



Talk, time, and creativity: Developing ideas and identities during a start-up weekend



Florian Hiss

Department of Language and Culture, Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, UiT – The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Keywords:

Flow of time
Interaction
Temporal indexes
Chronotope
Creativity
Start-up

ABSTRACT

This study explores the temporal dynamics of language use, collaboration, and creativity in the case of a start-up weekend. The organisation of interaction in time and the use of temporal indexes and semiotic resources vary over time, not simply because of changing contextual conditions, but rather because of dynamic developments in the flow of time. Interacting in time, the participants appropriate temporal frames and contextualise their actions in and across time. The start-up weekend as a chronotopic frame has a semiotic impact on all local actions. Simultaneously, small, individual actions emerging in the flow of time have a collective impact, which leads to unpredictable, creative developments. The relations between these perspectives are mutually dynamic.

© 2018 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Time in language use, though omnipresent, has called relatively little attention yet. One aim of this article is to demonstrate the importance of incorporating time in the analysis of language use: Communication and interaction unfold in the flow of time. Simultaneously, while interacting in time, speakers index and appropriate different time frames to structure the interaction and their mutual relationships and to achieve interactional goals. These two perspectives on time as a flow and a contextual frame are related in a mutually dynamic way in language use.

I analyse the linguistic interactions and creative collaboration of the participants at a start-up weekend in Norway. A start-up weekend is an event for young entrepreneurs (and those who want to be ones) to work creatively in a low-risk, high-energy atmosphere and develop ideas into small businesses. The study follows a team of six participants and their linguistic interactions while they work on their project and compete with other teams for the best business concept. A clear temporal frame, time pressure, and high intensity are characteristic of the setting. In the unfolding process, the time frame, initially given as a duration of 50 h with a clearly defined end-point and goal, gets filled with actions and gradually turns into experiences, which the participants draw on in any new interaction and in their evaluations of what is still to come. The structure of the start-up weekend and the limited timespan allow for a longitudinal and at the same time detailed analysis of language use and contextualisation during the creative, emergent process. It provides empirical access to the complexity of creative, collaborative, linguistic interaction over time.

In the team's linguistic practices and creative collaboration, time is pervasive as a contextual frame. Furthermore, in its permanent flow, time both structures and complexifies interactions and the production of creative outcomes. Viewing time as

E-mail address: florian.hiss@uit.no.

both frame and flow, I explore: how the flow of time enables creativity and shapes order while things are going on; how the participants navigate in time, organise, and appropriate temporal contexts; how time is used as a semiotic resource; and how semiotic resources emerge over time. In detail, we will look at the temporal organisation of the interaction, the use of temporal indexes over time, and the alternation between Norwegian and English in the flow of time. These phenomena vary over time, not simply because of different contextual conditions at different points of time, but rather because of the dynamic development of events, semiotic resources, indexicalities, and personal relations over time.

In linguistic research, the timescale of 50 h (i.e. the weekend), in which the coherent, collaborative project development takes place, has remained a grey area between speech events and short sequences of interactions (lasting from seconds to minutes) on the one hand and long-term historical developments on the other. The case of the start-up weekend differs in many respects from interactions in everyday life and other organisational contexts. A number of special circumstances make it an ideal case for investigating the relations between time and language use. Firstly, the term *start-up weekend* implies a future orientation as well as a limited timescale. The idea is to trigger creative productivity under time pressure, with the aim of achieving new, presentable outcomes within a short time. This future orientation has also an ideological aspect. Not only does any individual start-up project have a future prospect pointing beyond the frame of the weekend itself (here, it is important for the team to develop a concept that is timely). Start-ups in general address a hope for future socioeconomic success grounded in creativity and innovation from a grassroots level. Secondly, the limited—and therefore empirically manageable—time frame is one of the most important characteristics of the start-up event. The teams are constituted in the beginning of the event by participants who have not worked with each other before. This means that the process of teambuilding and identity formation (Who is who within the team? Who are we as a team?) starts at this point and unfolds over time. Building and negotiating social relations is normally a process that evolves on much longer, open-ended timescales. Thirdly, both ideas and relations evolve in an intense and creative process. The participants produce not only ideas, which compete and interact dynamically and develop gradually towards the final outcome; in their interactions, they also produce semiotic resources, which they recontextualise and reinvest in the flow of time. At any point of time, the participants make sense of the given time scheme as well as their own past actions and future plans. Using language to organise time is not only a central part of the interaction; it contributes to the ongoing process of change and development. Taking these together, it is clear that the start-up weekend unites orderly and stable phenomena (such as the time schedule, the fixed starting point and goal) with unstable and emergent phenomena that arise out of the participants' individual and collective agency. Some contexts and semiotic resources are highly stable (or underlie processes of change far beyond the scope of the weekend) while others emerge and shift while things are going on. Some linguistic behaviour is habitual; some emerges in the flow of action (cf. [Blommaert, 2005: 126–128](#)).

The article begins with a discussion of perspectives on time as a flow in which linguistic interaction unfolds, and as a contextual frame that affects the making of meanings in any here-and-now and how these perspectives intertwine in the case of the start-up weekend (Part 2). Part 3 introduces the setting, participants, and method of data collection. In Part 4, I present two example sequences to demonstrate how ideas, relations, and semiotic resources unfold over time and across different timescales. I show how the participants organise their interactions in time, how temporal indexes shape coherence in and across time, and how temporal frames and the flow of time influence the alternation between Norwegian and English. Concluding the analysis, Part 5 shows how these processes and semiotic relations intertwine and lead to unforeseen, creative outcomes.

2. Time, language use, and creativity

Time is a fundamental dimension of everything we know, so fundamental that its effects are often overlooked. In spite of a long tradition of research into language history, variation, and change, temporality and the flow of time in language use have called relatively little attention yet. This has been pointed out from various angles for quite a while (e.g., [Blommaert, 2005](#); [Auer et al., 1999](#); [Enfield, 2011](#); [Goodwin, 2002](#); [Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008](#)). [Auer et al. \(1999\)](#) relate the detemporalisation of language as a research object to the general decontextualisation of language in western folk ideology and linguistic research. They argue,

in the end, the metaphor of language as a tool used to convey (denotational) meaning turns out to be basically flawed, although it continues to thrive in folk theories of language and, in various disguises, in linguistic theory: The tool has no existence without the praxis in which it is used, and this praxis unfolds in time. ([Auer et al., 1999: 6](#))

Linguistic forms and meaning-making resources emerge on multiple timescales (from biological evolution and diachronic emergence to online situational processing), which interact dynamically and mesh in the current moment ([MacWhinney, 2005](#); [Rączaszek-Leonardi, 2010](#); [Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008](#); [Lemke, 2000](#)). The same is true for the multiple voices, subjectivities, and historicities that mesh in encounters between different individuals ([Uryu et al., 2013](#)).

Such encounters of different individuals and their collaboration as a team take place during the start-up weekend. The participants engage in the creative development of something that has not existed before. This process unfolds within a given temporal and contextual frame; all actions take place within the flow of time; and immediate and distant temporal contexts

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات