

Sensemaking Moment Comparisons

March 2010

Categorization of sensemaking triggers

| Category | Types of Triggers | Sessions Affected |
|--|--|-------------------|
| Pertaining to representational structure | Incoming input doesn't fit structure; no place to put/contain current input | AG2 |
| | Current container (representation structure) not really working | Hab |
| Pertaining to volume or type of participant input | Too much too fast (too much coming in at once, too much going on) | AG1, AG4 |
| | Ambiguous input from a participant | RG2 |
| | Someone going off in another direction than intended with so much energy that cant' be stopped | AG3 |
| Pertaining to information/subject matter | Needed information is missing | RST |
| | Realization that a helpful construct or material is somewhere else | Hab |
| Pertaining to intended process/plan | Participant expresses confusion as to purpose | RG1 |
| | Participant expresses unhappiness with what other participants are doing with their ideas/ input | RG2 |
| | Seeing things go off course; "veering off" | AG2, AG3 |

Ethical dimensions of practitioner actions taken in response to sensemaking triggers

| Category | Type of Response | Result |
|--|---|--|
| Direct collaboration between practitioners and participants | Collaborative navigation to find item of interest (Hab) | Ran out of time (with recovery) |
| | Negotiation/agreement on placement of an item (Hab) | |
| Direct intervention aimed at participants | Acknowledging diverging participant concerns, but directing focus elsewhere ("this is what the focus should be -- this not that is what we're doing") (AG2) | Discussion and representation diverge from each other, no longer referring to representation |
| | Clarifying purpose, giving direction/expected behavior (RG1) | Back in the swing of things |
| | Process call and offer of alternate solution (RG2) | |
| | Decision to delink then strong visual validation (RG2) | |
| Direct intervention for purpose of practitioner action | Holding forward progress until new strategy is in place (AG4) | Back in the swing of things |
| | Stopping forward progress and asking for help; stop-and-think to recover (AG1, AG4) | |
| Indirect intervention | Independent investigation (RST) | Acceptance of imperfect data, decision to move on |
| | Meta-comment capturing interim resolution (RST) | |
| | Making silent meta-comment on map (AG3) | Ran out of time (without recovery) |
| Changing/blurring roles | Aiding and abetting (caught up in the subject matter itself instead of standing above/apart) (AG3) | |
| Non-intervention | Stunned silence (AG3) | |

Aesthetic (shaping) dimensions of practitioner actions taken in response to sensemaking triggers

| Category | Type of Response | Result |
|---|---|--|
| Direct contribution to shaping | Collaborative navigation to find item of interest (Hab) | Ran out of time (with recovery) |
| | Negotiation/agreement on placement of an item (Hab) | |
| | Decision to delink then strong visual validation (RG2) | Back in the swing of things |
| Intended to help participant shaping | Process call and offer of alternate solution (RG2) | |
| | Clarifying purpose, giving direction/expected behavior (RG1) | |
| | Independent investigation (RST) | |
| Creating space for remedial shaping to take place | Acknowledging diverging participant concerns, but directing focus elsewhere ("this is what the focus should be -- this not that is what we're doing") (AG2) | Discussion and representation diverge from each other, no longer referring to representation |
| | Holding forward progress until new strategy is in place (AG4) | Back in the swing of things |
| Stopping forward progress and asking for help; stop-and-think to recover (AG1, AG4) | | |
| Partially having to do with shaping | Meta-comment capturing interim resolution (RST) | Acceptance of imperfect data, decision to move on |
| | Making silent meta-comment on map (AG3) | Ran out of time (without recovery) |
| No aesthetic dimension | Aiding and abetting (caught up in the subject matter itself instead of standing above/apart) (AG3) | |
| | Stunned silence (AG3) | |

| Group | Trigger | Type of Trigger | Practitioner(s) Response to Trigger | Type of Practitioner Response | Result of Response | Type of Result | Notes |
|-------|--|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| AG1 | Mapper trying to do a secondary task (creating another holding map) while participants keep going with new contributions. Participants going 'meta' and questioning why other participants kept raising "visual and critical thinking" | Too much too fast (too much coming in at once, too much going on) | The mapper was first stymied, then a 'master' participant intervened to give her breathing room. She asked for help in what to put in -- "What's the current thing I'm trying to capture?" | Stopping forward progress and asking for help; stop-and-think to recover | Mapper was able to catch up and resume previous progress | Back in the swing of things | Succeeded |
| AG2 | Several participants objected to the way the prepared map was structured and wanted to discuss it | Incoming input doesn't fit structure; no place to put/contain current input. | Facilitator tried to discuss the issues participants were bringing up in terms of the subject matter (not the map structure); mapper pointed to the area of the map the participants were discussing and, while acknowledging their issues could be valid, directed participants to "all this stuff down here" that was the intended focus | Acknowledging diverging participant concerns, but directing focus elsewhere ("this is what the focus should be -- this not that is what we're doing") | Participant discussion went on with no further reference to the map | Discussion and representation diverge from each other, no longer referring to representation | Failed |
| | | Seeing things go off course; "veering off" | | | | | |
| AG3 | Participants (and one of the facilitators) go off in a meta-direction, discussion how to show argumentation about tags | Someone going off in another direction than intended with so much energy that can't be stopped | One of the facilitators jumps into the meta-discussion (fuels the fire), the other doesn't do anything; mapper places a "what does this mean?" node on the map | Aiding and abetting (caught up in the subject matter itself instead of standing above/apart) Making silent meta-comment | Session ran out of time while still off on meta-topic | Ran out of time (without recovery) | Failed |
| | | Seeing things go off course; "veering off" | | | | | |
| AG4 | Participant E. gave a lot of verbal input while mapper was still doing small cleanups; she got behind | Too much too fast (too much coming in at once, too much going on) | Facilitator provides a 'mini-plan' for the mapper by narrating a strategy ("if we put a Question that said..."). Mapper drops what she was doing and embraces the new plan | Holding forward progress until new strategy is in place | Session continues on with new contributions | Back in the swing of things | Succeeded Boh AG1 and AG4 'stop time' in different ways |
| RG1 | Participant confusion amidst noise and joking around -- "what are we really supposed to be doing, should we guess what the practitioners intended" | Participant expresses confusion as to purpose | Clarifying comments from one of the (semi) practitioner team restates the central question and states the desired kind of response | Clarifying purpose, giving direction/expected behavior | Session gets back on track, participants finish supplying a response and practitioners move on to next item | Back in the swing of things | Succeeded Similar type of response as AG2 -- but it worked for RG1 and didn't for AG2 |
| RG2 | Participant contribution not specific or clear how/where on the map she was referring to, and in what way | Ambiguous input | Facilitator goes up and points to screen to guide/validate what the input refers to; mapper tries to catch up in the meantime ("you keep 'em talking"); L goes over to help and they delink until they catch up. Then facilitator goes up to map again and directs participant attention there and validates. | Decision to delink then strong visual validation | Participants validated that the input was captured correctly | Back in the swing of things | Succeeded Trigger is similar but different to "too much too fast" |
| | Participant unhappiness about the "art & literature" vs "philosophy" tagging of "her" memory node | Participant expresses unhappiness with what other participants are doing with their ideas/input | Mapper makes instant decision about the process ("it's gotta be a group thing") but offers to make a separate tag | Process call and offer of alternate solution | Participant accepted the "more than one tag" solution and the way the mapper tagged the nodes | Back in the swing of things | Succeeded Trigger is similar to AG1 in terms of expressed participant unhappiness with other participants' input, and similar to RG1 in terms of expressing confusion as to purpose (in a way) |
| Hab | Perception that the "first digit digit" grouping was possibly confusing, and B remembering that he had had an explanation in a previous map from another day | Current container not really working Helpful construct or material somewhere else | Collaborative navigation to look for the remembered explanatory node, going to a couple of different maps, finding it, agreeing it was the right one, getting back to and placing into the original map, and removing the previous grouping 'first digit digit' node | Collaborative navigation to find item of interest Negotiation/agreement on placement of an item | Successful placement/agreement that the retrieved node resolves the issue | Ran out of time (with recovery) | Succeeded |
| RST | Discovery of missing Waypoints data | Needed information is missing | Participants look in their own notes and discuss while practitioner delinks and looks in other maps; while discussing they take a guess that the image is at Waypoint 0; practitioner puts in a "guess" node and augments it with more information/rationale as discussion continues | Independent investigation Meta-comment capturing interim resolution | Participants acknowledge/validate the mappers' characterization of the issue ("it *isn't* helpful so we have to go back"), then move on to the next activity | Acceptance of imperfect data, decision to move on | Succeeded |