youngsters. In this way, the Clubs emerged from their inception as embedded in the community and took a stance as important social agents, working alongside other community networks. However, the role of the Promoter was one of facilitator, not of sponsor or protector.

The SaRA Clubs operated at two differentiated levels. There was in each Club a nucleus of between 25 and 55 highly committed individuals (with a roughly even balance between men and women) who participated in the everyday life of the Club. These members constituted the 'core group' who took the initiatives for the activities carried out within the club. In addition there was a 'periphery' of additional young people who participated in a less regular way.

As the Clubs matured, their members invariably decided to dispense with the promoter as part of the process of taking over ownership of the innovative decision-making possibilities emerging in the arena. The promoters became prime adult referents for the young people: sources of inspiration and support, who engaged in processes of debate, negotiation and consensus. This on-going process of negotiation, at times creative, at times controversial, generated in turn other more reflexive processes. First, these extended into the arenas centred on the clubs, promoting internal debate and discussion, which enhanced the possibility for the young people to appropriate their space. Second, these processes also extended outside the clubs, providing co-ordinators with a key role in the interlocking of network and community, extending the horizons of the arena; while at the same time, not becoming gatekeepers.

Part I, of this backstory, comprises a paper *Creative Support for Innovative Decisions* created by Patrick Humphreys, Carol Lorac and Marcelo Ramella, based on the SaRA project. Patrick Humphreys led the SaRA research team and describes and analyses the SaRA project from the perspective of a social psychologist, with a particular interest in innovative decision-making for community development. Carol Lorac explored the potential of using audiovisual composing within communities and her more detailed description about how audiovisual composing was used, the genres that evolved, and the positive effects that took place, can be encountered in chapter 7. Marcelo Ramella managed the SaRA project and described and analysed the project from the point-of-view of a social psychologist: details from his perspective can be found in Part 2 *Extract from Taking Part* written by Marcelo Ramella.

## **Part I**

### **Creative Support for Innovative Decisions**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines requirements and possibilities for decision support situations where conventional decision analysis would indicate that the decision-makers have little chance of centralising the control of decision making about their own futures, thus offering only social exclusion. It describes how creative support for innovative decision-making can be generated and communicated through the interplay of modes of composing in multimedia (textual, audiovisual) and modes of language (observation, action). This provided extended language opportunities which empowered local decision-makers in fifteen Peruvian communities to discover new resources and implement new pathways, realising satisfying lives in situations where conventional methods of decision analysis and decision support are constrained, by the kinds of knowledge they manage, to signal “no way, no hope”.

## **1. INTRODUCTION: BLOCKED DECISION MAKING AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

This paper examines requirements and possibilities for knowledge management which can support innovative distributed decision-making in a situation where many of the usual premises of organisational decision support do not apply because the decision makers find themselves trapped in situations where:

- Any conventional decision analysis would indicate that the decision-makers have little chance of centralising the control of decision-making about their own futures, or of any implementation of represented courses of action, upon themselves. To have any chance of success, decision-making has to be distributed, outside of any control hierarchy, but collectively effective across decision takers.
- All initially represented courses of action within the local arena end in undesirable consequences, or blocked opportunities, so that elaborating scenarios is like “hitting your head against a brick wall”. It would thus appear that the most attractive personal course of action for the decision maker is to leave the situation, but this would have socially undesirable consequences for those people who chose to remain, leading to depopulation of the community.
- Available resources to implement any course of action decided upon are practically non-existent, or blocked off from the decision implementers, resources would need to be “discovered” or “created out of apparently nothing” for any course of action to be implemented.
- Decision makers are unable to become effective “decision takers” because, in Checkland’s terminology, they do not “own”, in any way, not only the decision itself, but not even the decision taking space within which scenarios for implementing decisions can be constructed and explored with some chance of agency on behalf of the decision maker him or herself.

This kind of situation, while absent from consideration in Decision Support literature to date, is the one in which the majority of inhabitants of this world find themselves. This applies particularly to inhabitants in the so-called “third world”, in ex-colonial countries, or indeed in any location where a small proportion of the population has hegemonic control over most of the resources available for exploitation. The endemic failure of possibilities for innovative



collective decision-making has led to “social exclusion” (the condition, at a sociological level, that local decision makers, in the kind of situation indicated above, inevitably find themselves in) being defined as a whole field of study and research. But “social exclusion studies” typically examine this condition from the outside: looking at societal, economic and political macro-processes, which lead to this condition for communities. The implications for changes (or lack thereof) are explained in terms of the same processes. The agency of the “excluded personnel” to do something about their condition for themselves is rarely examined, except at the level of possible mass action (usually demonstrated to be counterproductive), or through the notion of participation in programmes for the betterment of their own lives already designed “for them”: The decisions about the actions in which they should participate (or even, sometimes how they should think) have already been taken “for them”: their role is to comply with the resulting prescriptions for action made by these decision takers.

## **2. PARTICIPATION: COMPLIANCE WITH EXTERNAL PRESCRIPTIONS**

Theory and practice on the participation of the ‘socially excluded’ in the betterment of their own lives has a prolific history (Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994; Hall and Midgley, 1988; Freire, 1970), reaching fields as diverse as rural development (Schuurman, 1993; Long and van der Ploeg, 1989) and health promotion (Bracht, 1999), and encompassing an extremely wide range of nations across the world (PRB & PC, 1999; UN, 1997; UN, 1999). However, this plurality of attempts has gone hand in hand with heated debates that touch on both theoretical controversies (Nettleton and Bunton, 1995; Fryer *et al.*, 1994; Lummis, 1991; Hall, 1988; Long, 1984) and practical dilemmas (UNFPA, 1997; Craig and Mayo, 1995; Smail, 1994; Long and Villarreal, 1993). For instance, Hall (1988) attacked the notion of participation as “an ill-defined concept” and Lummis (1991) argued that the notion of development is taken for granted when formulating “participation” programmes, applied as something “good-in-itself.” Smail (1994) has pointed out the tendency to reduce complex issues regarding failure in “participation” to psychological problems exhibited by the participants, which should be psychologically addressed, hence implementing participatory programmes with little chance to do good and high chance to harm, for example, blaming the victim (Crawford, 1977).

Sociology has consistently addressed the issue of the “inclusion of the excluded”, critiquing attempts to reduce problem solving either to structural variables, seeking explanations in terms of external (societal, economic and political) macro-processes, or in terms of individual variables, seeking explanations in psychological diagnoses of problems located within the excluded individuals themselves. Conceptual suggestions on a sociology *for* the participation of the excluded has not proved as successful as those on the sociology *of* the participation of the excluded.

In enumerating “forms of participation”, a plethora of taxonomies on “forms of participation” have been produced (see for example, Uphoff, 1985) addressing programme execution, programme evaluation, and on decision making about how to secure participation. In all these taxonomies, very little consideration has been given to local agents themselves, in particular to the agency they hold to construct and explore their own scenarios about what they are participating in, and to generate the terms of participation on the basis of their own conceptualisation of the meaning of “participation”. Of course, under this paradigm, decision support can only be offered to designers and managers of “participation programmes”: the people actually participating in the programme can only be offered support for their *compliance* with decisions taken externally.

### 3. PARTICIPATION: GENERATING DECISION MAKING AGENCY

In this paper we offer another paradigm, and outline how we were able to support distributed innovative decision-making in fourteen communities which had previously experienced being on the receiving end of externally designed and motivated participation programmes (e.g., CEDER, 1992; Sobrevilla and Caceres, 1993; Gonzalez, 1994, La Rosa, 1995, MINSA, 1996) which, it was generally agreed, had succeeded in doing more harm than good (Llosa, 1996; UNFPA, 1997; Ramella and Attride-Stirling, 2000). We will indicate the fundamental role of creative knowledge management as the foundation for such support.

Provision of this kind of support was a fundamental goal for a community-based action-research initiative in Peru (SaRA – Salud Reproductiva Para Adolescentes)<sup>1</sup> aimed at improving the well being of Peruvian young people. Between March 1997 and March 1999, SaRA succeeded, on a self-sustainable basis, to achieve social and network-based organisational transformation in 15 (originally, now more) communities in Andean, coastal and jungle locations, both rural and urban-marginal which are all officially classified as “marginalised.”<sup>2</sup> Such communities are usually viewed as classic cases for “social exclusion” studies, inevitably constituting what can only be called “inaction-research”. As shown in figure 1, Del Barco (1994) presented the issue from the point of view of a community on the receiving end of the conflicting prescriptions for participation emanating from contemporary Peruvian reality through the flows of agency from decision-making institutions external to the community such as the Army, the Church and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO’s). These institutions’ prescriptions aim, to act “on” or “in”, rather than “with” the community.

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<sup>1</sup> SaRA was funded by the UK Government Department for International Development (DfID), 1997-1999  
For more details of SaRA and its multimedia products, see the SaRA website: [www.sara.org.pe](http://www.sara.org.pe)

<sup>2</sup> The fifteen communities were distributed as follows: eight in the Department of Ayacucho, in the Southern Andes; five in the Department of Junín, in the Centre of Peru; one in the Department of Ica, in the Coastal Region; and one in the Province of Callao, in the Coastal Region adjoining Lima. The Ayacucho communities were the rural villages of Coracora, Murancancha, Cangallo, Huanta and Quinoa, and the urban-marginal communities of Artesanos, Carmen Alto and Santa Ana (located in the fringes of the city of Huamanga). The Junín communities were the rural Andean villages of Concepcion, Chupaca and Paccha, and rural Jungle village of San Martín de Pangoa and the Urban-marginal community of La Victoria on the outskirts of the city of Huancayo. Ica’s community was the rural village of El Carmen. Callao’s was the urban-marginal community of Gambeta/Santa Rosa. SaRA clubs were initially set up in each of these communities in 1997. Plenary workshops, in which all the clubs were involved were held in Lima in March 1998 and in Ayacucho in March 1999. The Ayacucho workshop marked the end of the project funded by DfID, but at this workshop the youngsters unanimously decided to transform the project into a self-organising network of SaRA clubs. At time or writing (March 2000) an additional 7 clubs have joined the network: the first SaRA network plenary workshop will take place in Huancayo in September 2000.

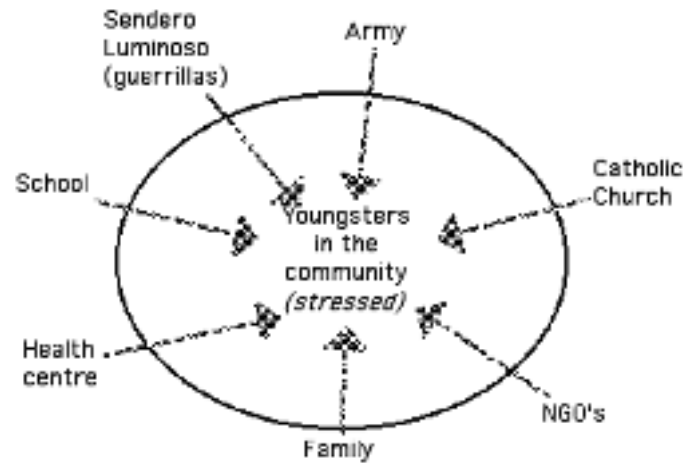


Figure 1. Conflicting external pressures for “participation” on a typical Peruvian “marginalised” community.

It would appear that the major priority for support here would be stress alleviation support. Conventional approaches to community-based knowledge management for decision support would reveal the conflicting prescriptions, which prevented action, but could do little to help community-based decision-making on how to escape from this impasse.

In designing SaRA we escaped from this impasse by turning the traditional “social exclusion” analytic paradigm inside out. We founded our research and development paradigm on ideas from decision analytic theory and distributed decision support methodology, starting from the assumption that key members of the community could be viewed, fundamentally, as decision makers who had potential agency that was blocked by external conditions. However, this experience of being “blocked” does not have to be taken for granted, as if it existed on an absolutely real basis. It is only a synthetic experience, resulting from limitations on the way in which scenarios for their futures (individual and collective) can be generated and explored. These limitations result from the way in which the “small world” which bounds these scenarios had been conceptualised (c.f. Savage, 1954, Toda, 1976, Humphreys, 1983).

