Talk-in-interaction in Facilitated and Training Workshops in Organizations: A Summary of Findings from Conversation Analysis

Sascha Rixon

ABSTRACT

This article presents a summary of the findings of a doctoral study (Rixon, 2011) that used the methodology of Conversation Analysis (CA) to explore talk and physical conduct in two different types of workshops in organizations, specifically a facilitated workshop and a training workshop. Very little empirical research on facilitator talk-in-interaction has been conducted, and it is this deficit which the doctoral thesis aimed to start addressing. A one and a half-day facilitated workshop and a one-day training workshop led by independent consultants and involving medium-sized groups were video recorded and audio recorded. The study was an institutional CA study that pursued two main avenues of research enquiry. First, the institutionality of the workshops was investigated by demonstrating an aspect of the workshop conduct that is distinct from ordinary conversation, namely asymmetry in the participation roles between the parties to the interaction. The workshop leader(s) typically performed initiating actions and the workshop participants typically performed responding actions. Second, two particular institutional tasks in the workshops were analyzed, specifically how the workshop leader managed the transitions into and out of activities performed by the participants in sub group participant configurations (i.e., individually, in pairs, in small groups). It is hoped that by drawing attention to the interactional practices that workshop leaders engage in when leading workshops will help practitioners to reflect upon their practice and be more intentional. As the dataset was comprised of only two workshops, future research could seek to investigate additional instances of either or both types of workshops.

KEYWORDS

group facilitation, conversation analysis, institutional talk, talk-in-interaction, facilitated workshop, training workshop

Introduction

Several years ago, after participating in many chaired meetings in my job at a university, I discovered through attending a meeting of the Victorian Facilitators' Network (VFN) that there was another way of leading meetings - that of group facilitation. After observing the seemingly open and inviting language of the facilitator of this meeting, the linguist in me wondered, "How is facilitation realized through language?"

In pursuit of answering this question, together with my husband Dr. Andrew Rixon and friend Viv McWaters, both facilitators, we invited facilitators to reflect on their language use in facilitation by means of an online reflective practice survey. Facilitators were asked if and what they understood by the term "speaking facilitatively", and to list words and phrases that they used in their facilitation practice. Over one hundred facilitators from across the globe responded to the survey (Rixon, McWaters, & Rixon, 2006).

Many respondents, in their descriptions of what it meant to speak facilitatively, mentioned asking questions. The majority of facilitators also viewed body language to be equally as important, if not more important, than spoken language in facilitation, and most respondents believed that the two should be congruent.

 Copyright by the authors and International Association of Facilitators. All rights reserved.

After eliciting facilitators' *perceptions* of their language use in facilitation, I wondered, "How is facilitation *actually* realized through talk and body language?" Searching the literature, I was unable initially to find any empirical research specifically on language use in real-life facilitated sessions. In a publication of our research findings (Rixon, McWaters, & Rixon, 2006), we suggested that future research could analyse facilitators' language-in-use by performing audio and video recordings of live facilitated sessions. The doctoral thesis (Rixon, 2011) on which this article is based is one of the products of this future research.

Literature review

A. Institutional talk

There is a comparative lack of research on "institutional" interaction in generic office environments as compared to that in specialised workplace settings—such as a medical centre or a classroom—as in doctor-patient or teacher-student interactions. Drew and Heritage (1992) coined the term "institutional talk" to denote the inherently task-related form of talk that takes place in the workplace and other institutional settings, and to distinguish it from mundane everyday conversation. Institutional talk is institutional not because of the institutional setting in which it takes place, but rather because "…participants' institutional or professional identities are somehow made relevant to the work activities in which they are engaged" (Drew & Heritage, 1992, p. 4). For talk to be institutional, at least one of the participants in the interaction needs to represent a formal organization.

B. Meetings

The meeting has been a favoured formal context in which to examine spoken discourse (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003), and a particularly important one as many employees (e.g., managers) spend a significant amount of their time in meetings, and this is the context in which much work is performed (Kikoski & Kikoski, 2004). The types of meetings studied by discourse analysts (i.e., researchers that study language- in-use) have been fairly homogeneous in that they typically share the following characteristics: 1) a meeting chair leads the meeting; 2) the meeting leader is an organizational employee; 3) they involve small groups, i.e., up to 15 participants (Hunter, 2007); 4) the business of the meeting is accomplished in the whole group; and 5) the business is accomplished through the participation formats of presentations, reports, and discussion.

C. Facilitated meetings

As is the case for other professions (e.g., law and teaching), there are many training manuals and other practical "how-to" books on facilitation for practicing or aspiring facilitators written by facilitation practitioners. Given that the "business" of facilitation is *talk*, it is not surprising that the importance of facilitator language to the facilitation process is often alluded to in these resources. For example:

> Facilitation may involve some of the highest levels of human interaction and communication skills. (Hogan, 2002, p. 10);
>
> …task and relational communication [are] the main ingredients of effective group facilitation. (Chilberg, 2005, p. 151); and,
>
> Whether for twenty, two hundred, or two thousand participants, the words we use [in facilitation] matter. (James, Eggers, & Hughes-Rease, 2005, p. 348).

Facilitator spoken language in the practitioner-written literature is usually described in terms of behavioural categories, or 'facilitative behaviours' (Hogan, 2003). A facilitator may speak or 'intervene' for a variety of reasons and in a variety of ways, with the type of intervention dependant on its purpose (Hunter, 2007). Questioning is unanimously acknowledged as an essential facilitation skill and the key communicative behaviour in facilitation (Bens, 2005; Fails, 2003; Garmston, 2003; Heron, 1999; Hogan, 2003; IAF, 2003).

Active listening is probably the second most widely mentioned communicative behaviour after questioning (Bentley, 1994; Fails, 2003; Hogan, 2003; IAF, 2003). It is an umbrella term that is commonly used to refer to the behaviours of paraphrasing, mirroring or echoing, i.e., using a participant's exact words, either the last few words from the end of a participant's turn or contextually significant words from the middle of their turn (Heron, 1999), and reflecting feelings or meaning (Hogan, 2003). Active listening involves the facilitator giving their full attention to the participant who is talking. It is mentioned as a skill under both "Creating and sustaining a participatory environment" and "Guiding groups to appropriate and useful outcomes", two of the six facilitator competencies required for certification by the International Association of Facilitators (IAF, 2003). Therefore, active listening is thought to perform both a process and task function in facilitation.

However, despite the recognised importance of a facilitator's communication skills to 'doing facilitation', very little empirical research on facilitator talk-in-interaction has been conducted. To the best of the author's knowledge, there have been only two published studies to date that analyze language and social interaction in workplace business meetings facilitated by an allocated third-party group facilitator (as opposed to an allocated chairperson): Cooren, Thompson, Canestraro, and Bodor (2006); and, Savage and Hilton (2001). In these studies, in accordance with espoused group facilitator conduct, the facilitator used one or more participatory group processes to help the group accomplish its work. For example, Savage and Hilton (2001) refer to "a number of brainstorming sessions" (p. 53) being conducted by one of the two Quality of Working Life work-site committees whose unspecified number of labour management

decision-making meetings comprised their data corpus. Cooren et al. (2006) describe an "exercise" in a facilitation process which includes an activity performed individually by the group members and a following activity which involves the participation of the group members and the two co-facilitators.

While both of these studies describe examples of interaction amongst the facilitator(s) and the group members in one or more meetings, only the study by Cooren et al. (2006) represented and analysed the meeting participants' language-in-use, and this was limited in scope as only a single exercise from one meeting in the facilitation process was examined. Cooren et al.'s (2006) data corpus was comprised of a series of audio-recorded bi-weekly or monthly meetings of a group of managers from various branches of a US state's criminal justice system, facilitated by external facilitators who were contracted from a university-affiliated Centre. The objective of the meetings was to develop a web portal strategy.

D. Workshops

While there is a growing number of studies of talk-in-interaction in chaired workplace meetings, and a couple of interaction-based studies of facilitated workplace meetings, there is a lack of interaction-based research on workshops of any type, in any setting. To date, there have been no conversation analytic studies of workshops published.

Only one interaction-based study of facilitated workshops in organizations has been conducted by Papamichail, Alves, French, Yang, and Snowdon (2007). This study, however, analyzed simulated facilitated workshops that were set up by the researchers for the purposes of the research, rather than naturally occurring workshops. Additionally, it was not a discourse analytic study focused on the workshop participants' language-in-use. Rather, using the grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), which uses a researcher's observations of activities in an interactional episode (which in this case were based on the video-recordings of the workshops) as the data for analysis, was employed. The objective was to compare and contrast how process tools and methods, specifically Problem Structuring Methods (PSMs), were implemented by the different facilitators to achieve the workshop objective as a means of identifying 'best practice' in the use of such methods.

As the data analysed in this study were observations of interaction in the workshops (both researcher and workshop participant observations), rather than recordings of facilitator-group talk-in-interaction, it was not possible to gain much insight from this study into how workshops are conducted in, and through, facilitator-group talk-in-interaction.

Method

A. Aims

My doctoral study aimed to commence filling a gap in the literature on talk-in-interaction in business settings other than the traditional chaired business meeting. It sought to contribute to the growing body of workplace interaction research by using a conversation analytic approach, i.e., examining the sequential organization of talk and other conduct in interaction, to analyse interaction in two different types of workshops in organizations (i.e., facilitated workshops, where a facilitator guides a group's process, and training workshops, where a trainer delivers content to a group of learners in addition to guiding the group's process) which were led by independent consultants and involved medium-sized groups, i.e., between 15 and 30 participants (Hunter, 2007).

It was the first study to analyse talk-in-interaction in the institutional settings of a naturally occurring facilitated workshop and training workshop. The thesis pursued two main avenues of research enquiry. The first was highlighting the institutionality of the workshops by comparing an aspect of the interactional conduct in the workshops that is distinct from ordinary conversation; namely asymmetry in the participation roles between the parties to the interaction. The second main avenue of research enquiry was that it explored how two particular institutional tasks in the workshops were accomplished interactionally; namely how the facilitator or trainer managed the transitions into and out of activities performed by the participants in sub-group participant configurations.

B. Methodology: Conversation Analysis (CA)

The methodological approach used in the doctoral study was Conversation Analysis (CA). Unlike many social-scientific studies of social interaction that use research methodologies that elucidate what people *say* they do (e.g., interviews, focus groups, surveys), CA is a methodology that investigates what people *actually* do, with analysts examining the details of recordings of talk and other conduct of participants in naturally occurring interaction. Conversation analytic studies use naturalistic data, i.e., non-experimental data that wasn't set up for the purposes of the research and would have occurred without the researchers' instigation (Have, 1999).

Schegloff and Sacks (1973) argued that the most important orientation of recipients of talk-in-interaction at any one point in time for its understanding is "Why that now?" (p. 299), which may be broken down further to "What is the speaker *doing* by that?" (Schegloff, 1997, p. 506). In other words, what is the action embodied by the conduct, performed in that manner, in that particular sequential environment? (Schegloff, 1997). Thus, because this is the foremost orientation of participants to the talk, elucidating an answer to this question is also the key undertaking of analysts of the talk (Schegloff et al., 2002).

CA is based on the premise that interaction is organized and orderly at all levels; no detail in the talk or conduct, no matter how small, can be excluded as unimportant and meaningless prior to analysis (Schegloff, 1987). CA studies have shown that social actions (e.g., questions, requests, offers, invitations) done through talk and other conduct in interaction are organized and orderly for the participants; if this was not the case then mutual intelligibility would be the exception rather than the rule that it is in normative interaction (Schegloff, 1987).

C. Data collection methods

The methodology of conversation analysis governs the choice and use of specific research methods to collect and analyse data. The data collection techniques of video and audio recordings of co-present conversation data (Have, 1999) were used in the doctoral study. The workshops were video recorded using a single video camera. The video camera was positioned at the back of the room, trained on the session leader, and operated by me. The workshops were also audio recorded using a digital audio recorder.

D. Description of the workshop leaders and the workshops

Participants in the study were three workshop leaders (i.e., two facilitators and one trainer) and the participants (i.e., group members and learners). The workshop leaders were all independent professional consultants who did facilitation, training, and other consulting work in organizations and beyond. They were diverse in regard to their ages, professional and educational backgrounds, and professional facilitation and consulting experience.

