

Multimedia, minority languages and the New Economy

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Abstract

By now it is acknowledged that the ability of a language group to produce and reproduce itself rests heavily upon the extent to which the associated language enters the labour market and provides opportunities for social mobility at least within the regional labour market (Williams, Roberts and Isaac, 1978). If this is, indeed the case, then language groups which do achieve a presence in the regional labour market are obliged to confront the prospect of economic restructuring and social change, much like the normative language group within society. They are obliged to be capable of flexibly modifying their role in the economic order through formal or informal agencies of Language Policy.

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Introduction

Normative language groups will penetrate every aspect of the economy and will be taken for granted as the language which is used within every kind of economic operation. In contrast, minority languages will be restricted in their reach and extension into economic activity.

Within industrial age economy several minority language groups have succeeded in achieving a significant presence in public sector activities and, most notably perhaps, in the regional media (Nelde, Strubell and Williams, 1996). These public sector activities are not insignificant within regional economies characterised by the absence of large private sector enterprises. This has been of value to the minority language group if only by reference to how the associated promise of accessing high profile, well paid and highly skilled occupations using the minority language serves as a motivating force for parents seeking the best for their children. However, these opportunities have been restricted to minority language speakers and the associated labour market segmentation has generated considerable animosity in some quarters. Consequently we are a long way away from the scenario within which the minority language is of benefit to everyone, whether they speak the language or not. Minority languages remain a problem rather than becoming an asset.

2. The New Economy

Currently we are confronting a new round of economic restructuring within which industrial age economy is slowly giving way to what is known as the New Economy (Williams, 2000). It is this challenge that is facing minority language groups. Any region or social group which fails to engage with the New Economy is in danger of becoming the source of displaced labour for that economy. It is clear that there are definite spatial concentration by reference to the hardware and software developments –two of the main components of the ICT sector in Europe which leaves many minority language regions out of these developments and obliging new forms of entry trajectories. The concept of path dependency, or how earlier forms of economic activity will determine future forms, means that for several such regions the existing media sector and how it transforms into multimedia activities will be a key to that trajectory.

However, there are two contexts within which the media sector is obliged to change. Firstly there is the issue of convergence and how it merges previously separate sectors and

¹ Much of the subsequent discussion can be found in Williams, 1999.

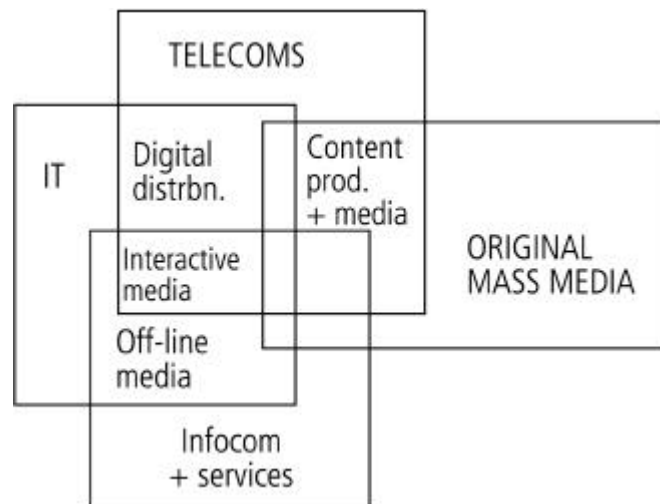
activities; and secondly there are the new ways of working associated with the development of knowledge as an asset. Economic activities are redefined (fig. 1):

Figure 1. Toivonen 2001:75 (Modified by Kentz)



The convergence of ICT and media breaks down the barriers which have separated the world of broadcasting, publishing, communication and IT. New partnerships are required. The Infocom sector uses digital communication to create a content industry which uses hardware and software to distribute digitised information (fig. 2).

Figure 2. Infocom Sector



The synthesis of many fields of expertise links with IT capabilities and stimulates content and services production. It is claimed that the content industry could be worth as much as 5% of EC GDP, becoming responsible for employing 4 million workers. Its annual growth rate could be up to 20%, creating up to a million new jobs between 2000 and 2005 (EC, 2000). There are already opportunities for the creation of new systems of entertainment which can reach a global market at relatively low cost. The key involves the link between product and process innovation (Williams and Kantz, 2003).

New workflows are necessary and these can now operate trans-regionally (Williams, In Press). The semantic web uses software specifically designed to cope with on-line working. Human language technology in the form of machine translation and voice recognition allows on-line working to evolve regardless of language differences. Even large video files can be moved effortlessly across space via broadband. Trans-regional development using interoperable cultural archives for content production used as shared resources is feasible. It opens up markets formerly closed by language and culture, while accessing a global market which includes a range of regional diaspora.

In summary there are the kinds of changes which are summarised in the following table which must be addressed:

Table 1. The Old Economy and the New Economy

	Old Economy	New Economy
<i>Economy-wide characteristics</i>		
Markets	Stable	Dynamic
Scope of competition	State	Global
Organisational form	Hierarchical Bureaucratic	Networked Entrepreneurial
Geog. mobility of businesses	Low	High
Regional competition	Low	High
<i>Industry</i>		
Organisation of production	Mass production	Flexible production
Key Factor of production	Capital/Labour	Innovation/Knowledge
Key technology driver	Mechanisation	Digitization
Source of competitive advantage	Lowering cost via economy of scale	Innovation, Quality, time to market, cost
Importance of research/innovation	Moderate	High
Relations with other firms	Go it alone	Alliances/collaboration
<i>Workforce</i>		
Main policy goal	Full employment	Higher wages/incomes
Skills	Job specific	Broad, cross-training
Requisite education	A skill	Lifelong learning
Labour-Management relations	Adversarial	Collaborative
Nature of employment	Stable	Risk and opportunity
<i>Government</i>		
Business-government relations	Impose requirements	Assist company growth/innovation
Regulation	Command+control	Market tools, flexibility

3. Operating within the New Economy

There has been a tendency to consider these changes by reference to two or even three separate emphases. Firstly, there is the structural focus involving the organisational and spatial focus claimed to be necessary to simulate knowledge generation and innovation. It includes reference to the importance of the regional and the cultural and how it leads to the conception of Regional Innovation Systems (Braczyk, Cooke and Heidenreich, 1998). The

emphasis on learning as the precursor of knowledge generation leads to an emphasis on proximity and the focus on the kinds of interaction which are claimed to stimulate process and product innovation. Local knowledge and regional culture are claimed to be essential for shared knowledge to be promoted. This involves the reasoning behind the emphasis on industrial clusters, the Triple Helix relationship between Universities and the public and private sector in promoting the learning process, the emergence of incubators and Science Parks as the organisational basis for such developments, etc. These approaches tend to be driven by the geographical and the economic metadiscourse with some input from among Sociologists.

Secondly, there is focus on the kinds of interactive contexts within which knowledge is claimed to develop. Evidently, this links with the first concern, but the emphasis tends to be more on the interaction than the process. It involves the anthropological metadiscourse and its concern with small scale interactive analyses. It has resulted in a focus on what are called communities of practice as the basis whereby knowledge is created (Wenger, 1998)². These are small scale communities which are capable of being studied using the ethnographic methods of Anthropology and the Sociology of work.

Thirdly, far less emphasis has been placed on the relevance of language for the entire process. The focus here is less on structure and the interactive process than on the interpersonal process of knowledge generation. It must engage with the other emphases and should ignore disciplinary concerns in developing its focus. It is the later which I wish to focus upon in this paper. The relevant starting point involves what is being claimed about the nature of knowledge and how it can be developed.