Thus there should exist possibilities for the creative re-conceptualisation and regeneration of these small worlds as *arenas* (c.f. Kieser, 1997; Humphreys, 1998), in which key decision makers could discover their own agency and previously “unseen” resources, permitting individual and collective decision-making resulting in consequences which achieve real gains in both participants’ emotional satisfaction and local development of their communities. Achieving this would, in effect, turn the flows of agency shown in figure 1 inside out, as indicated in figure 2. Within the community-based arena, actors would no longer be bound to inaction by externally scripted contradictory prescriptions for action. Instead, they would have the space and the agency to *improvise*. Improvisation is viewed here as active, creative and under the immediate agency of the performer (as in jazz), not “making do with second best” (as might be viewed from the external perspective). In improvising, the youngsters are thus communicating and acting according to their own (not someone else’s) innovative ‘scripts’, i.e., conceptualisation of scenarios and resources for living.

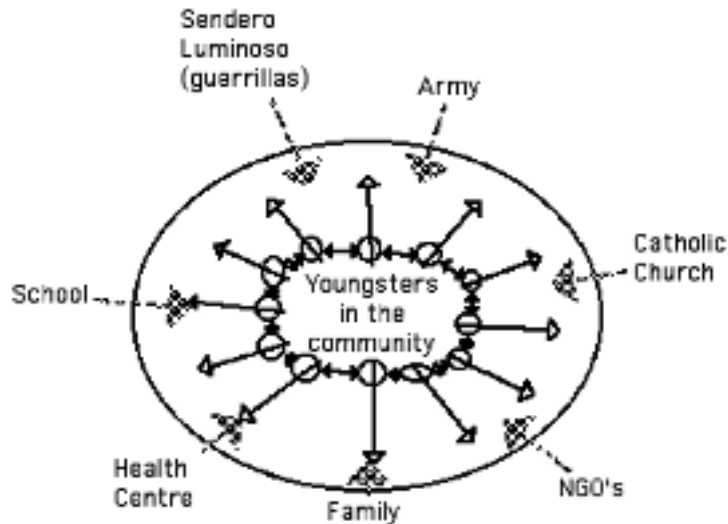


Figure 2. Flows of agency and innovation, which could be supported through SaRA in a typical Peruvian “marginalised” community.

The ‘key decision makers’ addressed through SaRA were youngsters (aged 11-18) living in the community. In Western health promotion literature, community members in this age range are generally called ‘adolescents’. Adolescence is a notion with a short, but highly salient past. French historian Philippe Ariès points out that although the concept of adolescence is rooted in nineteenth century practices, its distinctive characteristics gained credence during the twentieth century and, as such, its history is a significantly recent one (Ariès, 1962). A common denominator that pervades competing conceptualisations of adolescence is given by the significant attention paid on the one hand to the entry and exit boundaries of the concept, that is childhood and adulthood, and on the other hand to the transiting trait of the period in-between. Adolescence is “the period of time which the individual develops from child to adult” (UNFPA, 1998:6); or “the period of transition from childhood to adulthood” (IPPF, 1994:4); or the “period of turbulent transformation from childhood to adulthood” (Giarratano-Russell, 1998:1). These conceptualisations portray adolescence as ‘non-child non-adult’ rather than as a positive category. A clear example of this is sexual health literature where adolescents are talked about as ‘bio-social gaps’ (see for example Mohamud, 1996).

A crucial consequence of this transiting, dangerously ‘non-category’ understanding of adolescence is that little attention is given to “adolescent” agency in a period where major decisions are taken. Nevertheless, outside certain European and North American forms of societal organisation, the age of “adolescence” represents, not so much an interregnum between childhood and adulthood, but a moment of major change and commitment to particular fundamental courses of action resulting from decisions on questions like:

- Where do I want to live - in this community, or elsewhere (Lima? New York?)
- Who do I want to live with?
- How can I achieve a satisfying lifestyle, (given the way I answer the above questions)?

Those who decide to live their lives in the community are, in terms of realising future scenarios, indeed key members of the community. They are, as yet, less trapped by vested



interests. They are likely to remain key decision makers within the community in the long term because they have, on account of their youth, the longest decision horizon, the greatest potential investment in lifestyle terms, and the greatest potential for decision-making. In this paper we will, for want of a better word, simply call these people “youngsters”.

SaRA focuses on “reproductive health” (interpreted in a wide way as sexual and emotional health) according to the World Health Organisation’s “social model of health” which emphasises that health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health is therefore seen as resources for everyday life, not the objective of living: it is a positive concept emphasising social and personal resources as well as physical capacities (World Health Organisation, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1993 and Bankowsky et.al, 1997). However, generating and realising scenarios which result in “positive” (physically, emotionally, sexually and socially satisfying) health requires, necessarily in the situations addressed by SaRA, innovative discovery, conceptualisation and communication of resources for everyday life within a *decision-making arena*.

This arena is generated and reconstituted by the participants who actually inhabit it. At the individual level, the arena is experienced through constructing scenarios within its horizons and exploring them as pathways. Resources may be innovatively accessed and their transformation imagined through voyages along these pathways. At the social level, the arena is activated through the participants *showing* and *telling* about discovery, innovation and improvement in the conceptualisation, utilisation and transformation of resources for living.

Ramella and Attride-Stirling (2000) discuss community-based arenas for the facilitation of shared decisions as *gendered spaces*, which provide “possibility for interchange, for fruitful communication” in conceptualising resources and developing, communicating and realising scenarios. It is important that decision-makers, like the youngsters addressed by SaRA, collectively “own” them, both in the symbolic world of their conceptualisations and communications and in the local reality in which these spaces are grounded. For ownership to be experienced, the spaces must serve as arenas in which the observations, actions and interactions are actually played out in generating and communicating their contents. In this way the youngsters can discover their own individual and collective agency. The SaRA project facilitated this by promoting and developing the formation of “clubs” by the youngsters themselves as informal organisations focused on communication, exchange of ideas and joint actions engendering the development of such spaces.

The clubs were set up through open encounters taking place in highly visible places, e.g. the community’s main square. During these events, all potentially interested parties (e.g. the youngsters, their families, local leaders, etc.) were informed about the new initiative and, more importantly, were encouraged to contribute views and opinions. These procedures generated active community participation, enabling the emerging adolescent clubs to constitute appropriately grounded arenas<sup>3</sup>. But we did not intend that the spaces would be

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<sup>3</sup> Clubs operated under two differentiated levels. There was in each Club a nucleus of between 25 and 55 highly committed individuals (with a roughly even balance between men and women) who participated in the everyday life of the Club. These members constituted the ‘core group’ who could take full advantage of the facilities of the club as an arena for the construction of gendered spaces, which they inhabited themselves. In addition there was a ‘periphery’ of additional adolescents who partake of the initiative in a less regular way (the nucleus of 25 to 55 individuals corresponds to the ‘core group’). The mechanisms for establishing the Clubs varied from community to community, however in all of them two Club Promoters (a man and a woman), were the persons in charge for the actual set up of the Club. Promoters were always ‘persona grata’ in the community; they necessarily belonged to the society within which they were working, had experience working with adolescents

bounded by within-club activities (like some kind of small-world oasis within a wider world exhibiting the characteristics indicated at the head of this abstract). The spaces were initially centred on activities emanating for discussions within the clubs. But they were unbounded, and grew as the youngsters progressively extended the scenarios, and their realisation into their communities, effectively building new kinds of resources for living and networking with other local agents (and community knowledge) who could help in their realisation.

Building gendered spaces, and generating and realising innovative scenarios within them, is necessarily a social and distributed process. This process requires multi-layered communications, founded in languages, which can support innovative conceptualisation and generate new possibilities for exploration, as well as assessment and monitoring these possibilities in making trade-offs and deciding between alternatives – a necessary precondition for turning fantasy into real action. As indicated in figure 3, the communicative process involves interplay between:

- What is being conceptualised and communicated, through the language of observation and the language of action (following De Zeeuw, 1992);
- and
- How it is being conceptualised and communicated in *telling* through textual (written, spoken) and *showing* through audiovisual language (following Lorac and Weiss, 1982).

		<i>Language mode</i>	
		Language of Observation	Language of Action
<i>Mode of Composing in Multimedia</i>	Textual (written or spoken)	Telling about what is / could be	Telling what is / could be done about it
	Audiovisual	Showing about what is / could be	Showing what is / could be done about it

Figure 3: Interplay between language models and composing in multimedia in the communication process.

Conventional school education concentrates on developing social competence in observational and textual language, neglecting competence in action language and in the audiovisual composing and communication process. Conventional methods for representing decision problems share the same priorities. Textual language preserves a rigid subject-object distinction, and the need to name the subject of a sentence provides that subject with the presumption of a fixed identity through time and space. This distinction is reinforced in text-based techniques for scenario generation, where the “same” named decision maker is presumed to have complete agency over all of his or her subsequent acts in the scenario described, masking the possibility that the subject will no longer be “the same”, i.e., feeling

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and were well respected by the community’s members and young people. In this way, the Clubs emerged from their inception as embedded in the community and took a stance as important social agents, working alongside other community networks. However, the role of the Promoter was one of facilitator, not of sponsor or protector.

the same way and wishing to act the same way, at choice points in the future as he would now, after intervening events, and collective action have unfolded “for real”. The presumption is that the intervening experience will have no impact on the decision-maker’s identity, or result in any change in understanding of the potential significance of resources for living.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the acts of others are represented as events; thus collective agency is excluded. As a result, decision-makers become trapped in the manner described in the introduction to this paper.

Furthermore, decision problem representations based on textual language (even when their elements are linked through graphical and numerical representations) are constructed through, and employed as artefacts within, *discourses of truth* (Foucault, 1980, 1988; Humphreys, 1998). Within any discourse of truth, particular subjects and objects are identified, by naming them, thus giving them implicitly fixed identities extending through time and space (Lacan, 1977). Information about the relationships between them is provided, in text communications, entirely in the terms authored by the communicator (Eco, 1985). Such *telling* about what “is” or what “may be, if” is useful for establishing control of the decision making process, but locks out innovation through discovery of aspects of the communication mediated, but not authored by, the communicator.

On the other hand, audiovisual language prioritises authoring through editing material designed for *showing*, rather than just telling: the material shown offers more than the editor may have noticed, or the editor may decide to communicate it because it “seems relevant” intuitively, even though he or she cannot say why. The audiovisual composing process, in effecting *mise-en-scène*, does not start from the identification of named subjects on which activities are predicated. Instead it provides viewpoints from which actions may be seen to occur. The receiver/viewer of what is composed is free to explore what appears *mise-en-scène* from his or her own interpretation of the viewpoint and scene. Here, naming of subjects and objects is not a pre-requisite for audiovisual, as opposed to text based, communications about acts, and collective and distributed agency can be explored contemporaneously as well as diachronically.

Thus a vital ingredient for the success of SaRA was the use of audiovisual composing and multimedia presentations, by the youngsters themselves, in which audiovisual composing processes are linked with textual languages of both observation and action, in exploring and communicating about innovative resources and activities, i.e., *showing* and *doing* as well as *telling* and *looking*. In the following, we examine how this was done.

#### **4. GENERATING AND COMMUNICATING KNOWLEDGE FOR INNOVATION: BY CREATING AND EXCHANGING AUDIOVISUAL COMPOSITIONS AND MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATIONS**

New communications technology played a significant role in SaRA in generating and communicating knowledge, for innovative distributed decision-making. As well as talking and making written notes, the youngsters were provided with camcorders and editing facilities so that they could record observations and actions utilising images and sound, including talk. The youngsters engaged in a range of audiovisual composing processes,

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<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere, this presumption has been described, by Brown (1978) and Berkeley and Humphreys (1992), as the “Achilles’ heel” of decision theoretic prescriptions, which conventionally concentrate all possibilities for subsequent agency on the decision maker through his or her acts, both now and in the future.

operating at a number of levels and in different ways, as they participated in three distinctive, though related activities. These were (a) exploring the nature of their own communities and how they would like to see them develop; (b) participating in sustainable economic projects designed and developed by themselves, and (c) investigating and sharing relational and emotional issues pertinent to their sexual health and wellbeing. The resulting multimedia productions were used both to communicate innovative knowledge for distributed decision-making in the local community and to enable local experience to be shared with other communities across Peruvian subcultures: rural and urban-marginal, Andean, coastal and jungle.

