FUTURE LANGUAGE AS A COLLABORATIVE DESIGN METHOD

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a new design method, which we call "Future Language," for designing the future of place, community, and life. Future Language is a new kind of language that is composed of Future Words to talk about the desired future vision, where each Future Words has three aspects: what is a desired achievement in the future, why it is important, and how to achieve it. With using the Future Words, people can share their vision and conduct good collaborations toward the future based on the words. In this paper, I show some applications of this method: designing workplace, café, and community center, and also drawing the future vision of a regional community.

INTRODUCTION

When thinking and talking about our future, we should use our own vocabulary we have already had. Future must include something that doesn't exist today, so in principle our current vocabulary is not enough to describe the future. On the backdrop, in this paper, I will propose a method to build new vocabulary for describing coming future, which I call this method "Future Language." In what follows, I will present the composition and the process of Future Language method, and then demonstrate it with some examples.

FUTURE LANGUAGE

Future Language is a new kind of language that is composed of Future Words to talk about the future vision (Figure 1). Future Words have three aspects: first, they are words that represent approaches realizing the vision; second, they are words that represent solutions to the problems in current situation; third, they are words that you can use when talking about the future. Thus, if you create and share those words, you can describe the vision, share it with others, and prototype a part of it. The idea of Future Language was proposed by Takashi Iba in

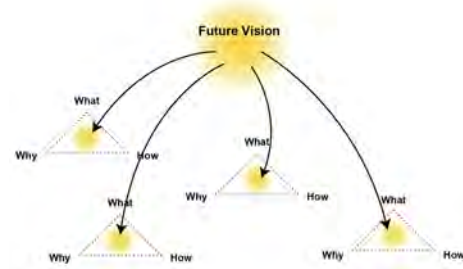2013, and its method has been developed by Future Language Project, Iba Lab.

Figure 1: Future Language consists of Future Words that represents future vision

The process to obtaining Future Words through dialogue is called as "Future Mining," where 1 or 2 facilitators, which we call "generators," facilitate the process and present their own ideas (Figure 2).

In the Future Mining, for example of designing the future of a community, participants and generators first freely think about the desired community and write ideas on sticky notes. Then, they think about the problems or difficulties they feel and write them on sticky notes. After thinking about the future of the community and its issues it holds, label the solutions that they came up with as one of the Future Words, which solve those problems (Figure 3,4).
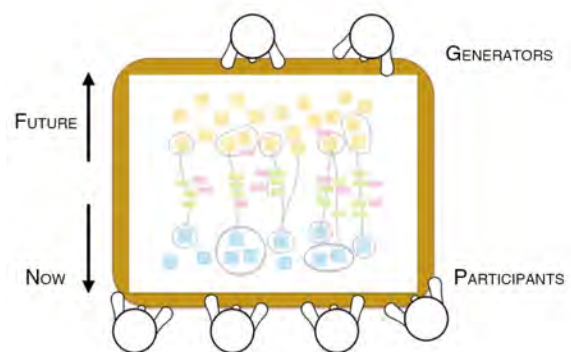

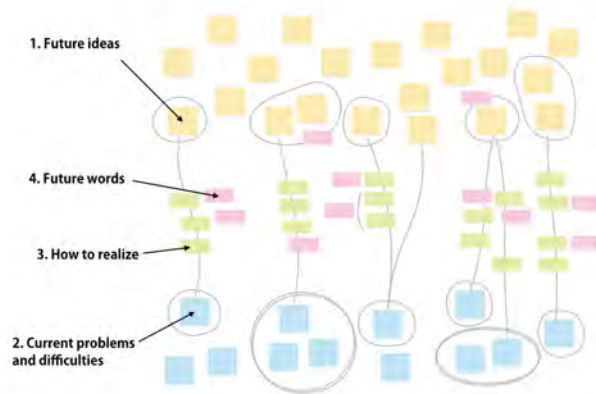*Figure 2: Workshop settings for Future Mining*