The first workshop leader, Bev (who co-facilitated Workshop 1), was in her early fifties and had been working as a professional group facilitator for over fifteen years. The second workshop leader, Ann (who co-facilitated Workshop 1), was in her mid-forties and had been working as a professional facilitator with her own consultancy for nearly two years. The third workshop leader, Tim (who led Workshop 2), was in his early thirties and worked as a consultant for a consulting firm, a company he had worked at for over five years.

Workshop 1 was a one-and-a-half-day facilitated workshop (i.e., an afternoon and a full work day, totalling approximately 7.5 hours of in-session recorded data) involving 32 employees from one of the three main groups of a Victorian state government organization in Australia. Bev had worked with the group on three previous occasions, and therefore was familiar with most of the members of the group. Ann, on the other hand, had never worked with the group before, and had been engaged by Bev after the client requested a co-facilitator to provide a fresh perspective. The aims of the workshop were two-fold: first, for the group members to reflect on "where they are at" individually, as a team, and as an organization; and second, for the team to commence planning for projects in the following year.

Workshop 2 was a one-day training workshop (totalling approximately 5 hours of in-session recorded data) led solely by Tim. The learners were 19 middle managers from various offices (both regional and metropolitan, intra- and inter-state) of an Australian non-profit organization. The client organization had been an ongoing client of Tim's organization for the past several years. The purpose of the workshop was to help prepare the participants to facilitate staff feedback and action planning derived from an organizational culture survey that Tim was just finishing conducting with the organization.

E. Data analysis

Basic transcriptions were done of both workshops (i.e., of the talk produced in the whole group; sub group activities were not transcribed). Subsequent transcriptions of target activities identified for analysis were done in detail using a restricted set of the notational conventions developed by Jefferson (2004) and additional conventions as required (see Appendix A: Transcription Conventions for a list of the transcription conventions used in the examples in the sections below).

Heritage and Clayman (2010) describe three broad research aims that have been pursued within institutional CA: 1) probing the institutionality of a form of interaction by demonstrating its distinctiveness from everyday conversation (and other forms of institutional interaction), 2) analysing how a particular institutional task in a form of institutional interaction is accomplished interactionally, and 3) analysing the extra-interactional causes or consequences of particular interactional practices. The doctoral study focussed on the first and third aims. In regard to the first aim, the transcribed data was examined with respect to asymmetry; specifically the asymmetry in the participation roles between the workshop leader (i.e., facilitator or trainer) and the workshop participants (i.e., group members or learners). In regard to the second aim, the study investigated how the institutional tasks of the leader giving instructions for an activity and the debriefing of an activity, and the transitions between activities, were accomplished interactionally.

Results and Discussion

A. Asymmetry in participation

Workshops are distinct from everyday conversation in that there is asymmetry in the participation roles between the workshop leader and the workshop participants. The leader, in their capacity of guiding the workshop process, typically performed initiating actions, such as directives, i.e., "…speech acts that try to get another to do something" (Goodwin, 1980, p. 157), summonses (i.e., attention-getting devices), and questions, and the participants typically performed responding actions, such as responses and answers.

Asymmetrical participation of this type has been noted in other forms of institutional interaction, such as courtroom

interaction and news interview discourse. In times of trouble, when the participants did not collaborate with the leader's guiding of the group's process, participants sometimes performed initiating actions that were normatively done by the leader (e.g., a summons) as a means of 'helping out', as in Example 1 below.

Example 1

1	[((group members talking))
2 F2:	((00:45:11)) [↑HOW MANY TI:MES HAVE YOU:-
3	(2.4)
4	I need ↑ding ding ding↑. ((imitating ringing bells))
5	(0.9)
6 G?:	((claps hands twice))
7	[((claps hands third time))
8 F2:	[clap
9 G?:	((claps hands twice))
10 F2:	((claps hands once))
11	thank you; ((claps hands softly three times))

In Example 1, drawn from the facilitated workshop, the group members appear to have finished doing the instructed discussion task in pairs and are now chatting in their pairs about the postcards that they have just received from Ann (which serve as an input into the next part of the task activity). Ann ("F2" in the transcript) starts speaking nearly straight away after sitting back in her chair, having just handed the group members postcards. While she begins speaking with what sounds to be a raised volume on the video audio, her voice is barely audible on the digital recorder audio above the group member talk in the room. None of the group members who are visible in the camera frame and who are sitting close to Ann attend to her when she begins speaking, not even the group member who is sitting next to her.