#### **4.1. Exploring the local community: creating multimedia resources supporting local development.**

When the youngsters were exploring their own communities with a video camera they were constantly making decisions about (i) what they wanted to consider/capture and (ii) the significance of their observations for their own and other communities. The audiovisual record provided a focus for another way of 'seeing' and a possibility for reflection. It also enabled an explanation of local environments for other SaRA groups who lived in different locations. Oral communication can easily describe and explain known phenomena, however when people can 'see and hear' unknown places and people, greater understanding can be achieved. For example, the La Victoria club recorded their community and interviewed many local people. In this way they introduced the viewer, of their audiovisual composition, to the local area and people. Among other things, they made a visual case to stop the upstream city of Huancayo dumping rubbish in the river that passes through La Victoria. They also showed the need for a local park by filming a young couple embracing against the boundary wall of the school, with voices-over saying: [Girl 1:] "These are the consequences of not having a park." [Girl 2:] "They've nowhere to go." [Girl 1:] "It would be different if there was a park... we need a park here - urgently!" [Girl 3:] "Let's go and talk to the mayor". This audiovisual documentary facilitated effective inputs to community decision-making on how to clean up the river and make a park; which resulted in improved river water and the creation of a small park on a patch of open wasteland in the centre of La Victoria. Such progress was shared between communities across Peru, by exchanging video documentaries.

Some of the clubs, for example, Callao, El Carmen, Chupaca, La Victoria and Pangoa arranged to video record talks given by doctors, nurses and psychologists at their local health centres. This provided them with analysable documents. During the process of reviewing the videos they became aware that the advice given was often intimidating and directive. The young people discussed what they needed from these health professionals and then produced video documentaries, which described their experiences, explained their responses to the presentations and made suggestions on how they thought the service could work in a better way for them. More than seventy per cent of these professionals independently reported that they benefited from the knowledge they gained through this communication process, which helped them



improve their health centres and discover more effective ways of working in their communities.<sup>5</sup>

These examples and many others emanating from SaRA seem to confirm that composing and communicating using audiovisual composing enabled the youngsters to explore their communities in creative ways that enabled distributed innovative decision-making.

#### **4.2. Creating multimedia resources supporting distributed local decision-making on sustainable economic activities.**

When the youngsters in the clubs were recording the processes involved in the design and development of their sustainable economic activities they created audiovisual diaries. These diaries charted the decisions and outcomes thus allowing the youngsters to analyse their successes and failures in terms of the decisions they made at the various stages of their process and the implications of those decisions. They made and exchanged multimedia presentations, using the diaries as resources informing distributed decision-making.

For example, one club (Concepción) initially organised a food stall in the local market selling *chicharrones de trucha* (trout pieces freshly fried at the stall). The initiative was not successful because old ladies were also offering chicharrones on neighbouring stalls. The audiovisual record indicated how the customers clearly believed that grandmothers could fry chicharrones better than young people could. However, it inspired other clubs (Chupaca, El Carmen) to make a success of selling freshly cooked food at the local market. For example, the youngsters in the Chupaca club had the initiative, knowledge and resources to construct a stall and source the raw materials. But they also hired grandmothers (who did not have the resources to mount a stall on their own) to cook *anticuchos* (grilled brochettes of ox heart). Another club (Callao) took over school premises (closing the deal by promising to help with the school's anniversary celebrations) and used the space to host a sports tournament with the sale of *ceviche* (marinated fish with onions and peppers, a favourite Peruvian dish) made by their mothers. The youngsters video-recorded all aspects of the event (not just the tournament) and showed and discussed the resulting productions with youngsters from other clubs. Then they composed a multimedia production (combining video and inter-club discussions), which has served as a useful resource in distributed decision-making on organising successful economic activities in many of the communities.

#### **4.3 Gaining awareness of relational and emotional issues pertinent to sexual health and wellbeing.**

The activities related to the awareness of emotional and sexual wellbeing centred on the creation of video dramas about relationships covering a variety of aspects important to the youngsters. These included sexually transmitted infections, abortions (personal trauma, medical consequences, resources for procurement), pregnancy, family support, homosexuality, violence, unemployment, friendship and so on. The process of creating a drama started with a discussion of the issues that might be addressed. The young men and women worked together improvising scenes and dialogue, video recording their activities.

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<sup>5</sup> This is why, in figure 2, we show an arrow indicating a flow of agency and innovation from the youngsters, which confronts the arrow indicating external pressure for the health centre for "participation".

They used immediate playback (on the LCD screens in the camcorders) to discuss the results and synthesise new ideas for the *mise-en-scène*. In this sense, the dramas evolved through the production process, rather than being produced according to prescriptions. The role of improvisation in the production of drama provides a rich resource for distributed decision-making. Differing viewpoints can be suggested and explored as part of the evolving storyline. These would often address topics, which were generally taboo in the local community, particularly in communications between the sexes on topics ranging from homosexuality and transvestism to how to “chat up” a member of the opposite sex. As each decision on the development, recording and editing of the drama was made, from a variety of ‘tried out’ possibilities, the story would take on new directions with alternative pathways. This process made explicit the potential implications of taking particular decisions to all those involved.

The resulting videos were shown and discussed in the clubs and exchanged between the clubs. Many of the discussions were themselves video recorded by the youngsters and integrated into the original videos, setting them in context and highlighting controversial issues. The value of video recording the dramas was evident through the opportunity they provided for reflection, and gaining awareness of other, gendered positions. This enabled the youngsters to investigate the vast range of issues involved and to decide within the variety of choices that exist. Considering these issues collectively added to the richness of the experience.

#### **4.4 Repercussions in the community of communicating knowledge in multimedia.**

In all these audiovisual compositions, whatever the form – record, report, documentary, diary, drama – it is important to point out that it is not necessary for people to come to the same understanding about everything, interpretations are bound to differ. The criteria for ‘showing’ are that it is interesting and that different people will be able to get different things from it, i.e., that it is useful communication to share (Lorac and Weiss, 1982). It is not problematic if sender and receiver have a different understanding. An audiovisual communication is open, rather than closed, because images hold more than one intended meaning. Such communications can be very effective in distributed decision-making, which involves improvisation and change among people occupying very different subject positions in the arena (Moore, 1994).

In the context of activities and communications initiated through the SaRA clubs, such improvisation and change was not limited to the club members, but had progressively wider repercussions throughout the communities. The arrows pointing outwards in figure 2, which are not present in figure 1, indicate some radical changes in the communications and relationships between the clubs and external agencies. As a result of activities supported by multimedia communications, like those indicated above, and of which we now have very many examples, open co-operation was gained with outside people and/or institutions who, benefited from the videos offered to them (and sometimes confronting them) to “escape” in one way or another from the straightjacket of the traditional, prescriptive communication language associated with their subject positions. As a result they managed to communicate and interact with the youngsters in the clubs, and more generally in the community, in a positive fashion. While the SaRA approach to composing and communicating through recorded images and sounds does not guarantee this, it certainly opens an appealing door to the possibility of it happening.

## **5 GENERATING AND COMMUNICATING KNOWLEDGE FOR INNOVATION THROUGH INTER-CLUB MULTIMEDIA WORKSHOPS**

It is interesting to note the ways in which the telling and showing occurred during the collective inter-club workshops when youngsters from many communities came together. The youngsters would talk/present, answer questions, show a short video extract, discuss further, use the video to demonstrate an answer. They moved easily and comfortably between telling and showing using each language as appropriate. For example, at an inter-club workshop in Huancayo, La Victoria club performed a live dance, choreographed by themselves, called “Los Viejos Verdes” which addressed the issue of male stripping and female prostitution by re-working a traditional folk dance from Jauja. They created a special audio re-mix for the dance that started with traditional folk and finished, after half a dozen transitions, as techno music. The topics addressed were urgent, but taboo – things that were not usually discussed in public. Subsequently the youngsters who participated in the discussion about the dance (which, was recorded audio-visually together with the dance for subsequent presentation and discussion in other clubs) told us that this discussion was the first time in which they could feel empowered and free to talk about the issues addressed seriously without the pressure to either “make a joke of it” or “say what you’re expected to say”.

This can be contrasted with another example, from the same inter-club workshop, of the presentation, by a girl from the Chupaca club, of a drama that the club had produced on video. The plot contained a sequence showing sexual relations leading to unwanted pregnancy and then to abortion and death. This sequence was presented in the video mainly in terms of “what you’re expected to say”. Youngsters in the audience challenged the presenter on the moral of the dramatic piece (i.e., “you should only have sex after marriage”) and on her initial justification (“well, that’s the way it goes”). The multimedia record of the workshop transforms the implication of the drama from an echo of external prescriptions to an expose of pressures on youngsters’ communications. It also re-locates and grounds the significance of dramatic elements of the audiovisual composition in the community. For instance, when asked about the alcoholism of the father of the girl who dies, the answer, articulated in the multimedia record, was “The father drinks because, when he does not have problems *finding* work, he has problems *at* work; I mean, always having to take a shit job”.

In these examples, and in many other instances, the fact that the entire experience gets recorded, analysed, seen and discussed provided a superb opportunity for the youngsters involved, in whatever role, to learn, reflect and relate better to their own environments. Distributive decision-making could be witnessed in both the showing and the discussions. Innovative conceptualisation is crucial to gaining and communicating knowledge about often-taboo issues, which have a significant impact on sexual and emotional health. It is significant that this was enabled and enhanced through using an audiovisual composing process. The youngsters confronted, and quickly mastered, the task of creating and communicating knowledge for distributed decision-making, integrating both audiovisual composing and textual commentary into layers of multimedia communications. For example, a video might be shown at an interclub meeting as part of a performance which would also involve live dramatic elements (interpretative dance, sketches, etc.), and which would be discussed live by the presenters, performers and viewers. Sometimes the discussion would also steer the presentation. Various participating youngsters, occupying different subject positions recorded all this activity using still cameras, tape-recorders, and video. The material presented (which was distributed on videotape around the clubs) would then be edited together with the recordings made of the process of its production and reception, to make new, more richly layered audiovisual compositions in multimedia presentations supporting further distributed decision-making on the issues addressed.

## **6. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR CREATIVE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

Our results from the SaRA project indicate that we were able to support distributed decision-making in the Peruvian communities in which the clubs were located with some degree of sustainable and increasing success. Through the examples and discussion above, we have indicated how this kind of distributed decision-making requires creative knowledge management addressing, fundamentally, infrastructures for generation and communication of innovative knowledge in audiovisual composing and multimedia. This is quite different from the traditional knowledge management (KM) focus on structures for storage, linking and retrieval of denotative and connotative knowledge. Hence, in designing and developing SaRA, we realised that major features of creative knowledge management effected through the project would have to include (a) support for the audiovisual composing process amongst the youngsters as producers/decision makers themselves and (b) development and maintenance of facilities for discussion, distribution and circulation of the resulting productions (both live through the inter-club networking and in recorded form). In effect, this should provide infrastructure for multiple layering of knowledge supporting innovative distributed decision-making.

### **6.1 Supporting the audiovisual composing process amongst the youngsters as producers/decision makers.**

This meant developing competence in audiovisual language: scripting, developing a mise-en-scène, production, recording, editing and post-production. However, in taking account of the critique of externally driven prescriptions of “participation”, we did not wish to fall into the same trap as did the external agencies illustrated in figure 1, which undoubtedly would have happened if we had provided training courses on topics like “audiovisual composing for distributed decision-making” for the youngsters in the clubs. Inevitably, we would have prescribed our view of styles of audiovisual composing, requisite decision-making agendas and appropriate communication and social skills. The result would have been to invade, rather than extend, the youngsters’ gendered spaces, and to steal, rather than promote, their ownership of the spaces, and any activities decided upon through the resulting audiovisual communications.

Instead, we provided the clubs with 35mm automatic still cameras, mini portable tape recorders, 8mm high sensitivity video camcorders with integral colour LCD display screens (so recorded material could be instantly played back and viewed by a variety of participants, particularly in locations without electricity), and ample supplies of blank film, video and audio tape. The clubs in each locality also had shared access to VHS video editing and large screen display equipment. Very basic tuition was offered in the operation of the machinery. There was also discussion on the best ways to archive the 8mm master tapes and on editing, copying and distributing material on VHS tapes. The youngsters were encouraged to use the cameras and recorders in any way they wished for exploring their communities, investigating their economic activities, and probing and dramatising issues of concern in relation to sexual and emotional health. They understood that there was no requirement to make finished closed accounts in any particular medium. All recorded material, in whatever media, constituted multimedia communications resources, which they were free to mix and layer together, add commentary, and integrate into live performances, in any way, at any time, in any mode they wished.



