

Abstract - Space Interaction Discourse

Oskar Juhlin & Alexandra Weilenmann

Titel: On movement, sound and radio talk in deer hunting

Recently, there has been an increase in studies focusing on naturally occurring mobile activities. In this paper, we add to this growing body of work, by presenting a study of a highly mobile activity - deer hunting. Deer hunting is a collaborative activity with a number of different roles such as marksmen and dog handlers, collaborating to make the hunt efficient but also fun. A hunting radio is an important tool in this activity, as well as the dogs, which are lead through the specified terrain, searching for animals and driving the prey towards the marksmen.

We focus on a number of issues of relevance for mobility, space and talk. First, we look at how the radio is used to make sense of the ongoing activity. For the marksman, the hunt often consists of long periods of isolation; looking and listening, many times without seeing or hearing an animal. The radio creates an awareness of the ongoing hunt, when hearing the dog handlers discuss what they have seen and heard. It is also used to prepare or warn hunters that a deer might be coming their way. Second, we analyze how sounds in the *local* environment are oriented to by the hunters. They skillfully describe their sound environment and qualify the audio observations to each other. Third, we discuss the potential relevance of *absence* of sound. The hunters need to interpret what the absence of a barking dog means – is the dog following a lead, is it too far away to be heard, or does this particular dog not bark when following the trace of a deer?

The paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork of three hunting days, and the data consists of recorded radio talk, videos of marksmen and dog handlers, as well as photos of all these activities.