

# Strategy making as a communicative practice: the multimodal accomplishment of strategy roles

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**Abstract.** This paper deals with the communicative accomplishment of strategy practices and processes (Cooren Bencherki, Chaput & Vásquez, 2015; Pälli, 2017; Vásquez Bencherki, Cooren & Sergi, 2017). We do so by investigating one significant activity within an organizational strategy making process, namely strategy meetings. Here, members of the upper management group create concrete drafts for the actual strategy document, and we focus on a specific action sequence where strategy actors propose changes to the strategy document. Specifically, we investigate how the participants subsequently deal with the proposal, how such interaction work facilitates the accomplishment of strategy roles, and how the interaction impacts the decision making process.

Our study shows that strategy actors, when making these decisions, not only orient to an acceptance or rejection of the proposal but also to questions of entitlement (Asmuß & Oshima, 2012). This orientation involves multimodal resources, ranging from talk (Samra-Fredericks, 2003) to embodied and material resources. The study thus provides an empirical demonstration of the processual aspects of strategy work and their impact on strategic outcomes; further, it highlights the importance for practice studies to acknowledge communicative (verbal, embodied and material) aspects in capturing the complexity of strategy work.

**Keywords:** strategy-as-practice, strategy making, multimodality, conversation analysis

## INTRODUCTION

Based on a constitutive view on the role of communication for organizing (Putnam & Nicotera, 2008), Cooren et al. (2015) have pointed out that there is a variety of interactional practices involved in strategy making, highlighting the “contextually built, volatile, timely, situated and sometimes partly improvised dimension of strategic activities” (Cooren, et al., 2015: 376). The current paper builds on this constitutive approach to understand organization general and strategy making in specifically. It investigates the role of communication in strategy making by paying specific attention to the strategy actors’ multimodal communicative actions in relation to a strategy-related activity. As such, the paper aims to provide a bridge between the constitutive view on communication for organizing and the practice view on strategy.

In contrast to the pre-dominant prescriptive approach to strategy – which entails an understanding of strategy as a linear and predictable process with a clear final outcome (Lynch, 2003), thus lacking an attention to “how” strategies come about (Johnson, Langley, Melin & Whittington, 2007) – the current paper applies an emergent approach to strategy. Here,

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Strategy-as-Practice is central in its focus on strategy as an evolving process that is recurrently interpreted and negotiated throughout the organization and its people (Golsorkhi, Rouleau, Seidl & Vaara, 2015a; Jarzabkowski, 2005; Johnson et al., 2007; Mantere & Vaara, 2008). Benefitting from this approach, this paper investigates a specific communicative practice in an organizational strategy making process (see Rouleau, 2013). It thus contributes to a reflection upon how specific communicative practices in strategy making influence strategic outcomes.

The activity in focus is a recurrent activity in the phase of strategy making, namely a strategy meeting, where members of the upper management group discuss and create concrete drafts for the actual strategy document. While doing so, they recurrently propose changes to the strategy document; the focus of the current study is how the act of proposing changes to the document and the interlocutor's subsequent responses to these proposals are accomplished. Our analysis demonstrates that both pre-defined organizational roles and locally negotiated strategy roles influence the strategy decision making process. More specifically, we show that the strategy actors with an organizationally lower position can influence the strategy decision process substantially by locally making use of verbal, embodied and material communicative resources. Thus, while we follow the call for a linguistic turn in strategy research (Vaara, 2010) by paying specific attention to the participants' use of verbal resources, we furthermore capture strategy making as a multimodal accomplishment.

In what follows, we first provide an overview of strategy making and strategy roles. We then introduce the analytical concept of entitlement, which is central for strategy actors' orientation to strategy roles. This is followed by a description of our empirical data base and analytical method. We then provide a conversation analysis of four excerpts, which highlights the influence of entitlement on strategy making processes and the role of verbal, embodied and material resources for these processes. Based on the analytical findings, we discuss how strategy making is multimodally accomplished by the moment-by-moment unfolding of strategy actors' communicative actions.

## **STRATEGY MAKING AND STRATEGY ROLES**

Within strategy making, participants of strategy activities have various institutional roles. While these roles are externally defined (meeting leader, superior, subordinate, etc.) and have an impact on how decision making takes place (Clifton, 2012), they are also recurrently negotiated during these strategy activities. Thus, institutional roles are not static entities but oriented to, re-negotiated, and sometimes challenged in the ongoing interaction (Boden, 1994; Pomerantz & Denvir, 2007).

This focus on ongoing orientations and re-negotiations opens up a process view on strategy activities (Langley, 2007), on the one hand, and a focus on strategy meetings as social practices, on the other (Golsorkhi et al., 2015a; Vaara & Whittington, 2012). These process and practice views on strategy are centrally addressed by the strategy-as-practice perspective, the main concern of which is the understanding of "the links between what people do as they strategize, the influences on that behaviour and the outcomes of their strategizing activities" (Johnson, Prashantham, Floyd & Bourque, 2010: 1614, but see also Jarzabkowski, Balogun & Seidl, 2007; Johnson et al., 2007), and whose strength lies in "its ability to explain how strategy-making is enabled and constrained by prevailing organizational and societal practices" (Vaara & Whittington,

2012: 286). In other words, a strategy-as-practice perspective helps in conceptualizing strategy as more than an organizational product that the organization owns: it is an organizational accomplishment, something an organisation does in its everyday organizational activities (Johnson et al., 2007). Accordingly, the central term 'strategizing' covers a processual focus in that it "comprises those actions, interactions and negotiations of multiple actors, and the situated practices that they draw upon in accomplishing that activity" (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007: 7-8).

From a strategy-as-practice perspective, strategy processes consist of three central elements: practice, praxis and practitioners (Jarzabkowski & Whittington, 2008; Whittington, 2006). Briefly put, practice is the routinized discursive behaviour related to strategy; praxis is the actual, precise, situation-dependent and socially constructed doing of strategy related activities; and practitioners are the ones who analyse, develop and implement strategy (Aggerholm & Asmuß, 2016; Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). While these terms are useful for distinguishing different levels of strategy-related activities and specifying the organizational members involved, the current study employs terms that to a higher degree recognize strategy as a communicative accomplishment (Cooren et al., 2015). Therefore, we will refer to those people involved in strategy work as 'strategy actors' (instead of 'practitioners'); the recurrent ways of acting that are part of an overall strategic orientation as 'strategy activities' (instead of 'practices'); and the term 'actions' (instead of 'praxis') will be used to cover the precise communicative acts performed by the individual actors.

Various studies address the question of how strategy actors and strategy activities relate to larger strategic outcomes. For instance, specific strategy activities such as strategy meetings and workshops have been shown to play a significant role in shaping organizational strategy, stability and change (Aggerholm, Asmuß & Thomsen, 2012; Hendry & Seidl, 2003; Jarzabkowski & Seidl, 2008; Johnson et al., 2010). These studies also highlight that strategy making is no longer associated solely with the strategy activities of upper management teams but "can in principle occur at any level of the organization, and can take a wide range of forms, including all kinds of informal episodes outside the organization's direct control" (Hendry & Seidl, 2003: 193). This line of research captures strategy and strategic change as a social (as opposed to individual) phenomenon, and the matter of who strategy actors are is not pre-determined but dynamic (Hendry & Seidl, 2003; Golsorkhi, Rouleau, Seidl & Vaara, 2015b). This broader perspective on strategy actors as no longer being composed solely of upper management but now also including multiple internal stakeholders calls for an investigation of how actors at various organizational levels can influence the strategy activity. The current study advocates this view by investigating strategy activities that involve upper and middle management communicative actions.

## **STRATEGY ROLES AND ENTITLEMENT**

Individuals' positions and tasks in institutional settings are often renegotiated through interaction (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998). One means of understanding these processes of renegotiation is by way of entitlement (Asmuß & Oshima, 2012). Entitlement addresses the social practice of orienting to the rights and obligations of performing specific interactional work, and it has been shown to entail two different aspects: epistemics and deontics. Epistemics deals with who is supposed to know what (Heritage, 2013; Stivers, Mondada & Steensig, 2012), or, as put by Drew (1991) puts it, a "conventional ascription of warrantable rights or entitlements over the

possession and use of certain kinds of knowledge” (Drew, 1991: 45). In the context of proposals – the action in focus for the current study – epistemic access is recurrently oriented to the way in which the strategy meeting participants inform each other about their respective knowledge status in regards to the topic being talked about. In regards to the second aspect of entitlement, deontic rights are about who has the right and obligation to define and perform future actions (Stevanovic & Peräkylä, 2012; Landmark, Gulbrandsen & Svennevig, 2015; Svennevig & Djordjilovic, 2015). In the context of proposals, Stevanovic (2015) showed a distinction between proximal deontics (“people’s rights to initiate, maintain, or close up local sequences of conversational action”) and distal deontics (“people’s rights to control and decide about their own and others’ future doings”) (Stevanovic 2015: 85-6). This distinction is also applicable to our study, as an orientation to rights and obligations of suggesting and implementing proposals can relate to actions that are in close proximity to the ongoing activity (e.g. implementing changes to the strategy document), and future actions that are rather remote from the ongoing interaction (e.g. implementing the strategy in accordance with the strategy document);. Specifically, our analysis captures how proximal deontics are played out. While teasing apart epistemics and deontics in relation to entitlement could be a relevant research endeavor in its own right, such a focus would go beyond the scope of the main aim of this paper, which is to investigate entitlement as an interactional resource for making strategy decisions.

The dynamic nature of entitlement has been shown through the study of both everyday interactions (Craven & Potter, 2010; Curl & Drew, 2008; Lindström, 2005) and workplace interactions (Asmuß, 2007; Asmuß & Oshima, 2012; Heinemann, 2006). These studies have shown how entitlement is managed as a local and interactional practice through the participants’ uses of various linguistic means, such as directives (Craven & Potter, 2010), positive and negative interrogatives (Asmuß, 2007; Heinemann, 2006), and pure statements (Asmuß, 2007). Similarly, the current paper analyses the ways entitlements are interactionally negotiated and how these negotiations enable strategy actors to negotiate relevant roles moment by moment. Accordingly, such analysis equips us with a better understanding of exactly how strategy actors make relevant various strategy roles, which subsequently has an impact on the progression of strategy making.

In addition, we argue for the need of a multimodal approach to looking at the negotiation of entitlement. We do so by paying specific attention to the strategy actors’ coordination of verbal, embodied and material resources. Our multimodal approach to workplace interaction is not new; a significant number of ethnomethodological and conversation analytical studies have explored the matter of multimodal resources for accomplishing interactional goals (for a concrete survey of such studies, see Nevile, Haddington, Heinemann & Rauniomaa, 2014), including how non-linguistic acts are recruited as components of talk as multimodal packages (e.g. Bolden, 2003; Olsher, 2004; Mondada, 2007; Oloff, 2013) and how communicative action is coordinated with practical and instrumental acts (e.g. Greatbatch, 2006; Mondada, 2011; Oshima & Streeck, 2015). In the field of “workplace studies”, the interest in the interrelation between material objects in the form of technology and interaction has increased considerably with scholars demonstrating how the social aspects of technology influence organizational members’ daily work routines (Büscher, 2007; Büscher & Mogensen, 2007; Heath & vom Lehn, 2008). Yet, when it comes to the negotiation of entitlement, the focus of analysis remains mainly on verbal communicative actions. The current

paper aims to provide a concrete demonstration of entitlement as a multimodal accomplishment and, thus, how strategy actors carefully orchestrate multimodal resources at the time of negotiating their respective strategy roles.

## **DATA AND METHOD**

The data for the study come from a larger research project aiming at investigating strategy processes from development to implementation<sup>1</sup>. For that purpose, the researchers followed a strategy process in a medium-sized Danish organization for a period of nine months, where they were allowed access to numerous formal and informal interviews involving different strategy actors including the chief executive officer (CEO). They were also granted permission to receive textual documents related to the making and implementation of the new strategy (Word-documents, PowerPoint presentations) and to make participant observations of various strategy meetings. After having built up trust around the project and the ways of handling the data (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010), the researchers were also allowed to make audio and video recordings of central strategy meetings. The current study focuses on this last set of data, which consists of approximately eight hours of video-recorded, two-party strategy meetings between central strategy actors of the company: the CEO, representing upper management, and the HR-manager (HR), representing middle management. The meetings are part of the strategy making phase, and their main aim is to finalize a preliminary version of the organization's strategy document, which will be presented to the executive board at a later point in time. Prior to the meetings, a preliminary version of the strategy document was electronically circulated to different representatives of the upper and middle management group, who could respond with written commentaries and suggestions for changes and additions. These written commentaries were available to the meeting participants and were recurrently referred to during the meeting.

The current paper focuses on one specific recurrent action in these meetings, namely proposals, where the meeting participants propose changes to the strategy document (on proposals: Houtkoop-Steenstra, 1987; Lindström, 2005; Maynard, 1984). The ways in which the strategy meeting participants launch their proposals by multimodally orienting to various degrees of entitlement and how they subsequently accept or reject the proposals allow insights into the communicative practices of strategizing. When proposing changes to the strategy document, the strategy actors not only have linguistic resources at their disposal but also material ones, such as a notebook computer that is projected on a whiteboard. Below is an image of the two strategy actors seated around a table in the meeting room (CEO on the left, HR on the right). The notebook computer is placed in front of HR and projected onto a whiteboard, which is accessible for both meeting participants (see Figure 1). Thus, we see a triangle in terms of orientation (see Figure 2).

1. This project was conducted by the first author together with her colleagues, Helle Kryger Aggerholm and Christa Thomsen, at Aarhus University.