The youngsters working together on each club's productions quickly developed audiovisual composing and editing styles of their own, showing a full mastery of technical aspects like sequencing and camera positioning for continuity, construction of virtual spaces from disparate physical elements, and so on. They achieved complex effects through innovative use of local resources.<sup>6</sup> The gendered spaces provided the arenas for discussion and development of composing and production skills, as well as an arena in which the contents of the recorded material could be reviewed, discussed and enhanced. The portability of the recording and editing equipment meant that it could be employed on location, capitalising on, and promoting the extension and exploration of the youngsters' gendered spaces into the community.

## **6.2 Development and maintenance of infrastructure for distribution and circulation**

During the first two years of the SaRA project (1997-1999), the SaRA research team maintained a co-ordination directorate in Peru, with branches in each of the regions where the clubs were active (Lima, Huamanga, Junin). The main functions of the directorate were (i) providing infrastructure and support for setting up the clubs, (ii) providing and arranging for the clubs to share the technical equipment and resources for composing, editing and producing in multimedia, and (iii) helping the clubs to distribute and circulate their productions on videotape. It helped to provide transport and facilities for inter-club workshops, and arranged annual plenary workshops where representatives of all clubs would bring, perform and discuss recorded and live productions on issues of interest. Youngsters from the clubs would also tape and video-record the activities of the plenary workshops, including the discussions, according to their own interests and perspectives. Free courier facilities were provided through the SaRA network for exchanging audiovisual equipment and material between clubs. The individual clubs were responsible for holding and archiving the master copies of their own audiovisual productions and materials.<sup>7</sup> Copies would be shown at meetings in the community and exchanged with other clubs at each club's discretion. The youngsters also edited the tapes and videos of discussions they had recorded together with the video-recordings that had featured in these discussions.<sup>8</sup> The results were shown, discussed and exchanged using multimedia techniques and facilities, between clubs and in the communities.

In these ways, the infrastructure supported multiple layering of knowledge through the spiral process of composing - showing - understanding - discussing - commenting -recomposing in multimedia. The result was to provide increasingly rich resources supporting distributed decision-making within many communities, not just those in which the material "originated".

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<sup>6</sup> For instance, an inter-gang fight scene after dark appeared as *chiaroscuro*, through the use of low-level horizontal lighting. This was achieved by shooting the scene in a yard next to a minibus stand. Knowing that the buses waited with their lights on, the youngsters set up the scene and then shot it on video the moment a bus arrived. Another scene (in which a boy dies after a fight) was shot entirely in crimson tones, an effect achieved through using the red light on the local radio station's transmitter tower (out of shot) as the sole light source.

<sup>7</sup> All the clubs also loaned the masters of audiovisual materials, which they considered particularly significant to the SaRA co-ordination directorate, for archival in digital form and used in research and to make presentations relating to SaRA aimed at external audiences.

<sup>8</sup> These recorded materials may have been originally shot by other clubs: ownership of content material was considered to be communal throughout the network of clubs.

## 7. CONCLUSION

We have described how creative knowledge for distributed innovative decision-making can be generated and communicated through the interplay of modes of composing in multimedia (textual, audiovisual) and modes of language (observation, action). We have shown how policies for managing such knowledge, which focus on providing structures for storage, linking and retrieval of its denotative and connotative content necessarily fail to provide effective support for distributed decision-making, in contexts where the achievement of satisfaction requires innovation within gendered spaces. Rather than interrogating such content to form prescriptions for decision-making (which would involve telling the youngsters what to do), we discovered for ourselves the importance of watching and listening to what the youngsters wanted to show, tell and communicate in audiovisual composing and multimedia presentations to themselves and to others. Through activities of the SaRA project the youngsters built a network of trust, learning from each other rather than trying to direct each other, through which new possibilities for creative understanding and action could be synthesised<sup>9</sup>.

With the aim of supporting this network, we implemented an alternative approach to creative knowledge management, focusing on infrastructures that facilitate its generation and communication. This paper has reviewed a few of the achievements resulting from this approach to knowledge management. What is being *managed* here is, essentially, *process* knowledge for creating and enriching gendered spaces and enabling the generation of communications in multimedia to show, tell, comment and reveal knowledge for innovation. These communications empowered local decision-makers to discover new resources and implement new pathways, realising satisfying lives in situations where conventional methods of decision analysis and decision support are constrained, by the kinds of knowledge they manage, to signal “no way, no hope”.

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<sup>9</sup> At the end of the final plenary workshop on the SaRA project (Ayachucho, March 1999) the 120 youngsters, representing all the clubs, discussed amongst themselves what they had gained through their participation in SaRA. They came to the unanimous conclusion that SaRA had enabled them, in their own words, to live as a group; to express what they think and feel as adolescents; to know themselves and their communities; to express themselves with confidence; to awaken a spirit of ambition; to generate self-sufficiency; to engage themselves with the problems of their communities and propose solutions; to maintain unity among themselves, to be able to achieve their plans, and to generate events to know each other better. They decided that they wished SaRA to continue, now as a network of clubs, managed by the youngsters themselves, without a central hierarchy or external directorate. New clubs could join if they subscribed to the SaRA way of working, and the clubs in the network would be collectively responsible for maintaining, sharing and developing the knowledge management infrastructure and multimedia communications facilities. Communicating in multimedia would have an increasingly central role.

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## **Part 2**

### **Extract from Taking Part**

**Marcelo Ramella**

Marcelo Ramella produced *Taking Part* a Ph.D thesis, developed at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His research was based on the Peruvian project, SaRA (Salud Reproductiva Para Adolescentes). The following Paper is taken from *Taking Part*. An edited version of this text can be found in *Images and Sounds Audiovisual Language* chapter 7.

Marcelo Ramella specifically analyzed sixteen audiovisual sequences that showed the presentations of the SaRA participants' relationship dramas, and the discussions that followed the viewings; an example of which can be viewed in the audiovisual Annotation *SaRA Case Study*, found in *Images and Sounds Audiovisual Language* chapter 7. Marcelo Ramella made the following conclusions.