Before so doing there is another issue to be confronted. Much of the above work tends to proceed with only a background reference to technological developments. We find technologists developing the architecture associated with new learning environments while educators are aware of the need for new pedagogies to exploit these architectures. We find a certain degree of awareness of what the technology can do among Geographers and Economists, but it is limited. What is missing is the ability to design new technology-based environments beginning from the philosophical and epistemological assumptions associated with the Knowledge Economy. In enabling things to happen, the technology development assumes certain things about how these things do happen, without understanding how technology itself is based on certain assumptions, while also being determinative in the sense that it makes things happen in specific ways.

There are other consequences associated with the advent of the New Economy. There is a shift away from neo-Classical principles of orthodox Economics. The new perspective results in the claim that fluid labour markets are not conditioned merely by occupational or sectorial knowledges, but by a capability for permanent learning. Thus, knowledge comes to replace the role played by natural resources in the OE, and enterprise support must be knowledge based (Williams, 2000).

Much of what is claimed by reference to the generation and management of knowledge is encompassed in Wenger's notion of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). His work is remarkably eclectic and it is difficult to see how his mixing of problematics does not result in epistemological contradiction. He embraces the work of orthodox Marxists such as Gramsci, Bourdieu and Braverman side by side with the asociological work of the ethnomethodologists. He incorporates the more conservative thrust of Giddens' work while also flirting with post structuralists and allied thinkers including Bakhtin, Heidegger and Wittgenstein. He embraces the work of Michel Foucault but is not comfortable with it because of its denial of the individual subject. He does accept how Foucault's work involves '...pervasive forms of discipline sustained by discourses which define knowledge and truth...', and views discourse as '...a characterisation of practice...' while not equating the two. He is also critical of Foucault for ignoring identity, seemingly being unaware of how the relationship between the individual, the subject and identity are handled in post structural discourse analysis. This position is a consequence of his reliance on Giddens' (1984) notion of structuration, and Bourdieu's (1980) emphasis on social practice, theoretical conceptions which are open to criticism.

² For critique of both the Regional Innovation System and Communities of Practice see Williams, In Press b.

What does emerge is the claim that much of our knowledge is tacit in nature. This is by no means a new idea and, in this case at least, appears to derive from the work of Polanyi (Polanyi, 1983). It is another manifestation of the claim of both Giddens and Bhaskar that the normative order of any society involves tacit knowledge. That is, normativity is not seen as a preordained form which relates to social order, but is to be found in the common sense of the ordinary citizen who is unable to easily express the basis of this common sense. While Polanyi's work is of relevance here, so also is the more general work of post structuralism and how it has had a profound impact upon how Sociologists have come to understand behaviour.

What Wenger does with this awareness of the nature of knowledge is to relate it to social practice. He claims that bounded communities operate social practice on the basis of tacit knowledge. Within this process meaning is constantly negotiated, not as a rational process, but as an on-going process of interaction which draws on tacit knowledge in developing new knowledge. This would appear to be merely another manifestation of how Sociology has always viewed social structure as patterned behaviour. What is different is how he relates the production of knowledge, not to a rational form of reflexivity, but rather, to the relationship between identity and the social construction of meaning within social interaction among members of this community of practitioners. He argues that the task for anyone interested in organisational learning is to be able to uncover and exploit tacit knowledge.

Space does not permit a critical evaluation of Wenger's work, nor that of those who draw upon it. Rather, in the remainder of this paper I would like to attempt what Wenger does not do –to develop a framework based on language and its use which embraces the idea of the social construction of meaning and how it relates to the production of knowledge. In pursuing this objective I will not draw upon orthodox linguistics which is based on Cartesian principles, but rather on what is known as French Discourse Analysis (FDA) which is based upon post structuralism (Williams, 1999). I retain the notion of a community of practice and seek to relate what is said about the relationship between the construction of meaning and practice by reference to the new workflows associated with multimedia content production.

4. Post structuralism³

The main focus I want to take by reference to post structuralism involves the work of Foucault (1969). It can be claimed that his work focused on normativity, and involved how the actions of norms in the life of humankind determine the kind of society in which they themselves appear as subjects. It involves a novel definition of subjects and objects and the relationships of these definitions to the constitution of meaning. Normativity is not seen as a preordained form which relates to social order, but rather, as the effects of discourse which establishes a norm of knowledge which is expressed as 'truth'. In this respect it differs from orthodox Sociological meta discourse which constructs the normative order as a manifestation of the social order which the individual rationally engages with. Thus Foucault shares in common with more recent understanding of normativity as pertaining to forms of tacit knowledge which relates to the individual, but which that individual is unable to express.

Foucault referred to the norm in two ways. Firstly by reference to how it engages 'objects' as in its juridical sense, and secondly how it involves the norm's 'subjects'. The norm sets boundaries which are related to judgement about the merits of inclusion and exclusion and results in domination. When we treat norm as discourse which not only sets boundaries in constructing subjects and objects in relation to each other, while institutionalising or stabilising certain discourses as normative, we begin to see how domination operates and how liberation is achieved.

The individual does not exist outside of discourse but, as we shall see in a moment, is brought into existence through her engagement with discourse within which she becomes the subject of that discourse. This means that the individual is not the centred rational subject of Cartesianism, fully capable of making rational decisions about social practice and her role in it. This also has implications for the concept of ideology in that Post structuralism argues that ideology is not constituted outside of practice, but only emerges within social practice. Ideology is not constituted before the act.

³ Much of the subsequent discussion can be found in Williams, 1999.

However there is also a need to relate the individual as subject with the social, either as subject or as object. This is achieved by recognising that the norm is that whereby, and across which, society communicates with itself. The norm is the link, the principle of unity and communication of individualities. It is also a relationship between the local and the global. The stabilisation of discourse involves relatively fixed relations between subjects and objects, and it is this stabilisation which gives the norm its enduring quality. Change occurs when discourses are destabilised. What Foucault achieves is to recognise the norm as a principle of communication devoid of origin and devoid of a subject. Normative individualisation occurs without reference to a nature, nor to an essence of subjects. We conform without realising how and why we conform. It is an account that is not far removed from the notion of tacit knowledge. Normativity becomes the effects of discourse which establishes a norm of knowledge expressed as 'truth'. If society is viewed as the pattern of recurring human behaviour, then the focus on discourse collapses the distinction between language and society which has been at the heart of Sociology for two centuries. Viewing language acts as social acts is to consider its stability within a ruled system of social relationships that involves shared meaning across locuteurs.

The essence of Foucaultian DA is that meaning is conditioned by what he refers to as discursive formations. Indeed, a discursive formation is circumscribed by how it pertains to meaning. It relates to stabilised discourse within which meaning is fixed, as are subjects and objects. Thus, in some respects it resembles the notion of communities of practice except that the focus is upon discourse as practice, and meaning as associated with practice, rather than focusing upon the actors within the community. A discursive formation sets limits on what can be said while determining what must be said from a given subject position. It is in this sense that it determines meaning.

5. French Discourse Analysis (FDA)

FDA is the analytic component of post-structuralism. Evidently it is obliged to resort to a form of linguistics, or more centrally, a semantics which is not premised on the centred, rational subject. In this respect it departs from Chomsky's position within which semantics belongs entirely to the linguistic field, where semantics is a natural extension of the syntactic, so that meaning is a fact of language. For Chomsky, the individual rationally chooses from among a range of possible meanings which derive from the essentially ambiguous nature of language. The alternative to this Cartesianism is what is known as enonciative linguistics (Culioli, 1990) which I will return to in the next section.

There is a sense in which normativity is conceived of as shared meaning, not merely between individuals, but also across individuals. This being the case, if there is a means whereby shared meaning can be ascertained outside of the orthodoxy of a Sociology based upon rationalism, then that is all that is required. Discourse comes to be equated with society. Social places are defined in discursive materiality, through the effects of discourse, rather than in an analytic meta discourse of a Sociology external to discourse. Social places are opened up in the materiality of discourse. This observation underlines that Sociology is merely an account which suffices to indicate the form of social practice. It is an account that is premised upon the centrality of reason, and the insistence of sociological orthodoxies such as 'there is one society for each state'. The focus shifts from this concern to how the effects of meaning organise and permit the understanding of the dimension of the physical inscription of social processes. This involved two things –how enunciation relates to social places, and how the inter-discursive accumulation conditions the memory of notions and their function. I will consider each of these in turn.

A discussion of the relationship between enunciation and social places leads to a discussion of how the individual is transformed into the subject of discourse. Of central importance is the concept of interpolation, where the individual is interpolated as the subject of discourse. Any language act involves an inter-discursivity of constructed or preconstructed places which the individual can or cannot be interpolated into. The subject as a human being is not the same as the linguistic subject. The 'I' of grammar is not the same as the speaking subject.

It is in discursive materiality that social places are defined. Social practice becomes the effects of discourse, in its materiality. Discursive structure replaces the normative context of orthodox Sociology in which the individual is socialised in relation to pre-established norms and value systems. The discursive materiality imposes itself on the locuteur in organising the effects of position and disposition.

Institutions involve stable structures of types of acts and the places with which they are associated. That is, they lie at the heart of discursive stability. The individual can only be drawn into these places through signification, and the interpolation of actor-speakers into the categorised places is a performative act. The subject places which open up within discourse are there to be taken up or rejected by the individual through signification and interpolation. If the individual takes in charge of a place, she becomes the subject of that discourse. Furthermore, each subject relates to other subjects and to objects within that discourse. She accepts the social places which are constructively marked. Within discursive interaction any statement only has virtual meaning, but this virtuality is presupposed and taken in charge by all of the participants in the process in a non-marked way. Not taking in charge is viewed as an explicit process of refusal. The explicit process (marked) can be actualised in the form of language acts (enunciation), or non-language acts (non-cooperation in the act). Institutionalisation which involves tacit knowledge is treated in terms of the relationship between the places that relate to the structuration of action, and how individuals are interpolated into these places.

Turning to interdiscursive accumulation, this involves the role of the past in conditioning the present. Current discourse accommodates and incorporates prior discourse. The meaning of any notion such as 'Wales' cannot be elaborated outside of how it has been historically constructed as an object. Similarly, all discourses encompass traces of the past in the way in which stabilised discourse fixes the meaning of subjects and objects, and the relationship between them. Thus when we confront such a discourse we are also confronting the archaeology of the past and how it conditions current meanings.

Meaning has already been discussed by reference to how each discursive formation frames specific meaning. Subject places are partly pre-defined by prior discourse, and the enonciateur occupies a specific place in relation to other subjects and objects which provide the structure we know as the 'discursive formation'. Such places determine what can and must be said by the enonciateur. By reference to the social, a discursive formation is conceived of as the structuring of social space by the differentiation of discourse. Discursive formations differentiate discourse, and thereby structure localities on the basis of regularities. These regularities are akin to legitimisation, involving unmarked discourse. From the point of view of signification there can be no difference between the language act and its enonciateur; legitimacy is presupposed. Whether or not the locuteur takes the discourse in charge, the place of enonciateur is external to signification, and is a matter of meaning.

A 'fact' is social only when it is put in meaning, directly or indirectly, in the speech act. An act becomes a social act through social signification, linked to its stability in the ruled system of social relations. The social is defined by a certain type of stability, involving the shared meaning between the locuteur and others, a meaning which is manifested in analogous acts. 'Social actors' relate to the institutionalisation of behaviour or social practice and, in this respect, conform with the non-marked nature of the subject in discourse. A language act creates institutional places replete with subject places into which the individual is interpolated, taking in charge the discourse in relation to the place that the discourse assigns them. The subject lies at the intersection of form and meaning.

It is also important that this perspective is social rather than merely being relevant to the individual. The concept of interpolation is social rather than psychological. The places into which the individual is interpolated are not merely individual places, but also pertain to social groups. Thus, a discourse on social differentiation may well open up places that pertain to gender, social class or language groups.

Identity is no longer the rational process whereby the individual rationally expresses her sense of self. Rather, it pertains to how the individual is transformed into the subject of discourse, and what is revealed about the individual as the discourse unwinds, and the relationships between the subject and other subjects and between the subject and objects are revealed. This means that identity cannot be a matter of self-reference but must encompass the others as social.

6. Knowledge and learning

Having outlined how the relationship between the individual and the subject of discourse is conceived of, we should now turn to the method whereby discourse analysis reveals meaning and tacit knowledge. Recognising how these are produced and the analysis of their nature should allow their operation to be clarified. Viewing social practice as the effects of discourse, and recognising the relationship between the stability of discourse and the normative order, allows us to uncover the nature of tacit knowledge and the 'negotiation' of meaning in terms of the subject/object relationship. That is, it is seen by reference to social parameters. Analysis proceeds from two directions – exposing the internal unwinding of the discourse; and the social action which the discourse supports. These are carried out by the enonce, and not by the rational intentions of the locuteur.

It can be argued that linguistic form is akin to a normative order in the sense that its codification derives from the direct observation of linguistic behaviour. Of course this has been modified by the process of corpus planning and standardisation but, nonetheless, ordinary language involves institutionalised, patterned behaviour. However, there is a difference between syntactic grammar and deictic grammar. The later fixes subjects and objects in relationship to one another by reference to time, person and place. Social deixis is the means whereby discourse is able to operate in social reality. Modalities, on the other hand, pertains to a 'truth' value in the sense that within discourse or text there is a subject who situates what she says in relation to the certain, the possible, the probable etc. or in relation to judgements of value. To this extent language is always a reflexive exercise involving the enonciateur in relationship to language. Each enonciative act is made visible through a series of marks which are capable of being analysed.

Wittgenstein's language play which sees language games as a form of life, involves the signification of a word as its use in language (Wittgenstein, 1969). Language is given a material existence, imposing its ambiguity on speaking subjects, their consciousness and their experience, and it is here that the social is most evident. Language play indicates that language acts are structured in the sense that they are linked to genres of life or social practices. There is a difference between signification and meaning. The former is linguistic whereas the later involves real effects and pragmatic understanding. Signification involves a systematic structure of places in relationship to the formal dimensions of time, person and place or of diverse modalities. In connection with effective situations, it allows language to perform the role of operator of interaction, situating the discourse in relation to a series of places of enonciateurs, where the taking in charge of the discourse by the locuteur has the effect of carrying the system along. Social interaction occurs where the locuteurs, in taking the enonces in charge, establish a relationship between the enonces which conforms with those relationships which the formal apparatus of enonciation implicates between the enonciateurs. Between the signification which interpolates the enonciateur, and meaning, which constitutes the real of the allocutaire, are the act and the event which are constructed on the internal structure of the enonces.

Where Wittgenstein's language play sees each sector of social life as a play of language wherein ambiguity is resolved, Bakhtin's work claims that the structure of enonces does not indicate the language play within which they are implicated (Bakhtin, 1981). Bakhtin's notion of dialogism is invoked by reference to social interaction. Dialogism indicates that meaning is never pre-given, but is the result of a practical meeting of social groups around signification. Enonciation does not have any meaning in itself, in an already completed signification, since it consists of a multiplicity of plays of language. Meaning is the result of practical confrontation of social groups around signification, and the plays of language are the products of open options at the heart of a discursive organisation. There are no natural boundaries to society, and society has no reality outside of language if it is the effects of discourse.

The social construction of meaning involves the materiality of language and the integration of linguistic form and their functioning in social interaction. Discourse is viewed as language process as social process such that the social/language distinction does not exist. Language production puts in play both the social structure, and the elements of the individual personality which occupies that social structure. Thus, one is obliged to seek the effects of discourse in the social production of meaning of discourse and not in the production of discourse. Meaning is already constituted before the subject's existence.