Figure 1 - The meeting setting

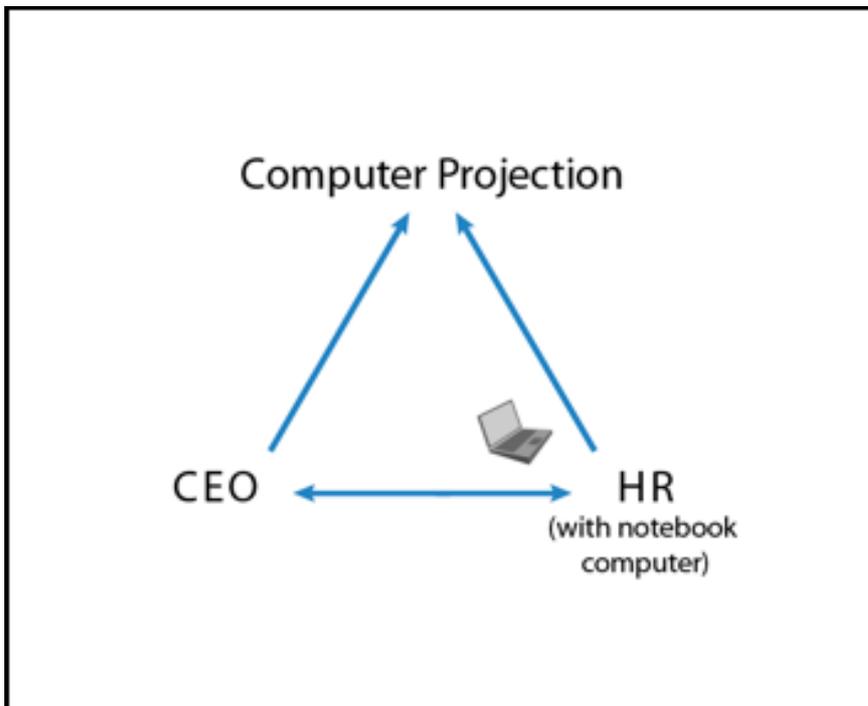


Figure 2 - The participants' orientations

CEO and HR can orient individually or jointly to the computer projection, but they can also mutually or individually orient to each other. The notebook computer, though, is only directly accessible to one of the strategic actors, namely HR. This means that, in terms of resources, we have an asymmetric distribution of material resources, which has an impact on who is directly able to implement changes in the final version of the strategy document. Whereas HR is the one who can actually implement changes in the document on the computer by typing, CEO is limited to suggesting and proposing changes. This is of relevance for the current study in understanding the complex and dynamic relation between verbal, embodied and material resources when negotiating strategic changes.

The current study applies a conversation analysis based on a collection of 24 proposal sequences in strategy meetings in order to explore how multimodal communicative actions in strategy meetings have an impact on the actual making of strategy. While previous strategy-as-practice studies identified strategy meetings and various actors as substantial for exploring strategy phenomena and locating the actual emergence of the organizational voice (Taylor & Van Every, 2000), there is still much room for uncovering exactly how and by what means this is accomplished. One reason for this is that a great amount of research has been conducted based on observational, textual and interview data (Jarzabkowski Bednarek & Lê, 2014; Mantere & Vaara, 2008), and moreover that little attention has been brought to authentic workplace interactions among strategy actors in the form of audio and/or video based data collections (Samra-Fredericks & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2008).

One place where scholars work with audio and/or video recordings is the tradition of ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, and/or microethnography (e.g. Boden, 1994; LeBaron, 2006; Samra-Fredericks, 2005). Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis provide a methodological apparatus particularly well-fitted to understanding the “foundations of organizing” (Samra-Fredericks & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2008: 665), as they rely on authentic talk-in-interaction instead of e.g. interview techniques (Samra-Fredericks & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2008: 653) that have been criticized for being solicited and retrospective in nature (Garfinkel, 1967). LeBaron (2006) and Gylfe, Franck, LeBaron & Mantere (2016) build upon this line of reasoning, arguing for the need to apply a microethnographic approach (LeBaron, 2006) that captures the various modalities of communicative practices as locally accomplished in time and space. By means of video-ethnography, it becomes possible to investigate the fine-grained verbal, embodied and material practices that constitute strategy work (Gylfe et al., 2016). The current study benefits from these approaches to strategy, and documents how strategizing takes place as a discursive and multimodal accomplishment across time and multiple strategy actors (Aggerholm et al., 2012; Glenn & LeBaron, 2011; Samra-Fredericks, 2004).

All data were transcribed according to conversation analytic transcription conventions (see Transcription Glossary at the end of the paper). In order to document multimodal communicative actions, we also use the system developed by Goodwin (2000). These selected descriptions of visible actions are provided and set within double parentheses. The transcripts consist of an original transcription in the first line, followed by a transliteration in English in the second line, and an English translation in the third line, when necessary. In line with the ethnomethodological foundations of conversation analysis, this transcription system allows us to identify members’ phenomena emerging through various resources that

they have at their disposal and that they make relevant in the interaction moment by moment.

## ANALYSIS

In what follows, we present an analysis of four proposal sequences in which the participants orient to entitlement in different ways when performing various actions in the process of making strategic decisions. For each example, we aim to highlight the aspects of: 1) how the proposal is launched and its entitlement is communicated; 2) how multimodal resources are used in negotiating (or renegotiating) the entitlement and proposals; and 3) how the participants' strategy roles are negotiated accordingly. The first excerpt demonstrates how entitlement and agreement of the proposal go hand in hand with making a joint decision about the strategy document; the second excerpt shows that renegotiation of entitlement can cause strategy decisions to be delayed, as acceptance of the proposal gets postponed; the third excerpt illustrates how entitlement can be a resource for maintaining pre-existing strategy roles; and, the fourth excerpt illustrates how entitlement can invoke multiple strategy roles within one single strategy decision sequence.

### REINFORCEMENT OF STRATEGY ROLES AND IMMEDIATE STRATEGY DECISION

As a basic sequence in interaction is composed of an adjacency pair (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974), a proposal sequence includes making a proposal (the first pair part) and accepting or rejecting the proposal (the second pair part). Although proposal sequences are often expanded (as seen in the rest of our examples), we start our analysis with a simple case in which the proposal is launched, accepted and implemented without any problem. In the following excerpt, we see that HR is typing a sentence in the strategy document when the CEO proposes a change in word order.

#### Excerpt (1)

```

1   HR: ((types 'strategien' and deletes thereafter 'strategien' again))
2   HR: .hh [er at] ((looking at the notebook computer))
      .hh are that
3   CEO: [i i ] i Alsted2 ikk? ((looking at computer projection))
          in in in Alsted PRT
          in in in Alsted right?
4   HR: jō:.
      yes
5   ps: (0.2)((HR leans forward; CEO adjusts his posture))
6   HR: ((HR starts typing))=
7   CEO: =[.ffn
          =[((HR continues typing))
8   ps: (1.8) ((HR completes typing 'i Alsted'))
9   HR: ((moves cursor to another place in the document))

```

2. All names, places and other information that could lead to recognition of the organization and its members have been anonymized.

As HR types a sentence in the document, he writes the word “*strategien* (the strategy)” twice, thereafter deleting one of them (line 1). Then, in line 2, he reads aloud “*er at* (are that)”, referring to the whole sentence that he has typed so far: “*strategiske mål for produktionsstrategien er at* (the aims for the production strategy are that)”. Overlapping with this, CEO proposes that the specific production site, namely *Alsted*, should be inserted after “*produktionsstrategien* (production strategy)” and before “*er at* (are that)”. His proposal design indicates an immediate acceptance of the proposal by HR as the next preferred action. First, it is launched without any hesitation, pauses or other markers (all of these actions could indicate upcoming problems, Pomerantz, 1984), demonstrating an orientation to the fact that the proposal might be an unproblematic one. Secondly, by ending it with the tag “right”, which indicates low contingency, CEO makes an acceptance of the proposal by the co-participant the next preferred action. This is also supported by CEO’s embodied orientation while launching the proposal. CEO keeps his gaze on the projector as he makes the proposal (l. 3). In fact, he does not shift his gaze from the computer projector during the whole sequence. With his bodily behaviour, he makes himself unavailable for discussion; thus, he can show his orientation to the proposal as immediately acceptable without discussion.

HR aligns with CEO’s action on several aspects. He aligns on a structural level by accepting the proposal through a type-conform answer, i.e. a response that “conform[s] to the constraints embodied in the grammatical form” of the question, such as “yes” or “no” in English (Raymond, 2003: 946). Here, his gaze is also fixed on his notebook computer, making himself unavailable for discussion (l. 4). However, the verbal acceptance is not enough, but must appear in the document. Accordingly, his verbal action is followed by his compliance of the proposal through typing (l. 6). Then, note that it is HR who marks the completion of the proposal sequence by moving the cursor to a new place in the document (l. 9).

In this example, the immediate acceptance of the proposal went hand in hand with a mutual agreement on the terms of entitlement. The way CEO made the proposal displayed a high degree of entitlement to launch the proposal for change. In turn, HR accepted the terms of entitlement brought into play by CEO with his immediate embodied display of acceptance of the proposal. We could also see that the participants’ orientations to material artefacts were a vital element of the display of and orientation to entitlement and strategy making. First, their consistent and enduring body orientations to the material artefacts (CEO on the computer projection, and HR on his notebook computer), but not to each other, implied their understanding of the proposal as implementable without discussion. Secondly, HR’s verbal acceptance of the proposal was followed by his relevantly positioned embodied action of typing. Finally, the sequence completion was marked by yet another of HR’s embodied actions of moving the cursor to another place in the document. That way, the participants performed these embodied actions to display their understanding of the proposal and the terms of entitlement related to it, and to smoothly move forward toward a strategy decision.

In sum, this example demonstrated the participants’ achievement of unproblematic negotiation of entitlement and proposed changes, as well as strategy roles as the superior who proposed the change, and the subordinate who implemented it. However, that is not always the case. In the rest of our analysis, we will explore how the participants work with the aspect of entitlement when it involves a problem, and how such negotiation

may involve negotiation of their role and ultimately influence the strategy decision-making process and its outcome.

#### RENEGOTIATION OF STRATEGY ROLES AND DELAYED STRATEGY DECISION

In our previous example, HR accepted CEO's display of high degree of entitlement without any problem, and the strategy decision was smoothly made. However, the aspect of entitlement is often negotiated and renegotiated between the strategy meeting participants, which may in turn delay the strategy decision-making process. In the following example, we find CEO and HR revising the sales strategy for their products, and they are about to change the wording from "*de enkelte produktvarianters værdiXXX og omsætningshastighed* (the single product variants' valueXXX and turnover rate)" to "*de enkelte produktvarianters værdibidrag samt omsætningshastighed* (the single product variants' value contribution plus turnover rate)". The sequence starts with CEO's proposal, which is launched in a similar fashion to that seen in Excerpt 1, indicating his high level of entitlement to make the proposal and expectation of immediate acceptance. What differs from Excerpt 1, however, is the series of HR's responsive actions. The transcript picks up from where CEO proposes that the word "*samt* (plus)" be replaced with "*og* (and)".

#### Excerpt (2)

- 1 CEO: ((looking at the computer projection))  
samt (.)om[sætningshæstighed (.) istedet for og.  
plus turnover\_rate instead of and  
*plus turnover rate instead of and*  
[((HR clicks on the end of "værdiXXX" and hovers  
the cursor over the words "og omsætningshastighed"))]
- 2 HR: hm, ((HR leans forward toward the computer))  
hm
- 3 HR: [>det skal nok også< være værdibidrag.  
it shall PRT also be value\_contribution  
*it should rather be value\_contribution*  
[((HR starts to delete the word "værdiXXX"))]
- 4 ps: (3.8) ((HR completes deleting "XXX" and types the new word  
"bidrag"))
- 5 ps: (1.5) ((HR types "samt"))=
- 6 CEO: =samt (.) [omsætningshastig[hed.=  
plus turnover\_rate  
[((HR deletes "og"))  
[((HR leans back, away from  
the computer))]
- 7 HR: =°ja.°  
yes.
- 8 ps: (2.4)((CEO shifts his gaze from the screen to the document he is  
holding in his hand))
- 9 HR: men altså målet er.....  
but PRT goal\_the is ...  
*but then the goal is.....*

In line 1, CEO proposes changing the word "*og* (and)" to "*samt* (plus)." His turn here is designed as a statement and produced without any hesitation. Together with his gaze that is fixed on the projector screen (as opposed to

shifting the gaze to HR), his action not only displays a high degree of entitlement to make the proposal, but also projects the relevance of the proposal to be accepted and implemented at once. HR aligns with CEO's action by quickly acknowledging the proposal and orienting to the imminent typing action (line 2). As witnessed in Excerpt 1, the sequence can be completed at this point if HR implements the change to the document. However, that is not the case here. While HR shows a sign of agreement regarding CEO's proposal in line 2, he does not implement the changes. Instead, HR proposes – and simultaneously implements – another change to be made within the same sentence.

In line 3, he points out that the word “*værdiXXX* (valueXXX)” should be replaced by “*værdibidrag* (value contribution)”. There are some noticeable observations concerning the way HR makes this proposal. First, note that HR mitigates his statement through the use of “*nok*”, which is a Danish particle that is translated as “rather” in this context. With this particle, his proposal indicates a lower degree of entitlement than what the CEO displayed earlier in line 1. HR also implies his acceptance of CEO's prior proposal by inserting “*også* (also)”, i.e. HR's suggestion should take place in the context of CEO's. By doing so, moreover, his proposal is presented in a way that complements the wording change claimed by CEO (as opposed to a counteractive proposal). With these linguistic moves, HR minimizes the risk of his action of making a proposal to be taken as a disaligned move. Secondly, but somewhat contradictory to his verbal moves mentioned above, we see HR's strong orientation to his entitlement for making the proposal in his embodied actions. HR starts implementing his own proposal by deleting the word “*værdiXXX*” (line 3) even before he verbally completes his proposal turn, and his gaze is fixed on the computer throughout. HR's embodied actions make CEO's approval/disapproval less relevant as the next course of action than would generally be expected from a proposal. CEO could still provide some kind of responsive action here, such as acknowledging or confirming, but he makes no noticeable moves while HR carries on his action of deleting “*XXX*” and inserting the new word “*bidrag* (contribution)” (line 4).

When his own proposal is reflected in the document, HR finally starts implementing CEO's proposal by typing the word “*samt* (plus)” (line 5). CEO orients to HR's action by repeating the new wording to be inserted, during which HR completes the revision by deleting “*og* (and)” and marks the end of the revising process by leaning back (line 6). The sequence ends with HR's minimal response to CEO's prior turn (line 7) and CEO's orientation shift from the projector screen to the papers held in his hand (line 8).