Figure 3: Resulting configuration of colored sticky notes on the craft paper in the Future Mining workshop
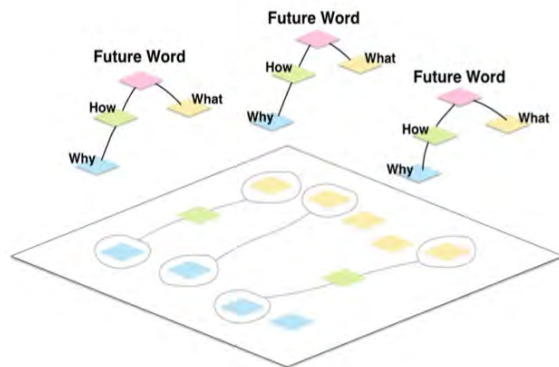

Figure 4: Every Future Words has all three connecting elements: What, How, and Why

For example, in the Future Language workshop at PLoP2014 conference, they can broaden an image of the future of the pattern community and discover the connection between the present and the future (Figure 5).

RELATION TO EXISTING METHODS

From the viewpoint of methodology, Future Language is a sister method of Pattern Language. Pattern Language is the way to learn from the Past. On the contrary, Future Language is the way to learn from the Future, while the "future" here means what is the vision of future conceived from the present. Besides, Future Language method can be used as the method for organizational learning like Scenario Planning and Theory U. We anticipate that the Future Language method will be worth practicing in any Future Centers, community, and organization.

Figure 5: Future Mining workshop in PLoP2014 Conference (Iba, 2014)

APPLICATIONS OF FUTURE LANGUAGE

Future Language method can be used for designing the future of Place, Community, and Personal life. The cases are presented in the following papers.

- Collaborative Design of workplace of UDS Ltd, Japan (Honda, *et al.*, 2015)
- Collaborative Design of cafe in Ebina City, Japan (Suzuki, *et al.*, 2015)
- Collaborative community development in Lorega district, Cebu City, Philippines (Nakamura, *et al.*, 2015)
- Collaborative community development in Satsumasendai City, Japan (Fujioka, *et al.*, 2015)

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COLLABORATIVE DESIGN OF WORKPLACE WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a collaborative design method of workplace with Future Language by thinking, talking, and designing the workplace where company members can work lively. Future Language is a methodology to describe the desired vision of the future. In this paper, we introduce the design process for the workplace of UDS Ltd. as a case, which demonstrates that this method enables workers to realize their desired workplace by talking about places they wish, sharing current problems of their workplace, and coming up with the solutions to the problems. We anticipate that this method helps various people to create language for creating their new workplace, and collaboratively achieve it by themselves.

INTRODUCTION

A comfortable workplace encourages its members to deliver high performance at work; therefore creating comfortable workplace is essential for creating new values toward our future. There is, however, few opportunities for the company members to think and talk about what the problem is at their workplace and what is desirable for them. So, even if one of the workers think about the desired workplace and another worker have an idea to implement it, without any help, they will not realize each other's ideas.

In this paper, we propose the application of Future Language method (Iba, 2015) to design workplace, and show a case of a renovation project of the office at UDS Ltd.

DESIGNING WORKPLACE WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

Future Language is a new kind of language that is composed of Future Words to talk about the desired future vision (Iba, 2015). *Future Words* are ideas that represent solutions to the problems in current situation and approaches for their vision.

To create Future Words for designing workplace, workers think and talk about what the desired workplace is, why it is desirable and how to achieve it. This process allows the participants to mine and share their feelings for the workplace, and think about solutions with others. Also, with Future Words, they can find out which Future Word took form in an actual spatial design. Thus, by creating and using Future Language to implement the desirable workplace collaboratively, their desired workplace can be built.

CASE: DESIGNING WORKPLACE OF UDS LTD. WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

Here, we show the case of designing a new workplace for UDS Ltd., a Japanese company that supports community development by designing houses, offices, and hotels. Figure 1 shows the former office of UDS Ltd.

Figure 1: The former office of UDS Ltd.

Future Language Workshop was held on March 2014 and included 30 members of UDS Ltd. Its aim was to describe their desired workplace and to come up with ideas so that they can work creatively.

The steps of workshop are as follows: (1) Future Mining is to mine their vision and actions for the new workplace, talking about what is desirable and its reason. (2) Future Writing is to describe the vision for the future as Future Words. (3) Future Dialogue is to talk about the vision for the future and how to achieve it by using Future Words.

In this workshop, 30 Future Words were created. For example, "Non-pressure café," is one of the Future Words, which was mentioned as "We want a

space where there are no pressures from our boss." "I want an interactive space to collaborate with others as in music, art, or Physical Education class at work."

Figure 2: Future mining for new UDS office

After the workshop, Idea Competition was held where members brought spatial ideas and decided on the best idea (Figure 3). As a result, more than 100 ideas on spatial design were generated and summarized to 8 keywords, as Design Requirements. In this step, the Future Word "Non-Pressure Café" resulted in a design requirement as "Café / Kitchen."

By using them, they planned an overall blueprint and designed it. The Future Word "Non-Pressure Café" was implemented as "Library Café," completing the new office with DIY by UDS Ltd. members and collaboration of other professionals.

The followings are some comments from the participants collected after designing the new workplace: "Since there are catchy words like Future Words, we can imagine many spatial designs," and "Various styles of dialogue happened so I think the quantity and quality of the dialogue have improved." As mentioned above, they can imagine and share their desired visions and problems of a workplace and ultimately have created a workplace which is suitable for the members to work lively.
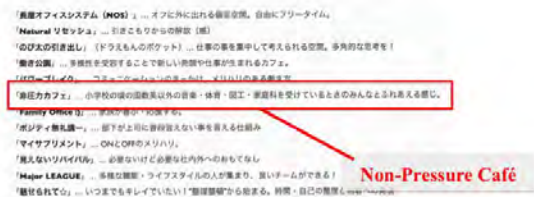
CONCLUSION

This paper presented a collaborative design method of workplace with Future Language. The case in this paper demonstrates that Future Language method enables workers to mine their concerns and feelings for a workplace and the solutions to improve it. We anticipate that, by designing workplaces with Future Language, workers can design workplace where they can work lively by themselves.

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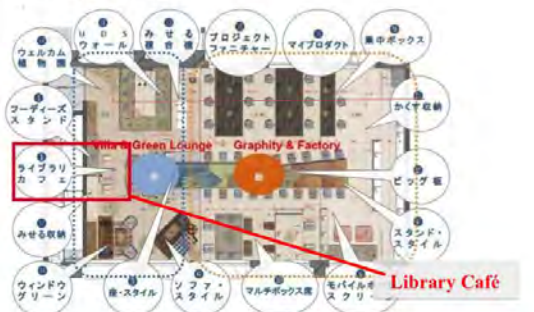
Figure 3: Design Flow of new UDS office with their Future Language

PROCEEDINGS COINs15

A NEW WAY OF IDENTIFYING NEEDS FROM MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a new way of identifying needs from multiple stakeholders with Future Language by mining their desirable communities and problems and mapping Future Words. Future Language is a methodology to describe the vision for the future. In this paper, we introduce the case of designing "Output café," which is planed to would open at Ebina City, in Japan in summer 2015. We anticipate that applying the method of Future Language for identifying needs from multiple stakeholders will unfold the overlap of needs and the differences in their desireble common place that multiple stakeholders desire, by mapping Future Words.

INTRODUCTION

In the case of designing Third Place (Ray, 1999), which has multiple customers, it is ever more necessary to form a place that fulfills various needs and desires. When designers create a place, they examine multiple stakeholders' current desires and problems, thinking about a place that satisfies their needs. Since this process is kept in the designer's mind, it is difficult to share the process with others.

In this paper, we make a proposal to apply Future Language method (Iba, 2015) to identifying the needs of multiple stakeholders, as we show the case of designing "Output café" in Ebina City, Japan.

PLACE MAKING WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

Different from houses and offices, Third Place gathers multiple people. When designing such place, Future Language is useful as a new method that describes the vision for a desirable place and identifies the needs of multiple stakeholders. Furthermore, it is effective in understanding the contents and service that satisfies the requests withdrawn from various stakeholders. Future Language is a new type of language that is composed of Future Words that have three aspects:

what is desirable in the future, why it is desirable, and how to achieve such future (Iba, 2015).

When creating Future Words in each stakeholder, they mine what they desire, the problems that they currently hold, and how to bridge such gap. After this process, designers can find the overlap of needs from examining Future Words as mapping of the solutions and find out new services or favorable contents, which satisfy multiple stakeholders' needs.