Orienting to her failure to solicit the group members' attention, Ann cuts off her utterance (line 2), and then verbalises her need to have the bells (to get the group members' attention), which she accompanies with a bell ringing gesture (line 4). A group member (who is not visible in the camera frame, and is identified as "G?" in the transcript) must be gazing at Ann as she is doing this as they start to clap (line 6), thereby trying to help the facilitator by taking on attention-getting duties. Ann follows the group member's lead and softly claps her hands several times (lines 10-11), simultaneously thanking the group member (line 11).

B. Instruction-giving

In the activity of instruction-giving, in the main part of an instruction-giving turn(s)-at-talk, the leader gave one or more instructions for one or more tasks, as in Example 2 below.

Example 2

1 T:	(.) .hhhhh ↑u:m:,
2	(0.5)/((looking down at notes/desk))
3	F:I:RS'V A:W I JIS(T) LOVE TE::R-
4	(0.6) >wha'dih you guys wannna ged outta< tihda:y's=
5	=se:ssion.
6	>d'you jis wan' on< yih ta:bles,=
7	=jis take a: (.) couple a minutes,=
8	=jus tih have a ch↑a:t¿
9	.hh ↑wha' wha' woul' be: useful fih y:ih tihda:y.=
10	=↓wha' dih yih wan' ged oudiv it.
11	gotta facilita' the s:u:rve:y¿
12	.hhhhh >wha:'th' things yih wanna< kno:w abo:u'.
13	(.) jist onyih ta:bles,
14	>couplea< minutes:.

In Example 2, the trainer asks, "What do you guys want to get out of today's session?" (lines 4-5). He subsequently orients to this as a task instruction by saying, "Do you just want to, on your tables, just take a couple of minutes, just to have a chat?" (lines 6-8).

The participant configurations for the task was also typically explicitly stated (e.g., table groups, as in line 6), and the leader's instruction-giving turn(s)-at-talk often contained other task-related information (e.g., exemplification of the task instructions; a time allowance for the task, such as "a couple of minutes", as in line 7; and so on.).

The leaders typically designed their instruction-giving turns-at-talk either with or without a separate closing part following the main part of the turn(s)-at-talk, with the performance of the instructed tasks to take place at the end of the leader's instruction-giving turn(s)-at-talk. Example 2 above is an instruction-giving turn-at-talk that contains a closing part in which the participant configuration and time allowance for the activity are reiterated (lines 13-14). Example 3 below, on the other hand, is an instruction-giving turn-at-talk that doesn't have a separate closing part; it is comprised of a single directive for an activity, namely the facilitator requesting the group members to "bring all their sheets up" (line 5) (and to post them on a grid on the wall at the front of the room).

Example 3

1	[((group members talking doing activity))
2 F2:	((00:05:35)) [((rings bells))
3	((00:05:36)) [((rings bells twice))
4	((00:05:37)) [((rings bells three times in quick succession))

5 [c'n you ↑BRING ALL YIH SHEE:TS UP PLEA:S:E.
6 (2.0) >if yih haven't already<?

In the majority of cases, the participants collaborated with this aspect of the leader's guiding of the process (and the asymmetry in the participation roles between the leader as the instruction-giver and the participants as the instruction-followers) by moving to commence performing (or discussing) the first of the instructed tasks at the designated end of the leader's turn(s)-at-talk. When task commencement was delayed by a participant directing an initiating action to the leader while the whole group was still convened, it was almost always due to a participant seeking to resolve some trouble in understanding (most frequently), hearing, or complying with the instructed task. There was only one case of a participant actively resisting complying with the instructed task, and thereby challenging the asymmetry in participation, while the whole group was convened.

C. Transitioning out of activities

When managing the transition out of an activity performed by the participants alone, the leader often projected an imminent transition by announcing the amount of time the participants had left to complete the task (e.g., line 3 in Example 4 below, which is a time announcement which is reiterated in line 4).