In this excerpt, we did not find any disagreement on strategy decisions between the participants, and, in the end, HR implemented CEO's proposal. Still, this example allowed us to witness how strategy actors may renegotiate their degree of entitlement by means of various communicative actions in order to launch and comply with a proposal. As subtle as it may appear, HR challenged the high degree of entitlement displayed in CEO's initial proposal by expanding the sequence and prioritizing his own idea implementation. Notably, this was made possible by the use of a resource that was available only to HR, namely the direct access to the computer keyboard and typing. By manipulating this resource, HR managed to incorporate his own thoughts and influenced the decision outcome without risking the chance of performing a dispreferred action.

The observations made in this sequence also suggest that CEO and HR can negotiate their roles as strategy actors. Unlike Extract 1, where HR performed the role of typist, in this example HR presented himself as a co-discussant with the right to present his own thought and even to implement it without CEO's confirmation. The issue of strategy roles becomes even more complex when the participants do not agree on the changes to be incorporated. In the following two sections, we demonstrate how the strategy actors orient to aspects of entitlement and manipulate multimodal resources accordingly when coordinating dispreferred actions such as disagreeing and launching a counter-proposal.

#### RENEGOTIATION OF STRATEGY ROLES FOR MITIGATING PROBLEMATICITY OF DISAGREEMENT

This section introduces an example in which the strategy actors navigate their degrees of entitlement in order to avoid possible social problems that may arise with the action of disagreeing and presenting a counter-proposal. In the following extract, HR coordinates his handling of material resources in reducing the risk of creating social problems when making a counter proposal. As CEO indicates a trouble source (l. 2), HR aligns with CEO's repair initiation by touching the computer mouse (l. 3). CEO soon makes a proposal (ll. 4-5), but HR does not comply with the proposal until much later (ll. 17-18). What takes place in between is our focus here.

##### Excerpt (3)

- 1 ps: (3.2) ((CEO has been looking at the computer projection;  
HR looks at CEO))
- 2 CEO: introducerer?  
introduce  
*introduce?*
- 3 ps: (1.4) ((HR looks at the computer projection and then touches  
computer mouse))
- 4 CEO: >Skal vi så ik' skrive i stedet for< (0.3)  
Shall we then not write in=stead of  
*Shouldn't we write instead*
- 5 udvikler [og t~~i~~lbyde,  
develop and offer  
*develop and offer*  
*[(CEO glances toward HR)]*
- 6 ps: (0.8) ((HR moves the cursor behind "introduce";  
CEO looks at the computer projection)
- 7 ps: (2.8) ((HR and CEO sit still, both looking at the computer  
projection))
- 8 ps: (1.0) ((HR starts to delete "intro[duce"])

CEO's proposal in lines 4-5 makes a response by HR conditionally relevant, yet what happens after is a relatively long - 4.6 seconds - pause (ll. 6-8). The delay may be explained as an orientation to preference for agreement (Pomerantz, 1984), that is, indicating a possible upcoming disagreement. Yet, at the same time, HR provides visible reactions to CEO's proposal during this pause – he moves the cursor directly behind the word that has been proposed to be changed (l. 6). With this action, HR shows his alignment with CEO's proposal, at least in terms of the trouble source. HR now needs to delete the word to proceed with CEO's proposal,

but he waits to do so for a while, staying still for 2.8 seconds (l. 7). The delay in his responsive actions could indicate an upcoming disagreement. This is what happens next:

8 ps: (1.0) ((HR starts to delete "intro[duce"])  
9 HR: [Skal vi ik' bare  
shall we not simply  
10 skrive, kunne tilbyde?  
write can offer  
write, can offer?  
11 ps: (0.5) ((HR finishes deleting "introduce"))  
12 ps: (0.7) ((HR looks at CEO; CEO shakes his head))  
13 CEO: Udvikle og <til[byde.=Det er j- begge dele.>  
develop and offer. it is PRT both parts  
develop and offer.=It is actually both.  
[((CEO looks at HR; HR momentarily looks down,  
leans forward toward the computer, and  
looks at CEO))

HR finally proceeds with the next step of accepting the proposal by starting to delete the problematic word (l. 8). Yet, while doing so, he launches a counter-proposal (ll. 9-10). Here, HR conducts two different actions: one, partially accepting the proposal, while in the second, rejecting another aspect of it. This combination of actions has been made possible through the use of the computer; HR embodies his partial acceptance of the original proposal by deleting the problematic word right before he makes his counter-proposal. By using a combination of embodied and verbal actions here, HR mitigates the assertive degree of his counter-proposal; in other words, he displays that his counter-proposal has not been made to refuse CEO's proposal but to modify part of it. In terms of entitlement, the extract shows that the participants orient to entitlement in a similar manner; by using a similar start for the proposal and counter proposal ("*Skal vi ik'*", translated as "Shouldn't we", in l. 4 and l. 9), they acknowledge the egalitarian display of the proposal as being open to discussion. Thus, they invite each other on equal terms to engage in finding the best phrase for the strategy document.

As HR presents his counter-proposal, he also finishes deleting the problematic word (l. 11). CEO then rejects HR's counter-proposal through embodied (l. 12) and verbal actions (l. 13), which is followed by a 4.2 second pause.

14 ps: (4.2) ((HR adjusts his posture and scratches  
his nose, looking at CEO))

Having heard CEO's rejection of HR's counter-proposal, HR engages in different embodied actions through which he makes himself accountable for being unavailable to work with his notebook computer (l. 14). Here, he also gazes expectantly at CEO as if waiting for more information, and, thus, treats CEO's previous turn as incomplete. Whether HR is disagrees with CEO's idea or not cannot be observed here, but what is made relevant through HR's actions in line 14 is an extended turn by CEO. HR marks that his own reaction to the proposal (i.e. accepting/rejecting, agreeing/disagreeing) is irrelevant at this moment and that instead CEO needs to further argue his idea. In doing so, HR enacts his role as a co-discussant rather than a subordinate who complies with CEO's proposal by default. By disattending to the opportunity to start typing in line 14, HR displays his



is not only the embodied action itself that performs an action, but also how the action is timed in regards to the ongoing interaction that constitutes its meaning.

Although HR has begun implementing the proposal, he has not yet provided any verbal or embodied response to imply this (e.g., nodding) in response to CEO's explanations of his proposal. As HR has constructed his role as co-discussant through the sequence, CEO could pursue securing a clearer sign of agreement from HR by extending the sequence here. However, what CEO does next is quite the opposite – he orients to HR's typing action as the relevant response with which to close the sequence. As HR starts typing CEO's proposal, CEO – who has been looking back and forth between the computer projection and HR – marks the relevance of sequence closure via his gaze withdrawal from HR and the reduced volume of his talk<sup>3</sup> (l. 17).

As seen in this excerpt, the strategy actors display and orient to aspects of entitlement while also orienting to questions of acceptance and rejection of the proposal. In a situation that might be socially problematic, namely disagreeing with the superior strategy actor, entitlement (to support pre-existing organizational roles) can function as a resource for the strategy actors to mitigate the social problematicity of the ongoing activity. Thus, the multimodally accomplished display of entitlement seems to be crucial for the interactional negotiation of strategy roles, where the roles of strategy actors are accomplished, sustained and re-evaluated during strategy relevant activities (here, editing the text of the strategy document).

#### MULTIPLE STRATEGY ROLES FOR ADVANCING STRATEGY DECISION MAKING

In the following excerpt, an orientation to entitlement serves as a resource to invoke multiple strategy roles, which the strategy actors negotiate throughout the sequence. Here, CEO and HR are in the course of revising the company's communication strategy. CEO proposes that the language used by the company should be easily understandable by anyone (ll. 6-9). The proposal is not immediately granted by HR. Instead, HR challenges the proposed wording by making a counter proposal that entails an alternative formulation of CEO's prior proposal.

3. Goodwin & Goodwin (1987) found that assessments with gaze withdrawal and reduced volume may propose a topic closure.

#### Excerpt (4)

- 1 CEO: [altså, Enkeltheden det s- sikrer vi jo ved  
PRT, simplicity this e- ensure we PRT with  
well simplicity we ensure by  
[((CEO looks at the computer projection, HR looks at CEO; HR  
leans back, hands fold behind his neck))
- 2 CEO: [o' bruge noget (0.2) spro:g som  
to use some language that  
using a language that  
[((CEO looks at HR, HR looks at CEO))
- 3 CEO: alle kan forstå.  
all can understand.  
everyone can understand.

From lines 1 to 3, CEO launches a proposal about how he sees the communication strategy of the company. Although CEO shifts his gaze from the projector to HR (line 2), his turn here is designed as a statement, displaying a high degree of entitlement to launch a proposal; the turn projects the relevance of the proposal to be accepted and implemented rather than discussed. He also uses the Danish particle “*jø*” (line 1) that highlights the interactants’ joint epistemic access to the matter at hand (the equivalent English translation in this context could be “as you know”), which contributes to mobilizing the preference structure of this turn and makes an agreement a preferred next response. While this is happening, HR positions himself as a passive recipient leaning back in his chair, folding his hands behind his neck and distancing himself from the notebook computer, thus making himself unavailable for transforming the proposal immediately into a written statement in the communication strategy.

4 ps: (3.2) ((mutual gaze, HR scratches his head))

In the following 3.2 second pause, there is a mutual gaze between the strategy actors, but neither of them visibly or audibly moves to take over the turn, which might indicate an upcoming problem (Pomerantz, 1984). HR engages himself in scratching the back of his head, thus once more displaying that he is not ready or willing to transfer the proposal into the written strategy document. This is supported by CEO, who via his gaze orientation to HR displays more of an orientation to a verbal response by HR than a written proposal by HR that would first be available for CEO on the computer projection.

- 5 CEO: [pt >så jeg synes du  
pt then I believe you  
pt then I think that you  
[((CEO points at and looks at the computer projection))
- 6 CEO: skal skrive< Enkelthed  
shall write simplicity  
should write simplicity
- 7 CEO: sikres ved .hh at anvende (0.4) [spro:g  
ensures by .hh to make=use=of (0.4) language  
ensures by making use of a language  
[((CEO looks at HR;  
HR takes his right hand  
down and touches the  
computer mouse))
- 8 CEO: .hh (0.4) øh: (1.4) med baggrund i laveste  
.hh (0.4) uh: (1.4) with background in lowest  
.hh uh on the basis of the lowest
- 9 CEO: fællesnævner,  
common=denominator  
common denominator
- 10 ps: (0.2) ((HR leans forward and starts typing on computer))

In lines 5 to 9, CEO reformulates his prior proposal into a typable version. In doing so, he upgrades his entitlement to make a proposal and the expectation that the proposal will be granted, which means that HR will accept the role of the person doing the typing instead of being an equal discussion partner. CEO explicitly encourages HR to type what he formulates; further, his prosody from line 6 onwards marks the coming wording as something that should be typed directly into the computer

document. This is supported by CEO pointing to and looking at the computer projection in lines 5 to 7. As a response, HR in line 7 onwards starts touching the computer mouse, which enables him to place the cursor at the relevant place in the computer document. Thus, HR's use of the computer mouse can be seen as an indication that he might move into granting the proposal (or at least parts of it), thus accepting both the proposal and its terms of entitlement.

11 CEO: [ik'?  
PRT?  
right?  
[((HR types on computer; CEO shifts gaze from HR and looks at the computer projection))

As CEO makes a post-expansion using a tag "ik" ("right"), HR starts typing on the computer. This goes hand in hand with CEO shifting his gaze from HR and moving it to the computer projection. Thus, HR makes use of the computer mouse as an indication of him at least partially granting the proposal.

12 ps: (4.5) [((HR types on computer))  
13 HR: [<tilstræbes> (2.5) əh ved (0.8) <anvendelse>  
seeks (PASS) (2.5) uh by (0.8) use  
we aim by the use  
[((HR reads aloud what he is typing))  
14 HR: (.) aF[:  
(.) of  
of  
[((HR looks at CEO, holding hands still above the keyboard))

In lines 12 to 14, HR types CEO's proposal. Before completing the typing of the sentence, however, HR moves his gaze from the notebook computer to CEO and stops typing by holding his hands still above the keyboard (l. 14). This can be seen as a repair initiator (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977), indicating problems in granting the proposal made by CEO.

15 CEO: [ptnj s:prog  
ptnj language  
ptnj language  
[((CEO looks at HR, mutual gaze; HR holds hands still above the keyboard))  
16 ps: (0.2)((mutual gaze; HR holds hands still above the keyboard))

In line 15, CEO treats HR's repair initiation as an "innocent" problem of memory and offers a candidate solution, "sprog" ("language"), to the problem, which precisely follows the formulation that he has been using in his original proposal. HR remains in the same position as before, thus not acknowledging CEO's other repair.

17 HR: [Ja.=Man kan ik' skrive laveste fællesnævner.  
PRT.=One can not write lowest common denominator.  
yeah.=we cannot write lowest common denominator.  
[((mutual gaze; HR holds hands still above the key board))  
18 ps: (0.4)

- 19 CEO: H<sup>v</sup>orfor ik' ?  
 Why not?  
*Why not?*
- 20 ps: (5.0) (HR withdraws gaze; CEO keeps looking at HR;  
 HR looks again at CEO at the end of the pause)

((23 lines omitted<sup>4</sup>))

In this phase of the proposal sequence, where HR and CEO display to each other their understanding of CEO's proposal, HR positions himself as not being available for typing by first leaning back in his chair (ll. 21-24), then shuffling papers (ll. 25-31) and lastly rubbing his eyes and nose (ll. 31-38). Thus, he identifies himself as not simply being a typist. Instead, he shows that he is entitled to engage in the discussion and, thus, makes the role of strategic discussant conditionally relevant. In line 39, when the clarification sequence has come to an end and a pause arises, HR moves clearly into typing by moving his hands from his face and then holding them open in front of his body. Overlapping with CEO's post-expansion of the clarification sequence, HR moves his open hands towards the computer, but he stops abruptly as CEO continues with his post-expansion. Thereafter, HR takes over:

- 45 HR: ne\_j (.) [m<sub>e</sub>n æh: ,  
 no but uh  
*no but uh*  
 [((HR lifts his cup and starts to drink))
- 46 ps: (0.6)
- 47 CEO: hrm  
 hrm
- 48 ps: (0.6) ((HR puts his cup down, reaches out for his  
 glasses, CEO looks at HR))
- 49 HR: [nå. (.) j<sub>a</sub> ja.  
 PRT yes yes  
*okay yes yes*  
 [((CEO looks at HR))
- 50 ps: (0.2) ((HR puts glasses on CEO looks at cp))

From lines 45 to 50, HR and CEO negotiate the end of the post-expansion, during which HR drinks coffee and shows that he is engaged in an activity that does not allow him to pursue the proposal here and now. By delaying his response to CEO's prior turn, he is again projecting potential disagreement and, thus, again invoking a role as someone who is entitled to object and not just to perform typing actions. Once HR has put his coffee cup down, he makes a sequence closure (l. 49) and marks his step into typing by putting his glasses on. Note that HR previously typed without using his glasses, which were directly available to him on the table next to the computer. So putting them on now is a resource – more than a physical necessity – for displaying and projecting his next action. Accordingly, CEO displays his understanding of HR's action by shifting his gaze from HR to the computer projection.

4. The full 23 lines are available as Appendix 1 at the end of the paper.

- 51 HR: æh:: >enkelthed tilstræbes ved  
uh::: simplicity aims (PASS) by  
uh simplicity is sought after by
- 52 HR: [anvendel[se aF,  
use of  
making use of  
[((HR takes his hands down to keyboard ready to type))  
[((CEO looks at the computer projection))
- 53 ps: (0.2)
- 54 ps: (1.2) ((HR starts typing))
- 55 HR: \*e-\* (.) <en (1.0) Ss::>progbrug,  
a a language=use  
a language use
- 56 ps: (1.5) ((HR continues typing))
- 57 HR: <med (0.8) let (0.2) for (.) ståelige (1.2)  
with easy understandable  
with easy to understand
- 58 HR: begreber.>  
words.
- 59 ps: (0.3) ((HR continues typing))
- 60 CEO: ja,  
yes
- 61 ps: (0.2) ((HR finishes typing))
- 62 ps: (0.2)

During lines 51-62, HR makes a counter proposal, proposing new wording for CEO's prior proposal. He does not do this in the form of a verbal proposal; instead, he types it directly into the strategy document. By doing so, he displays that he is entitled both to make a counter proposal and also to take a decision to implement it. HR synchronizes his online comments verbally with the typing actions and CEO keeps looking at the computer projection. Once HR has nearly finished typing, CEO provides a minimal acknowledgement token in line 60, but he does not mark any strong acceptance of the proposal.

- 63 HR: [Det er da i hvert fald en pæn måde at  
This is PRT in any case a nice way to  
This is certainly a nice way to  
[((CEO looks at the computer projection; HR looks up to CEO))
- 64 HR: skrive det på[:.  
write this on  
write this
- 65 CEO: [Det= er en pæn måde >at skrive  
This is a nice way to write  
This is a nice way to write  
[((CEO continues to look at the computer  
projection; HR looks at CEO))
- 66 CEO: det på<.=ja.  
this on yes  
this yes.
- 67 ps: (2.5)  
((New topic is launched))

As a response, HR assesses his own proposal, "this is certainly a nice way to write this". CEO repeats HR's assessment in a downgraded way (l. 65: CEO leaves out "certainly") and ends with an acknowledgement token. After a 2.5 second pause, a new topic is launched, which indicates that the proposal has been implemented successfully and that the proposal sequence has come to an end. In sum, the analysis of this excerpt made it apparent that the aspect of entitlement was used by the participants as a resource to make relevant various strategy roles, which subsequently had an impact on the progression of strategy making.

## DISCUSSION

In an institutional setting such as a strategy-making meeting, where participants' organizationally defined roles can often come into play (here the CEO and the HR manager), it may be assumed that the acceptance or rejection of a proposal would be the central activity. Yet, our analysis showed that the strategy actors in the meeting actively performed and (re)negotiated questions of entitlement, and thus their strategy roles, by manipulating various verbal, embodied and material resources that they had at their disposal. It was shown that a congruence between entitlement and acceptance of the proposal led to a smooth and quick decision about changes in the strategy document, whereas an incongruence between entitlement and acceptance/rejection led to an extension of the proposal sequences, thus delaying the decision about the strategy text. Here, the participants' practices in performing entitlement were shown to play a crucial role for strategy making in the cases where the strategy actors did not agree on the changes to be implemented. Entitlement was shown to be a resource to make relevant and accomplish pre-existing organizational (or to some extent, strategy) roles, thus mitigating the socially problematic action of disagreeing. Moreover, it became clear that performing entitlement could be a resource for navigating between multiple strategy roles, thus enabling strategy actors to challenge, re-invoke and accomplish their roles in the strategy making process. The aspect of entitlement thus helps to acknowledge the complexity and dynamics of strategy work; further, it adds to our understanding of the processual nature of strategy work and the multiplicity of aims dealt with during strategy work.

Our analytical findings lead to a discussion about how decisions about corporate strategy may actually come about: strategy meetings are not strictly mono-topical goal oriented events but various organizationally and socially relevant activities intertwined with the clearly agenda-driven goals of the strategy meeting. Moreover, the analysis showed that meeting participants who have a structurally lower entitlement to make strategic decisions (HR manager vs. CEO) can influence the strategy decision process substantially by making use of verbal, embodied and material resources, thus highlighting that the social side of strategy work goes hand in hand with the 'formal' side of strategy decision making. This supports a practice-view on strategy work that not only focuses on the final strategy outcome but also acknowledges the social and relational aspects of strategy work and their impact on strategy outcome. At the same time, such findings may pose a challenge to conventional strategy-as-practice notions such as the one that believes that strategic meetings should be equalitarian and inclusive (see e.g. Roobeek, 1996). Such equalitarian spirit is not a given condition but a local, interactional accomplishment of all involved meeting participants. Indeed, strategy actors can pursue accomplishing such a social environment alone before actually working on making strategic decisions.

The current study's communicative perspective on strategy work empirically grounds insights into collective actions as distributed and hybrid (Cooren, 2010), and as representative in nature by means of both human and nonhuman agents (Ashcraft, Kuhn & Cooren, 2009: 37) in two ways. First, in relation to the processual foundations of strategy outcome, the current study has demonstrated that collective actions were dispersed across various individuals, thus explicating the intersubjective nature (Heritage, 1984) of mutual understanding. In the end, the collective actions between the HR manager and the CEO constituted the company strategy document that would transform into the "organizational voice". Seemingly "subtle" communicative actions are thus indeed effective and powerful tools for strategizing, ultimately constituting organizational competence and performance (or performativity, as studied by Vásquez, et al., 2017). Second, the current study contributes to our understanding of collective actions as constituted by various inseparable resources (verbal, embodied and material). When making proposals, the participants' orientation to the computer projection and actual typing of the document, together with the verbal resources, were crucial in negotiating and achieving entitlement and defining strategy roles. In the analysis, we were careful not to give attention to one resource at the expense of the other but instead to treat the verbal, embodied and material resources as equally relevant and accessible for the participants' interactive construction of meaning. Without a careful consideration of the array of resources that are available to the strategy actors, we risk not understanding the full complexity of strategy actions. By revealing precisely how strategy actors use today's common artefacts such as computers and computer projections, we enhance our knowledge of the potential affordances and constraints related to the use of these artefacts for strategy meeting interactions and their role for strategy making. As such, building on the 'linguistic turn' in strategy (Vaara, 2010) and 'interactional turn' in organizational communication (Cooren, 2007), we argue for the appreciation of a 'multimodal' turn in organizational communication and practice studies (see also Lê & Spee, 2015); this will allow us to fully acknowledge what people do with their bodies and material surroundings, and how these actions constitute organizational and strategy work.