CASE: IDENTIFYING NEEDS FOR DESIGNING OUTPUT CAFÉ WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

We show the case of Future Language workshop for designing "Output café," which is expected to situate in a new type of Future Center, opening at Ebina City, Kanagawa, Japan in summer 2015. This building is designed by UDS Ltd., a Japanese company that supports community development by designing houses, offices, and hotels.

Figure 1: Future Language workshop for workers (upper left), housewives (upper right), students (lower left), and designers (lower right)
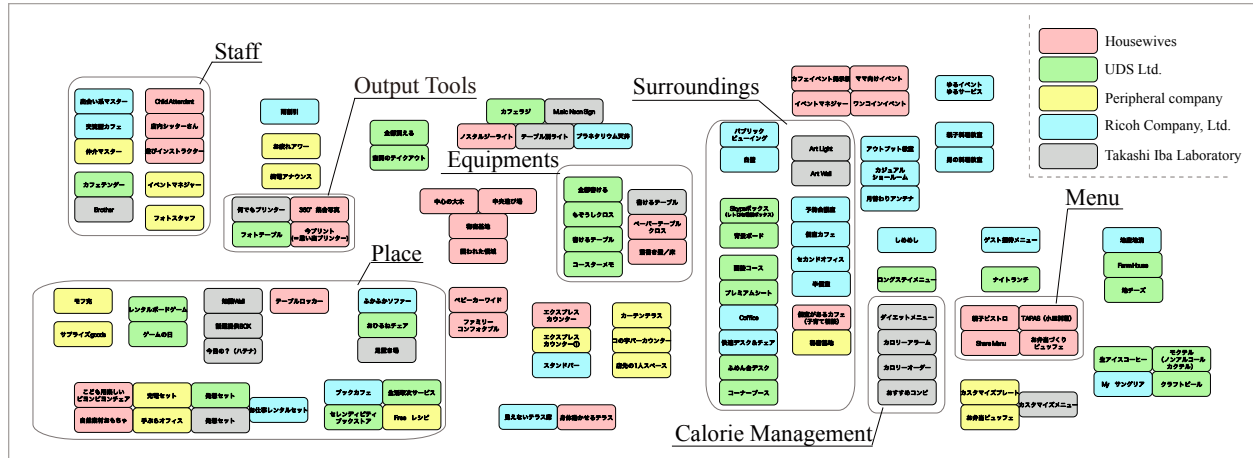
Staff

Output Tools

Surroundings

Equipments

Place

Menu

Calorie Management

Housewives
UDS Ltd.
Peripheral company
Ricoh Company, Ltd.
Takashi Iba Laboratory

Figure 2: The overall figure of Future Language for Output café

We targeted five stakeholders: Housewives, members of Ricoh Company, Ltd., members of a peripheral company in Ebina City, members of UDS Ltd., and some students from Takashi Iba Laboratory at Keio University. In this workshop (Figure 1), the participants described their desirable vision for the future and current problems they have. The reason for including the designer as a stakeholder is because that designers can also be considered as potential customers. As a result of this workshop, 211 Future Words were created by five stakeholders.

After creating Future Words for each stakeholder, we mapped these Future Words. In this mapping process, Future Words with a similar meaning were brought together, in the perspective whether such are symbolic, concrete, and feasible or not (Figure 2). Although their desirable future and the reasons behind the needs were different, there was an overlap among some solutions. Here are some examples of three Future Words: (1) "Fluffy sofa" is place to have a long stay. (2) "Nap chair" is a required space for taking a nap. (3) "Footrest place" implies the necessity for a place to sit down and stretch legs. Such Future Words are different in respect of the needs themselves, but there is a common point in that each one is a chair and a sofa to relax. Additionally, we found the differences among the participants' desirable place. Housewives in Ebina City, expressed the need for "Parent and child bistro," a meal that satisfies both the mother and her child. The underlying desire of this Future Word is that housewives want to come to Output café with her children, simultaneously being satisfied. On the other hand, one of the members at the peripheral company addressed the need for "Craft Beer," a high-quality and craftsman-made beer made to enjoy. The potential hope in this Future Word is that they need more choices for drinks than only coffee and tea. From these two Future Words, we discovered that the possible usage of the place is the same, but the purpose of it differs depending on each stakeholder.

So, this new way of identifying needs from diverse stakeholders enables us to not only find the overlap of needs but also to understand the differences from their desires for a place in common.