Example 4

1 [((group members talking))
2 F1: [((rings bells)) KEEP TALKING,=
3 =YOU HAVE ANOTHER TWO: MINUTES::.
4 (.) 'NOTHER TWO: MINUTES::?

A less frequent alternative or additional means of the leader projecting an imminent transition was checking whether or not the participants had completed the last of the instructed tasks through either a direct check, checking whether the participants had finished the task (as in Example 5 below), or an indirect check, checking whether the participants needed further time (as in Example 6 below).

Example 5

1 F1: →.hh ev'ryone got one written do:wn on a sticki:e?

Example 6

1 [((learners talking))
2 T: [>'NOTHER COUPLEA MINUTES< BE U:SEFUL?

There was a preference for the transition to a next activity to be a jointly negotiated decision between the leader and the participants, rather than a unilateral decision of the leader. That is, there was a preference for the leader to tie their initiation of a transition to a next activity to the participants' signalling of their readiness to move on, which they either simply observed through their non-verbal monitoring of the participants' task progression or explicitly checked through a checking task completion sequence. When moving to initiate the transition to the next activity, the leader typically needed to solicit the attention of the (often talking) participants, and did this by deploying one or more discrete attention-getting devices (e.g., bell ringing) or non-discrete attention-getting devices (e.g., increased volume).

While the participants most often collaborated with the leader's guiding of the process in regard to instruction-giving, this was not the case in regard to the leader managing the shift to a next activity (which typically involved reconvening the whole group) after the participants had engaged in task activity. In contrast to the relatively smooth transitions out of instruction-giving, most of the transitions out of participant activities were relatively "bumpy", in that the participants did not readily collaborate with the leader's transition-relevant behaviors, and the leader had to expend considerable effort in effecting the transition. Transitioning became increasingly problematic later in the workshops (particularly in the facilitated workshop), which supports Dalmau and Dick's (1992) observation that groups can only tolerate constraining processes for a limited amount of time before they resist the imposed structure.

D. Workshop structure

A task activity was typically followed by a report-back, in which the participants fed back the outputs of the task activity (which had been performed in a sub group participant configuration) to the whole group, and/or a debrief, in which the participants discussed or debriefed the task activity.

In both types of workshop, a significant amount of time was devoted to the participants performing task activities that were set up by the leaders as a means of the participants accomplishing the workshop objectives. In the facilitated workshop (i.e., Workshop 1), these task activities constituted the bulk of the workshop. In the training workshop (i.e., Workshop 2), instructional talk fed into and out of these task activities. These task activities utilised participatory processes (e.g., brainstorming) and process tools (e.g., postcards), which are purported to be the 'stock-in-trade' of a group facilitator (whose role is to facilitate interaction between the group members), and have similarly been described as being used in other interaction-based studies of group facilitation (e.g., see Papamichail et al., 2007). It is the deployment of experiential activities as a means of accomplishing the business of the interaction that is constitutive of a setting as a workshop as compared to another setting such as a meeting (in the case of Workshop 1) or a seminar (in the case of Workshop 2).

The data align with Hunter's (2007) observation that (in the interest of enabling participation) a medium-sized group will need to work mostly as sub groups. All of the workshop task activities except for the preparatory task activities (which prepared the group for the work ahead, such as getting into sub

groups) involved one or more parts performed by the participants alone in sub group configurations of participants. Many of the task activities (particularly in the facilitated workshop) were structurally complex, in that they were comprised of multiple parts, and/or one or more activities were involved in setting up the task activities (or parts thereof).

Conclusion

Motivated by an interest in learning more about talk and physical conduct in group facilitation, a hitherto relatively unexplored area of research, the author's doctoral thesis on which this article is based was the first study to explore the institutionality of two different types of workshops in organizations, namely a facilitated workshop where an independent facilitator guides a group's process and a training workshop where a trainer delivers content to a group in addition to guiding the group's process. The institutionality of workshops in organizations has been examined using two of the three broad research aims that Heritage and Clayman (2010) described as having been pursued within institutional CA. Firstly, this study probed the institutionality of the workshops by demonstrating their distinctiveness from everyday conversation using one of the six areas described by Heritage (1997), namely asymmetry (and specifically asymmetry in the participation roles between the workshop leaders and the workshop participants). Secondly, this study described how two specific institutional tasks in the workshops were accomplished in and through the interaction of the workshop leaders and the workshop participants, specifically focusing on how the leader managed the transition into and out of activities that the participants performed in sub group participant configurations as a means of accomplishing the workshop objectives.

A. Limitations, future research, and implications

A limitation of the study was that only one instance of each type of workshop was collected, with a total of three participating workshop leaders. There exists considerable diversity in facilitation and training styles and workshop purposes. As such, the research findings may not be representative of interaction in facilitated and training workshops in general. Future research could focus on addressing this limitation of study through the collection of additional data in multiple settings. Future studies could seek to investigate additional instances of either or both types of workshops, either in organizations or in a different settings (e.g., a community setting), to see if the findings of the current study can be substantiated in other situations.

The practice of giving instructions and the practices associated with managing the transitions between activities (i.e., announcing the amount of time remaining for an activity, checking task completion, getting the group's attention) are not described as key communicative behaviours in group facilitation literature and there is little or no mention of these behaviours in the practitioner-written literature. They are not listed as skills under competencies required for certification by the IAF (IAF, 2003). It could be argued that giving instructions and the practices associated with managing transitions are essential facilitation skills that should be given coverage in the practitioner-written literature to raise facilitators' awareness of these practices and be mentioned as skills under competencies required for certification by the IAF.

It is hoped that by drawing attention to the interactional practices that workshop leaders engage in when leading and facilitating workshops, it will help practitioners to reflect on their practice and be more intentional in their practice. This study reinforces Dalmau and Dick's (1992) call for workshop leaders to pay particular attention to managing the transitions in facilitated workshops. It suggests workshop leaders consider having several attention-getting devices in their 'toolkit' to improve the effectiveness of transitions out of participant activities. This could be particularly important when working with large groups and leading multi-day workshops.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisors including Associate Professor Lesley Stirling, the research participants, my parents, the Melbourne CA Group, and my husband Dr. Andrew Rixon, for helping me to bring my doctoral thesis (on which this article is based) into being and to completion.

AUTHOR

Dr Sascha Rixon is a Research Fellow in the Department of Nursing at the University of Melbourne in Australia. Her research interest is exploring workplace communication using qualitative research methods including conversation analysis. She is currently working on a project investigating medication communication among health professionals and between health professionals and patients and carers in hospitals. Her PhD thesis focussed on talk-in-interaction in facilitated and training workshops in organizations. She has previously published an article and a book review in the IAF's *Group Facilitation: A Research and Applications Journal*.

REFERENCES

Bens, I. (2005). *Facilitating with ease!: Core skills for facilitators, team leaders, and members, managers, consultants, and trainers. San Francisco*, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bentley, T. (1994). *Facilitation: Providing opportunities for learning*. London, England: McGraw-Hill.

Chilberg, J. (2005). A procedural analysis of group facilitation: A communication perspective. In S. Schuman (Ed.), *The IAF handbook of group facilitation: Best practices from the leading organization in facilitation* (pp. 135-151). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Cooren, F., Thompson, F., Canestraro, D., & Bodor, T. (2006). From agency to structure: Analysis of an episode in a facilitation process. *Human Relations*, 59(4), 533-565.

Dalmau, T., & Dick, B. (1992). *Managing transitions: A key to creating effective learning environments*. Chapel Hill, QLD, Australia: Interchange.

Drew, P., & Heritage, J. (1992). Analyzing talk at work: An introduction. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional settings* (pp. 3-65). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Fails, G. (2003). Keys to great facilitation. *Association Management*, 55(11), 20.

Garmston, R. J. (2003). Group wise. *Journal of Staff Development*, 24(2), 73-74.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.

Goodwin, M. H. (1980). Directive-response speech sequences in girls' and boys' task activities. In S. McConnell-Ginet, R. Borker & N. Furman (Eds.), *Women and language in literature and society* (pp. 157-173). New York, NY: Praeger.

Have, P. t. (1999). *Doing conversation analysis: A practical guide* (1st ed.). London, England: Sage.