The objective of analysis is to reveal how meaning is the consequence of a practical confrontation of social groups around signification and language play. The analysis involves focusing on the marked nature of the discourse. This involves the deictic markers and modalities or the truth value of the discourse. Enonciative linguistics explores how interaction is constructed into language, rather than being an innate, preformed performance. The marks of discourse designate the nature of the interaction. Modalities are analysed by reference to how they imply a certain 'attitude' of the enonciateur by reference to what is said. This is not rationalism, but is an expression of the constant interaction involving the co-enonciateur. They indicate affinity with others through the signification of 'reality' and the enactment of social relations. There is also the free or unmarked part of the discourse. It is 'free' in the sense that it does not reveal any relevant deictic marks nor modalities. By reference to this aspect of discourse the enonciateur and locuteur must take account of the place they assume in the interpretation of the existing situation, but do have a degree of latitude.

The individual is constituted as a subject through the relationship between interpolation, signification and the taking in charge of discourse, with signification interpolating an enonciateur into meaning when the enonciateur takes charge of the discourse. The act of language supported by the construction of meaning and the enonciateur who takes the discourse in charge are linked. The taking in charge derives from the marks in discourse, with the 'I'/'you'/'we' opposition regulating boundaries. When the individual identity changes so also does signification. However, signification itself is not akin to meaning and must be accompanied by the real effects of discourse. The act and the event involve the relationship between signification and the real effect, and involves how the enonciateur is transformed into the locuteur occupying a real social place. The formal apparatus of enonciation operates when locuteurs are taken in charge, implying a social interaction premised upon shared meaning and the implication of a relationship between the enonce and the situation. Similarly, modalities link the constituted subject and the situation.

7. Conclusion

The fundamental problem associated with the knowledge economy revolves around the claim that knowledge is both specific or explicit and tacit in nature. Furthermore, knowledge is the very basis of innovation, the driver of economic growth within the Knowledge Economy. Consequently, there must be some way of making the tacit explicit. If, as Wenger implies, knowledge is organised and generated within communities of practice, then it must be necessary to conceptualise the process of knowledge generation within these communities. There is general agreement that knowledge derives from meaning which is a shared feature and the very basis of being human. Thus some form of semantics would appear essential in order to explore the nature of tacit knowledge. In this paper I have argued for an approach which derives from the principles of post-structuralism and its relationship to a decentred linguistics – enonciative linguistics.

Having outlined how this approach builds up a specific understanding of the social construction of meaning and its relationship to analysing the nature of tacit knowledge, it remains to consider how the outcome relates to the new workflows mentioned at the start of the paper. The customary approach to analysing workplace practice involves ethnographic studies. This is nothing new and can take a wide range of trajectories in its analysis capacity. The problem involves the interpretive nature of ethnographic work and how this interpretation is premised on the orthodoxy of the centred, rational subject. In my view a great deal more than this is required. Above I have outlined the relationship between discourse and social practice. Discourse is not simply textual but involves the flow of behaviour that influences social practice as the effects of discourse. The analytic process of FDA is linked to this understanding and can be applied to social practice. Thus it becomes possible to analyse workplace practice by reference to the relationships between subjects

and objects, and between different subjects by reference to how they develop a shared meaning which has a high degree of stability. Knowledge is an integral part of this process. It means that the different components of the new workflow of multimedia production must be viewed as communities of practice and analysed by reference to the above procedure.

This process has proceeded by reference to an awareness that whereas linguistics sets constraints on forms, the social involves meaning. Outlining the stable nature of discourse allows us to recognise how knowledge relates to social practice. It allows the analyst to map out how knowledge is operationalised within social practice. Meaning becomes something other than the stable and homogenous projection of what a rational human subject wishes to say. Whereas orthodox linguistics refers to the unstable as the impossible, discourse analysis refers to the unenonciable by reference to what cannot be stated from a determined place. Consequently, meaning is always shifting, and despite being conditioned by prior discourse, new knowledge is constantly being created. There is room for creativity, both in terms of language and in terms of interdiscourse.

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