CONCLUSION

This paper proposed a new way of identifying needs with Future Language. The case in this paper demonstrates that using Future Language to identify the needs of multiple stakeholders is effective in understanding the overlap and difference of needs by mapping Future Words and their desirable place.

As the next step of this method, we plan to host the dialogue workshop using the blueprint or mock-up of Output café that the designer made with Future Words. In this workshop, the stakeholders can find out which Future Word took form in certain spatial design. As a result, they can share their needs with the designers and the designers can explain their design objectives to the stakeholders.

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COLLABORTIVE INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE:
A CASE OF LOREGA DISTRICT, PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we present a new method of describing the desired community through collaborative and bottom-up steps with Future Language method. In response to the fire, which broke out in Lorega district, Cebu City, Philippines, a new method was needed to gather the sufferers to think about their desirable community and concerns about the current situation, as part of community development. The results have shown that this method guided the residents collectively to think about their community on their own, resulting in forms of Future Words.

INTRODUCTION

With the globalization of the world, developing countries are racing towards capitalism, followed by smaller units such as communities, under governmental roles and policies. Such authority tends to bureaucratically impose its repressive plans on the reconstruction of the area. As it is in the interest of the oppressor to weaken the oppressed still further, to isolate them, to create and deepen rifts among them (Freire, 1996), such process will hinder the residents' ownership and send of belonging to the community.

In efforts to think about their desired community after the tragic fire destroying their residential area, the victims experienced Future Language workshop (Iba, 2015) as an opportunity in which they ponder over the community they wish to live in and address their issues along with possible solutions by themselves, in Lorega district, Cebu City, Philippines.

LOREGA , CEBU CITY, PHILIPPINES

Situated in the middle of Cebu City, Lorega district accompanies residents who make a living by growing livestock and running small vendors, spending the nights on grave tombs. Notoriously it could sound, gun and drug-dealers hovered about the area, when on March 2014, many households were destroyed by a disastrous fire, leaving the victims in a chaotic and dreadful situation.

Although the government worked hard for the reconstruction for the area, according to interviews with the residents, its development plan was created through a hierarchical top-down process, not reflecting the residents' voice.

Figure 1: The ruins in Lorega district after the fire on March 2014

Since many complains about their situation were shown in the supplementary interviews conducted prior to the Future Language workshop, the residents did not seem to have an explicit vision or thought for improvements. In response to such, the workshop was conducted so that the participants together can speak for themselves about their desirable community, and needs, actions towards a healthy and better version of Lorega.

FUTURE LANGUAGE WORKSHOP IN LOREGA DISTRICT

Aiming to achieve a more meaningful community development, that is, tapping into and understanding the residents' needs and demands, the method of Future Language was used in a workshop for the participants to form their visions, concerns, and action plans in rebuilding their community.

Setting

During our visits at the residents' shelters and supplementary interviews at each household, the authors have informed them about the overview and details of the workshop. Borrowing the rooftop of one of the buildings situated in Lorega district, the

workshop was held in English and included 25 participants with low income. The ration of men to women was 4:6, most family households, some along with their children. The participants were divided into 3 groups, supported by one Japanese *generator, a type of facilitator,* and one local youth volunteer as an interpreter.

Process

Each group freely discussed their desirable community and scribbled ideas on sticky-notes. After enough ideas were brainstormed, participants expressed their concerns or issues they carry. As the *generator* facilitates, the desirable ideas and concerns were connected with lines, and participants came up with approaches to bridge the gap. Lastly, such ideas were renamed in forms of Future Words.

Results

The participants brought various ideas about their desired community in Lorega, but they were too broad and didn't serve as a common input for change. For example, there were many agreements on "to become harmonious barangay (district) Lorega," "Respectful," "Stable job," and personal, regional, social issues emerged from the dialogue. Since the expulsion order led the victims of the fire into a perplex residential status or live in temporary shelters, many were concerned that they "don't have a house" or that "many drug users and addicts" exist.
The dialogue during the workshop also revealed that the participants wanted to fix these issues by "searching a job in Lorega," or "to build some condominium."

