

Voices from Ravensbrück

A feasibility study towards the creation of multilingual oral archives

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Anna Maria Bruzzone's oral archive



Anna Maria Bruzzone (1925-2015), teacher and oral historian.

Main fields of research:

- Psychiatric hospitals
(*Bruzzone, 1979; Setaro Calamai 2021*)
- Women in anti-fascist Resistance
(*Bruzzone, Farina, 1976; Bravo, Bruzzone, 1995*)
- Witnesses of deportation during Second World War
- Female deportation (Ravensbrück survivors)
(*Beccaria Rolfi, Bruzzone, 1978; rist. 2021*)

Ravensbrück concentration camp



- Largest **female-only** concentration camp of the Third Reich (1939-1945).
- Over **45.000** deported by the end of the war*.
- Over **20** nationalities (Germany, Poland, Czechoslovak, France, Italy...)*.
- Italians constitute a small minority.
- The prisoners were mainly **political opponents** and **anti-nazist** activists.

*Source: ANED (Associazione Nazionale Ex-Deportati)

The *Ravensbrück* interviews series

1976

A.M.B. and L.B.R. interviews 5 ex-deported in Ravensbrück.

1978

The volume *Le donne di Ravensbrück*, curated by A.M.B. and L.B.R., is edited by Einaudi.

2017

P.C., niece of A.M.B, finds the original supports of the interviews and gives them to Siena University.

2019

The recordings are digitised according to IASA standards.

2021

Start of the CLARIN-funded project *Voices from Ravensbruck*.

2022

Full verbatim transcription and metadatation of the oral interviews.

2022/23

Publication on the CLARIN Resource Families webpage, accessible to scholars in all countries that joined CLARIN.



The *Ravensbrück* interviews series



Lidia Beccaria Rolfi in 1990

Content of the analog archive:
14 audiotapes, total of ~ **18** hours of recording.
Five interviewed ex-deported:

- Lidia Beccaria **Rolfi** (1925-1996) 6h06
- Bianca Paganini **Mori** (1922-2013) 4h35
- Livia Borsi **Rossi** (1902-?) 3h48
- Lina Baroncini **Roveri** (1923-?) e Nella Baroncini **Poli** (1925-2015) 3h06

Edited volume vs. oral interviews



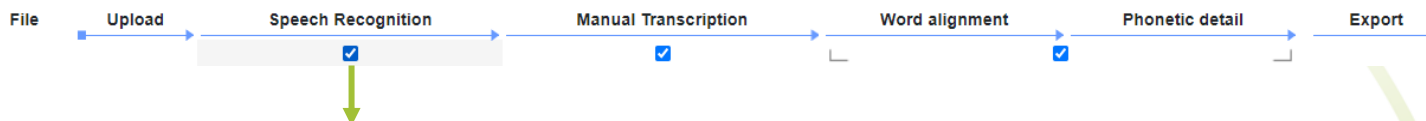
- Curators' reinterpretation of the interview's content (especially in Lidia's witness).
- Absence of all non-verbal and paraverbal traits (prosody, silences, laugh...).
- **Deletion of the interviewers' questions/remarks**
(Ardolino, Calamai, submitted)

N. BARONCINI: beh, l'abbiamo vista venerdì sera... mi ricordo che [...] passavano le dottoresse, chiedevamo... ma insomma, avevamo visto anche noi che era grave prima di entrare [...] [Una dottoressa] disse che l'avevano portata... A. M. BRUZZONE: *in che lingua parlava?* N. BARONCINI: mah, forse in francese. L. BARONCINI: forse in francese.

N. BARONCINI: io mi ricordo che – penso fosse verso la fine di novembre o in dicembre – in terra trovai un pezzo di giornale, e vidi il comune di Bologna... non so se me lo son fatto leggere o cosa, ma capii che Bologna non era ancora liberata [...] ci rimasi così male che mi cascarono le braccia [...]. A. M. BRUZZONE: *ma in che lingua era questo giornale* [...]. N. BARONCINI: in tedesco indubbiamente, e non so se me lo feci tradurre o chiesi a qualcuno... e capii che Bologna non era ancora liberata [...] ci rimasi tanto male...

Transcription of the interview

- First attempt: use of CLARIN's **Transcription Chain (T-chain)**



Unsatisfactory performances of the T-chain on legacy data (especially for ASR, cut-off 30%)

Lidia Beccaria Rolfi
interview
38% *Word Error Rate**



Lina and Nella Baroncini
interview
43% *Word Error Rate**



Manual transcription (in OCTRA)

Additional data + manual transcriptions = **improvement of the T-chain for legacy data**

* WER was obtained with R *wersim* package.

Transcription of the interview



[Lidia:] se tu non l'avessi fatto non saresti finita è colpa tua è stato direi un rientro in famiglia [...] normale il meglio che potessi desiderare il meglio che potesse avvenire però la comunicazione non ha non ha potuto esserci [Bruzzone:] tu non l'hai mai raccontato quindi [Lidia:] in casa non ho mai raccontato niente forse [eeh] non ho non ho neanche tentato [...] di raccontare c'era una specie di pudore di ritegno non volevo che mio padre e mia madre per esempio sapessero che cosa avevo sofferto

Adopted standards:

[Lidia:] speaker

[mmm] [eeh] vocalized disfluencies

[...] silent disfluencies

[+] technical issues (ambiental noises, tape malfunctions)