#### **Extract from Taking Part**

Constant changes in conversational perspective produces an array of effects. A first important consequence is that the shifting between performance and objectification, between action and observation between doing and commentary, becomes fluid. This fluidization, in turn, opens up a particular reflexive space. The adolescents moving back and forth between the position of actor and observer do so within a horizon of issues that are internally connected to their own repertoires, as they are the creators of the stories. In short, a potential for reflexivity arises from the condensation in the same individuals of the double position of the actor who experiences from the inside, and the observer who experiences from the outside.

An initial step in the collective experiencing of the world is the exercise of thinking of a story to tell (i.e. the documentaries and dramas). Here the participants first have to separate themselves from the crystallized world, the world within which they act. This process of preliminary detachment, which was often lubricated by curiosity or frustration, focuses on slices of the world that affect the creators' lives. This instance is situated in the everyday life atmosphere of the adolescents taking part. As such, the first objectification steps bear the weight of the world that acts upon the participant, rather than *visa versa*; objectifying fractions of the world, within which the participants act, becomes hence the first stop in a long journey.

As part of the process of creating the stories the participants subsequently debate about the slices of the objectified world, and in doing so the world begins to acquire further levels of complexity. First, as the creative process of producing a story is a collective one, the participants have to agree on the story, what story to choose, what to tell, what morale it will have, etc. The first clashes of points of view and perspectives appear, probably instigating the first opportunities for taking up the role of the other in the process of argumentation. Second, once the story has been thought out, the process of re-creating, of enacting it, brings in challenges about the 'produced' nature of a story vis-à-vis the 'real' nature of the world. Here

there is probably a first collective shake to the notions of ‘produced’ story versus ‘real’ world; the first suggestions of the real nature of the produced, and the produced nature of the real, begin to sprout. As examples we have the instances of negotiating spaces and people for filming, shooting on location, editing the footage filmed in the field, etc. In the instance of re-creation of the story, the world, or better said, the slice of the world that is part of the designed story, becomes a *performed world*, and not any more an observed world.

The world is later presented in the story told, or better said, in the video shown. Now the story has been uprooted from the location and the instance of creation, and has been relocated in a different social space and social time. The telling of the story coincides with the first instance of enactment by the observing audience. Two processes occur simultaneously: the social process of telling and the social process of observing. It is an interactive monologue, or to an extent, a quasi-dialogue. In the process of re-locating the story in time and space, the added commentary, the framings, expansions, qualifications, contradictions, additions, etc. all become part of the relocation.

As the presentations of the stories unfold, the process of empathetic identification discussed above begins to unfold. Further, while there is identification taking place on the side of the audience, there is another process at stake on the side of the presenting party (and it should be remembered that everyone taking part is at some point a presenting party). For those presenting the story, the world re-created in the story ceases to be real and becomes hypothetical. This hypothesizing of the world is latent here but it will become explicit later. It could be said that while the audience *enters* the story, that is, it comes to experience it from the inside (via the identification with the characters), the presenting party *exits* the story, shifting to a position of observation from the *outside* (here outside is a bold term, via the uprooting of the story from the point of production and re-rooting into the point of transmission).

Finally, there is the instance of *critical observation*, of commentary: the question time. Here the world is hypothetical par excellence; it is in full an objectified world that is acted upon by a critical audience. Everyone is an observer here, a critical observer (as much as a problematiser). However, by now, everyone has also been a performer, an actor, and a creator. The turn taking in presentation allows for everyone to identify with characters in stories (as many time as there are stories told, including the one told by themselves), and to be an observer of their own stories. In this instance, the original real world that fed the process of creation of the stories has undergone a long transformation articulated in the conception of the story, in the production of the story, in the telling of the story, and in the discussion of the story. In Freire’s terms, along this process of transformation the world ceases to be a given and becomes an opportunity. The subjects that created, told, observed and commented on the stories have also undergone a long process of transformation.

The relationship between the subject and the world has changed many times: an observer of the original world, who, drawing on feelings, selects a slice of the world to put under scrutiny; a critical observer of the world, who takes part in a collective process of conception and production of the story which re-creates the original world (here treating the world hypothetically, acting upon it from the perspective of the observer); a performer of the world in the story, acting upon it as an actor and not as an observer; a story teller, relating the world to others, treating it again from the observer perspective; and ‘identified’ performer of the world, acting upon it as an actor, by identification with the protagonists in the story; finally, and again, a critical observer of the world, who takes part in a collective process of

re-design and re-production of the story which re-creates the ‘told’ world (treating the world hypothetically, acting upon it from the perspective of the observer).

In conclusion, the detailed breakdown of this back and forth process of being an actor and an observer, as much as social object empathically identifying with others (and with oneself), can be understood as a *collective exercise in de-centering*. As such, this exercise concentrates three main conceptual constructions ... the adolescent as a social actor, participation as a process of creation, and sexual health as knowledge circulating in the community. Let us revisit these three issues briefly.

The collective exercise in de-centering is carried out repeatedly by hundreds of adolescents involved in it, creating, telling, and problematising dozens of stories. The adolescents here appear to provide a sound example of Freire’s concept of the active learner. Far from passive recipients of information, the adolescents vividly illustrate the notion of social actors, that is, subjects with agency who are able to do and undo, to shape social and material environment at the same time they themselves are shaped by the very processes they are engaged in.

In accomplishing this collective exercise in de-centering, the adolescents taking part constantly moved, as we have seen in the paragraphs above, between action and observation. There are two aspects of this movement that is important to distinguish here: pure movement and ripening movement. The *pure* aspect of movement is made up by permanent back and forth between observation and action. The second aspect of movement, that is, the *ripening* movement, refers to the acquisition of competencies by the collective of adolescents. It points towards the process of development of reflexivity, that is, the principal achievement of a creational process of participation. In other words, the ripening aspect of movement at the heart of the collective exercise in de-centering colourfully illustrates Paulo Freire’s concept of the development of critical consciousness or conscientizacao.

Finally, flowing through and with these processes of pure and ripening movement, transiting within the collective exercise in de-centering, there are the likewise collective stories of sexuality and community. These stories are unique examples of the knowledge of community, sexuality and sexual health that is in currency in the places where the adolescents live, the places they belong to. The stories are fed by the knowledge in circulation in their communities, and in turn, they feed back on to these. As such the stories constitute the stabilizing unity that both binds and bonds those involved in creating them, that is, the adolescent woman and men. The stories of community and sexuality illustrate the role played by dialogue and communication in both crystallizing and renewing knowledge.