Heritage, J. (1997). Conversation analysis and institutional talk: Analysing data. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice* (pp. 161-182). London, England: Sage.

Heritage, J., & Clayman, S. (2010). *Talk in action: Interactions, identities, and institutions.* Chichester, England: Wiley-Blackwell.

Heron, J. (1999). *The complete facilitator's handbook*. London, England: Kogan Page.

Hogan, C. (2003). *Practical facilitation: A toolkit of techniques*. London, England: Kogan Page.

Holmes, J., & Stubbe, M. (2003). *Power and politeness in the workplace*. Harlow, England: Longman.

Hunter, D. (2007). *The art of facilitation: The essentials for leading great meetings and creating group synergy*. Auckland, New Zealand: Random House.

International Association of Facilitators (IAF). (2003). IAF foundational competencies for certification. Retrieved from http://www.iaf-world.org/i4a/pages/Index.cfm?pageid=3331

James, S., Eggers, M., & Hughes-Rease, M. (2005). Facilitating large group meetings that get results every time. In S. Schuman (Ed.), *The IAF handbook of group facilitation: Best practices from the leading organization in facilitation* (pp. 335-350). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Studies from the first generation* (pp. 13-31). Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins.

Kikoski, C. K., & Kikoski, J. F. (2004). *The inquiring organization: Tacit knowledge, conversation, and knowledge creation: Skills for 21st-century organizations*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Papamichail, K. N., Alves, G., French, S., Yang, J. B., & Snowdon, R. (2007). Facilitation practices in decision workshops. *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, 58, 614-632.

Rixon, A., McWaters, V., & Rixon, S. (2006). Exploring the language of facilitation. *Group Facilitation: A Research and Applications Journal*, 7, 21-30.

Rixon, S. (2011). *Talk-in-interaction in facilitated and training workshops in organizations*. Unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Savage, G. T., & Hilton, C. B. (2001). A critical view of facilitating labor-management collaboration. *Group Facilitation: A Research and Applications Journal*, 3, 46-55.

Schegloff, E. A. (1987). Some sources of misunderstanding in talk-in-interaction. *Linguistics*, 25, 201-218.

Schegloff, E. A. (1997). Practices and actions: Boundary cases of other-initiated repair. *Discourse Processes*, 23(3), 499-545.

Schegloff, E. A., Koshik, I., Jacoby, S., & Olsher, D. (2002). Conversation analysis and applied linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 22, 3-31.

Schegloff, E. A., & Sacks, H. (1973). Opening up closings. *Semiotica*, 8(4), 289-327.

APPENDIX

Transcription Conventions

In the transcripts, the parties to the interaction are identified according to their allocated institutional roles. In Workshop 1, the facilitators are identified as F, with F1 referring to Bev and F2 referring to Ann, and the group members are identified as G, with G1 to G23 representing female group members and G24 to G32 representing male group members. In Workshop 2, the trainer, Tim, is identified as T, and the learners are identified as L, with L1 to L15 referring to female learners and L16 to L19 referring to male learners. The transcription conventions are as follows:

[Overlap onset

] Overlap ending

= No break or overlap between speakers; between intonation units (IUs) (i.e., “chunks” of speech); or between same speaker’s turn over two lines

(0.0) Elapsed time measured in tenths of a second

(.) An interval less than 0.2 seconds

_ Stress

: Lengthening of the prior sound

:_ An “up-to-down” contour

:̲ A “down-to-up” contour

↑ Especially high pitch

↓ Especially low pitch

. Falling terminal contour (i.e., a marked fall in pitch at the end of an IU)

, Continuing terminal contour (i.e., level pitch or a slight rise at the end of an IU)

? Strongly rising terminal contour (i.e., a marked high rise in pitch at the end of an IU)

; Terminal contour between continuing and falling

¿ Terminal contour between continuing and strongly rising

WORD Increased volume

° ° Decreased volume

<word A hurried start

- A cut-off or glottal stop

> < Faster than surrounding talk

.hh Audible in-breath

( ) Uncertain word(s) (best guess)

? Uncertain speaker

(( )) Transcriber’s descriptions

→ Feature of interest

((00:00:00)) Time stamp on the video-recording