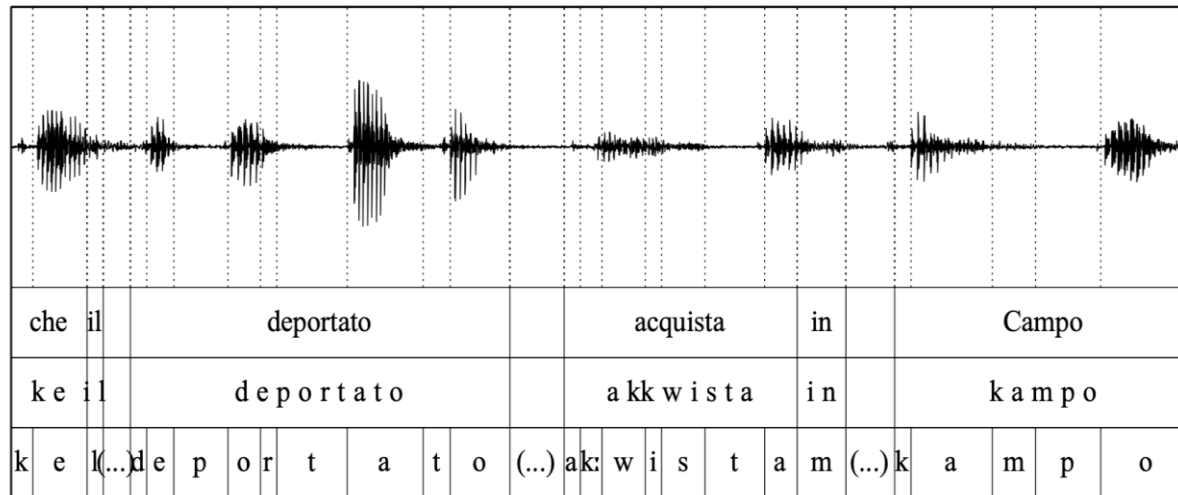
[*] laugh

[?] unintellegible speech

|| end of the file (audio tape substitution)

Automatic alignment

- MAUS web service (Kisler et al., 2012)
- Alignment of interviews at word and phonetic level.



Metadata description

- CLARIN Component MetaData Structure (CMDI) for oral history: **Oral History Interview** (van den Heuvel et al., 2012)
- Intended for **born-digital** interviews (not legacy data)
- Legacy data: need of clarify the relationship between the **digital resource** (*document*) and the original **analogue carrier**.



Rearrangement of the *Oral History Interview*

- **Context of Creation** component
[resource author, recording circumstances, recording purposes, location/reference subject/curator of the analogue carriers]
- **Context of Digitisation** component
[author of the digitisation, digitisation circumstances, expert in charge]



Toward a Ravensbrück *Resource Family*

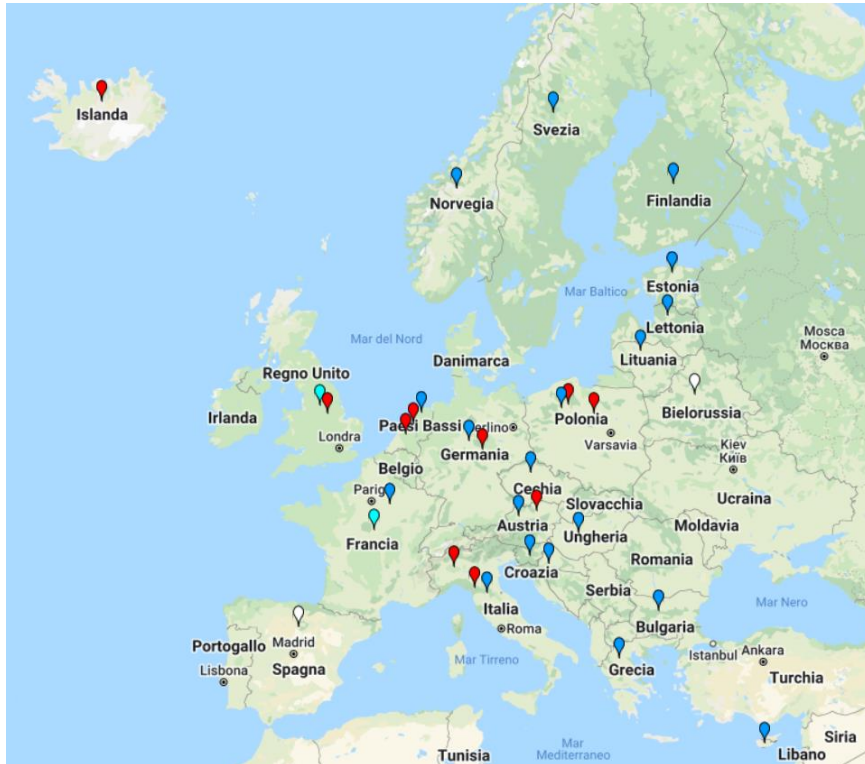


CLARIN

RESOURCE FAMILIES

- Clarin **Resource Family**: a way to simplify linguistic resources' **exploration** and **comparison**.
- Creation of a RF for **born-analogue interviews**.
- A **multilingual archive** for **linguistics** and **oral history**.

Potential partners in the CLARIN world



Austria

- *Oostenriches Mediathek*

France

- *Phonothèque de la Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme*

Germany

- *Waidak Media E.V. and Loretta Waltz Videoproduktion*

Italy

- *Archivio della Deportazione Piemontese*

Netherlands

- *Netherlands Institute for War and Holocaust studies*

Poland

- *Wodmętach Ravensbrück produkcja*

- *LUND Institute*

United Kingdom

- *Imperial War Museum Britain*

United States

- *US Holocaust Memorial Museum*

- *Shoah Visual Archive*



Sudafrica



Stati Uniti

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Thank you for your attention!



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