

CHAIN OF DIALOGUES INVOLVING THE LOCAL RESIDENTS WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

Shoko Fujioka¹, Takuya Honda¹, Ryo Tsukahara² and Takashi Iba¹

¹Keio University
Endoh 5322, Fujisawa, Kanagawa, 252-0816, Japan
e-mail: ilab-future@sfc.keio.ac.jp

²UDS Ltd.
Yoyogi 1-27-16, Shibuya, Tokyo, 151-0053, Japan

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the method of creating chain of dialogues with Future Language involving local residents. Future Language is a methodology to describe the desirable vision of the future. In this paper, we introduce Future Language workshops in Satsumasendai City, Japan, as a case, which created a trigger for the residents to think and talk about their desirable future of the community and encouraged their continuous dialogue thereafter. The result from the workshop shows that Future Language was able to involve many residents, and more over, that it encourage further dialogues towards their ideal community.

INTRODUCTION

The catastrophic earthquake on March 2011 in Japan has marked a milestone for its citizens to confront and foresee the uncertain future. With the need to instill a sense of creating unprecedented steps towards the future, Future Centers have widely attracted attention from many people. Future Center is a place where anybody can bring their problems or ideas and gather people to discuss. As it is an open place, anyone can participate in discussions or workshops if interested, gathering diverse people as a result. In Japan, the number of Future Centers has been increasing throughout the country and many dialogue workshops for the future are held accordingly.

Though Future Center is a place to have a dialogue on the future, a methodology is needed for entangling various people to trigger a chain of dialogues. The more local residents discuss about the future of their community, the chance of new ideas born or new actions taken increases. In this paper, we present a way to set up a chain of dialogues that involves various people.

A CHAIN OF DIALOGUES WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

Future Mining is the step of creating Future Language that is composed of Future Words to talk about the desired future vision (Iba, 2015). As one of the characteristics of the process of Future Mining is that desirable vision and issues are addressed in addition to the “How” to fulfill that desire, closing the dialogues. Everyone’s participation in the last phase of thinking about how to achieve the desired vision naturally leads to a dialogue for the future. In the end, the way or action for realizing the ideal future will be organized into words that can be casually used in ordinary conversation. Therefore, ideas could be shared within conversation, creating the chain of dialogue by pulling people’s interest towards the idea or the future of the community itself. In this case, we have repeated the process of Future Mining. In Future Mining, people produce Future Words which explains the way or action in order to realize the ideal future. With Future Words been created more and more, the process and the words become a trigger for conversation on community’s future, also encouraging residents’ continuous dialogue (Figure 1).

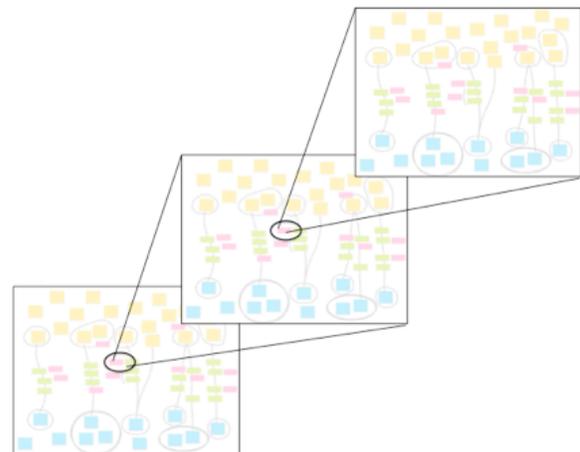


Figure 1: The Process of Expanding Future Mining

CASE: FUTURE LANGUAGE WORKSHOP IN SATSUMASENDAI CITY

At a Smart House in Satsumasendai City, Japan, we have conducted Future Language workshop for the participants to think about their desired future. Smart House is an eco-friendly house that controls electrical appliances with information technology. The Smart House in Satsumasendai City was planned, designed, and managed by UDS Ltd., which is a Japanese company that supports community development by designing houses, offices, and hotels. Smart Houses carry one of the functions of Future Centers and act as a platform, involving the residents to think about their desirable vision for their community.

Four Future Language workshops were held on September and October 2014. Before the workshop, interviews were held to local residents in order to reflect their potential issues that exist in the community onto workshop topics. As a result, the topics to think about the desirable "Food and Agriculture" and "Child-rearing and way of working," were mentioned. In September, Future Language workshop was held to think about the desirable future of "Child-rearing and way of working" and included three housewives. In this workshop, Future Word of "Share Work" was created, an idea from housewives to share the tasks for a full-time job. The second workshop was about "Food and Agriculture" and included seven young farmers (Figure 2). In this workshop, the Future Word of "Open Shutter" was created, an idea for the application of closed shopping street to sell vegetables to residents directly.

To explore the vision, Future Language Workshops for "Share Work" and "Open Shutter" were held in October. In the workshop for "Share Work," housewives, businesswomen, and some staff at a career support organization participated (Figure 3). Also, in the workshop for "Open Shutter," young farmers, members of the city hall, community center, and a food company participated. The reason for inviting such diverse body of stakeholders is that it was essential to understand many opinions from various angles to shape peaceful collaboration. The workshop helped each participant to understand concrete and feasible steps for each to contribute in achieving their common vision for the community.



Figure 2: Future Language workshop for "Child-rearing and way of working,"(left) "Food and Agriculture"(right)



Figure 3: Future Language workshop for " Share Work ,"(left) " Open Shutter "(right)

CONCLUSION

By using Future Language, concrete and smaller themes were born from broad themes such as the desirable "Food and Agriculture," "Child-rearing." The second workshop followed, succeeding in gather diverse stakeholders to Future Center, in this case Smart House. The third workshop was held at Smart House in November in Satsumasendai City, expanding on the several ideas that emerged at the workshop in October. In this workshop, ideas were discussed how to achieve the desirable future and with a diverse body of participants, various thought processes and ideas were born. To conclude, Future Language has encouraged many participants to dialogue about their desirable future.

REFERENCES

- Iba, T. (2015), "Future Language as a Collaborative Design Method," *Fifth International Conference on Collaborative Innovation Networks (COINs2015)*.
- Nomura, T. (2012), *Future Center wo Tsukurou*, PRESIDENT Inc.