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ABSTRACTS



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‘Getting on the same page’ – How participants’ reading aloud from an interactive tabletop facilitates joint game participation

Panel contribution

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This paper addresses how adult participants in a multiparty serious game-activity (ORBIT project, see Sunnen et al. 2018) at an interactive tabletop (ITT) use *reading aloud* (Heuser et al. 2020) to co-facilitate joint accessibility to interactionally relevant text information about the unfamiliar game they are engaging in. These so called ‘written informings’ displayed on the horizontal interface are designed to serve as a game-manual. Since the activity is new to the participants, they rely on these informings in order to jointly accomplish the game.

We consider participants’ *reading aloud* as an interactional practice for participating in the interaction and getting each other ‘on the same page’. By verbalizing and thereby also emphasizing specific (parts of the) text at a specific point in the interaction, participants make written informings from the ITT interactionally relevant and mutually accessible within the group.

In the sequences selected for the analysis we show, that participants’ *reading aloud* of written informings processes the interactional challenge of enabling and maintaining joint participation among the players in the game activity. Their *reading aloud* provides access to co-player’s perspectives at the shared interface and, furthermore, localizes and specifies one part of the ITT-mediated game that was marked ‘unclear’ or ‘problematic’ by a participant.

So far, the video recordings (95 min.) of three participant groups have been scrutinized for this phenomenon and lead to the identification of more than 70 *reading-aloud* cases. We could observe across our video corpus, that participants who make their hesitations of understanding accountable, receive support by their co-players *reading aloud*. In this paper, relying on a conversation analytic approach (cf. Goodwin & Heritage 1990) in its multimodal understanding (cf. Deppermann 2013), we consider two cases of *reading aloud*. Here, participants rely on the interface’s written informings to co-organize *reading-aloud* utterances alongside finely tuned local referencing gestures and bodily orientation (onto the informings on the ITT) in order to either address or raise a question. *Reading aloud* as an interactional practice is used to mark and process both addressing a question (understanding) as well as raising a question (a problem with understanding). Both cases show the participants’ fine-grained co-organization of joint successive *reading-aloud* actions *with* and *for* each other when dealing with the interactional challenge of gaining shared understanding and enabling joint participation.