Figure 2: Future Language workshop in Lorega

TOWARDS THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Such Future Words represent the conservative characteristics of the residents, which rely on a heroic or charismatic leader type figure to solve their issues. However, genuine community development should stretch its potential so that the area can grow itself

(Lummis, 2004). As the primitive members of the community, the residents themselves should participate in the community's development to drive development from within. Future Language workshop served as a communal platform for the participating residents to think about their needs and share their ideas and opinions with other participants without the influence of dominant and autocratic forces. The results imply that each participant derived insightful ideas from and built on others' ideas, generating more concerns and visions of the community, verbalizing them into Future Words.

CONCLUSION

This paper has described the process and content of Future Language workshop as an opportunity for the local residents of Lorega to bring their thoughts and ideas for their desired community. As the Future Words states, the victims of the fire were able to pile up and verbalize some solutions towards the harmony of their community on others' opinions. We hope that such collaborative march will flourish so that the local residents project a stronger voice in the community's development, leading to a more natural growth of the community.

Figure 3: Workshop Participants in Lorega

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CHAIN OF DIALOGUES INVOLVING THE LOCAL RESIDENTS WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the method of creating chain of dialogues with Future Language involving local residents. Future Language is a methodology to describe the desirable vision of the future. In this paper, we introduce Future Language workshop in Satsumasendai City, Japan, as a case, which created a trigger for the residents to think and talk about their desirable future. The results from the workshop express that Future Language enabled and was effective to involve many local residents to think about the future of their own community and its desirable shape.

INTRODUCTION

The catastrophic earthquake on March 2011 in Japan has marked a milestone for its citizens to confront and foresee the uncertain future. With the need to instill a sense of creating unprecedented steps towards the future, Future Centers have widely attracted attention from many people. Future Center is a platform in which people share ideas, exchange intentional opinions, sets innovative dialogues, and generates unexpected ideas. In Japan, the number of Future Centers has increased in many cities. And many dialogue workshops for the future are held accordingly.

Though Future Center is a place to have a dialogue on the future, a methodology is needed for entangling various people to trigger a chain of dialogues. The more local residents of the area discuss the future of their community, the more opportunities they will have to start new projects with increased amount of ownership as the creators of the future.

In this paper, we present a way to set up a chain of dialogues that involves various people.

CHAIN OF DIALOGUES WITH FUTURE LANGUAGE

Future Mining is the step of creating Future Language that is composed of Future Words to talk about the desired future vision (Iba, 2015). As one of the characteristics of the process of Future Mining is that desirable vision and issues are addressed in addition to the "How" to fulfill that desire, closing the dialogues. Everyone's participation in the last phase of thinking about how to achieve the desired vision naturally leads to a dialogue for the future. As Future Mining expands, loops of dialogues for the future start to form (Figure 1).

Additionally, Future Mining guides the participants to label simple names for the actions that are needed to achieve their vision. As words spread among people who use them, even those people who could not participate in the workshop, may be attracted and find the Future Words interesting through small talks.
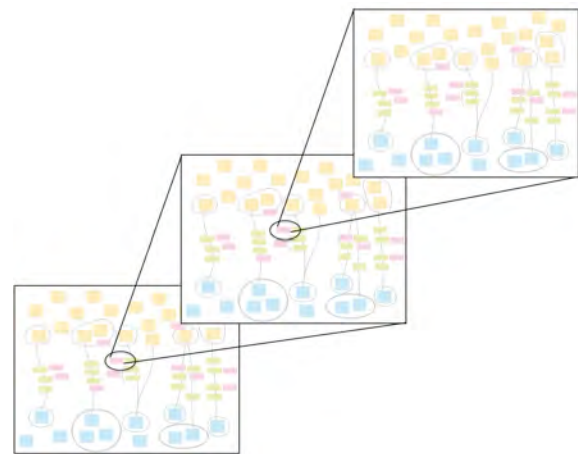

Figure 1: The Process of Expanding Future Mining

CASE: FUTURE LANGUAGE WORKSHOP IN SATSUMASENDAI CITY

At a Smart House in Satsumasendai City, Japan, we have conducted Future Language workshop for the participants to think about their desired future. Smart House is an eco-friendly house that controls electrical appliances with information technology. The Smart House in Satsumasendai City was planned, designed,

and managed by UDS Ltd., which is a Japanese company that supports community development by designing houses, offices, and hotels. Smart Houses carry one of the functions of Future Centers and act as a platform, involving the residents to think about their desirable vision for their community.

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

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

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

CONCLUSION

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

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