In regards to our understanding of who strategy actors are, recent reviews within strategy-as-practice (e.g. Golsorkhhi et al., 2015b; Rouleau, Balogun & Floyd, 2015) have shown that – despite a call for broadening our understanding of strategy actors (Hendry & Seidl, 2003) – there remains a tendency to focus on strategy making as predominantly executed by upper management. While this indicates an assumption of strategy actors as *à priori* and externally defined actors, the current study showed that strategy actors, or practitioners, are not pre-defined entities. Instead, they are dynamic and locally situated, communicative accomplishments that emerge in response to the turn-by-turn organization of the ongoing interaction; thus, they can locally influence the strategy decision process by means of communicative actions despite their externally defined roles. This highlights the importance of further pursuing who strategy actors actually are, as the 'strategic nature' of strategy actors may be grounded in their everyday, dynamic communicative actions just as easily as in their pre-defined organizational status or the task at hand.

The current study also explicates the insights opened up by a communicative view on strategy activities. Focusing on the moment-by-moment communicative constitution of strategy activities allows us to uncover the members' orientations to and displayed understandings of emerging strategy roles and their impact on the process of strategy

making. This calls for a higher acknowledgement of strategy making as a members' phenomenon, where the focus lies in how strategy making members make sense of the activities at hand and their strategic relevance. Consequently, strategy making becomes an intersubjective endeavor that is constituted by the communicative actions performed by the members involved. Thus, this perspective enables an understanding of strategy making in specific and strategy work in general as a communicative practice that is constitutive for the organization; furthermore, it consequently draws our attention to what is at the heart of a practice turn in strategy, namely the detailed activities that constitute strategizing (Seidl & Whittington, 2014). Methodologically, this perspective makes relevant a shift from data that are largely retrospectively generated in the form of interviews and surveys, to data that allow insights into the here-and-now, multimodal emergence of strategy activities. This shift in perspective is reflected in a number of recent studies that analyze actual strategy work episodes (e.g. Cooren et al., 2015; Kwon, Clarke & Wodak, 2014; Vásquez et al. 2017). By applying a critical discourse analytical and CCO-approach, these empirical studies contributed significantly to our understanding of the processual and multi-modal nature of strategy work. The current paper seeks to add yet another aspect to the complex nature of strategy work by way of a multi-modal conversation analytical approach, which allows for a moment-by-moment, sequential investigation of the interactional accomplishment of strategy work. The recent calls for (micro-) ethnographic approaches (Jarzabkowski, et al., 2014; Gylfe, et al., 2016) in the form of video observations for studying strategy indicate our need to understand more of the here-and-now of strategic actions; it is our hope that future empirical studies basing their analysis on these methods will widen our understanding of strategy as a members' phenomenon constituted by locally situated, multimodal communicative processes.

## TRANSCRIPTION GLOSSARY

<u>good</u>	speaker emphasis
YES	noticeably louder than surrounding talk
°yes°	noticeably quieter than surrounding talk
u:	stretched sound
ca-	sharp cut-off of the prior sound
,	continuing intonation
.	falling intonation
?	rising intonation
=	latching between utterances
> <	noticeably quicker than surrounding talk
< >	noticeably slower than surrounding talk
↑	rising intonational shift
↓	falling intonational shift
•hh	hearable in-breath
hh	hearable out-breath
(h)	laughter within a word
(.)	micropause (less than 0.2 seconds)
(0.5)	time gap in tenths of a second
[yes ]	overlapping talk
[no:]	overlapping talk
( )	presence of an unclear fragment
((nods))	descriptions of embodied actions

For more information on transcript conventions, please refer to: Atkinson and Heritage (1984).

**APPENDIX 1: THE FULL 23 LINES OMITTED FROM EXCERPT 4**

- 21 HR: .hh [Det du mener, det er at det er med:: med et  
That you mean, this is that it is with with a  
*What you mean is that it it is with a*  
[((HR leans back in chair, hands folded on stomach,  
mutual gaze))
- 22 HR: [lille lix;  
small lix;  
*small l*ix  
[((HR leans back in chair, mutual gaze))
- 23 ps: (0.3) ((HR leans back in chair, puts hands down on table  
in front of computer))
- 24 CEO: Jeg mener, at det skal være sådan så den der  
I mean, that it shall be like=this so this there  
*I mean it should be like this so that one*
- 25 CEO: er den [m:i[ndst uddannet [Også kan forstå d[et.  
is the least educated also can understand this.  
*who is least educated can also understand this text.*  
[((CEO makes r. hand gesture: small))  
[((HR nods)) [((HR moves papers w.l.hand))
- 26 HR: [Jamen de:t  
PRT this  
*Right this*
- 27 HR: [forstår jeg godt.=  
understand I well.=  
*I understand totally.*  
[((HR continues to shuffle papers on table))
- 28 CEO: =Ja.  
=yes.  
*yes.*
- 29 ps: (0.2)
- 30 CEO: og det er det når vi skriver normalt .hh  
and this is this when we write normally .hh  
*and it is like this when we normally write .hh*
- 31 CEO: at vores- >vi laver< utrolig [direkte (.) korte  
that our- >we make< unbelievable direct (.) short  
*that our- we make unbelievably direct (.) short*  
[((HR puts hands up  
to face, rubs eyes and nose))
- 32 CEO: sætninger .h[h  
sentences .h[h  
*sentences .h[h*
- 33 HR: [ja  
yes  
*yes*
- 34 CEO: og la- lav[e,  
and lo- low,  
*and lo- low,*
- 35 HR: [jamen de:t er li[xen.  
PRT this is lix=the.  
*well this is lix.*  
[((HR has still hands up in his face))
- 36 CEO: [ja

yes  
yes

37 CEO: ja.  
yes.  
yes.

38 ps: (0.8)

39 CEO: .ff ((CEO looks at cp, HR holds hands abruptly in front  
of body))

40 ps: (1.2)

41 CEO: [mæn (.) [hvis vi skriver lav [lix h[er så  
but (.) if we write low lix here then  
but if we write low lix here then  
[((CEO looks at CP))

42 HR: [((CEO looks at HR))  
[.FFF ((moves open hands in direction of  
computer, stops abruptly in motion))

43 HR: [ja,  
yes  
yes

44 CEO: er der jo ikke én der forstår det jo.  
is there not one who understands this PRT.  
there is no one who understands this.

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