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Abstract

With the advent of Twitter, microblogging has turned into a widely discussed phenomenon. Due to its perceived impact, many organisations have begun experimenting with the use of microblogging 'behind the firewall', in order to support internal communication and group work. However, Enterprise Microblogging (EMB) is still in its infancy and not yet well understood. With this study we want to add to the rather limited body of knowledge a case study of Enterprise Microblogging in an academic setting. A multidisciplinary team of University researchers has adopted the platform Communote to collaborate and communicate. We conduct a genre analysis of the team's microblogging stream and find that EMB mainly serves as an effective medium for context building and meeting coordination in a project of otherwise loosely related individual activities. We compare our results with findings from two existing EMB cases, one of which has investigated the use of the same IT artefact in a different context. We find striking differences in usage patterns and show that EMB is highly dependent on the particular organisational context shared by the EMB users. Consequently, we conclude that appropriation of Enterprise Microblogging happens largely in accordance with organisational context characteristics.

Keywords: Enterprise Microblogging, Social Software, Enterprise 2.0, CSCW.

1 Introduction

Over the past few years, subsumed under the label "Web 2.0" or Social Media, a new type of web platform has become increasing popular on the Internet facilitating changes to the ways in which people interact online. Most notably, these platforms facilitate user participation in the creation of web content and allow for new ways of connecting, interacting and communicating with other people. Having gained significant coverage from the popular press and management-focused media, organisations have begun trialling the application of these technologies 'behind the firewall', i.e. for facilitating collaborative processes, information sharing and communication among their employees.

Still little is known about the potential these open platforms yield for collaborative work in a corporate context. With our study we want to contribute to a better understanding of the benefits of these tools. An inter-faculty research team at a German University has adopted a so-called Enterprise Microblogging (EMB) platform to facilitate their day-to-day collaboration. Using genre analysis we analyse the team's utterances, as captured in the texts on said platform. In doing so, we find a diverse set of communication practices. As it is our aim to better understand the role EMB can play in organisations, we compare and contrast our results with findings from two similar studies. We find that the appropriation of microblogging in the cases is very different and attribute this to differences in use contexts. We discuss our findings in light of the particular contextual differences and the open nature of communication platforms, which impact on user appropriation. As better understanding of the nature of social media appropriation is essential for advancing our understanding of Enterprise 2.0 in general and the managerial implications in particular.

Our paper proceeds as follows: Firstly, we introduce microblogging and briefly summarise recent research. In section 3 we introduce the case company, its EMB platform and provide details on our study. Section 4 presents the results of our genre analysis, i.e. the genre repertoire. In section 5 we discuss these genres in light of recent results of two other studies and provide explanations for differences of EMB usage in the two contexts. We then discuss implications in section 6 and conclude the paper by pointing out study limitations and future research directions in section 7.

2 Enterprise Microblogging

Microblogging services allow users to publish short messages into an emerging, undirected message stream. These messages appear in chronological order in a combined view on the user's starting page. Others may subscribe to other users' messages, join certain groups or subscribe to certain keywords, which allows users to configure their own personalised message streams. Microblogging services can be accessed directly from within standard web browsers or with a wide range of third party applications, as well as with mobile clients. Thus, in contrast to traditional blogging, microblogging offers users a quick and easy way to post a short text message, enriched with features for social networking.

2.1 Twitter as Microblogging Archetype

The most prominent example for microblogging is Twitter, launched in 2006, which allows its users to post messages restricted to 140 characters on an open, free, public platform on the Internet. While many similar services have emerged in the market, Twitter still shapes the public perception of microblogging and has, thanks to its rising popularity and easy access to data, generated a lot of research interest. While the majority of studies focus on describing the phenomenon (e.g. Krishnamurthy et al., 2008; Barnes and Böhringer, 2009) and its various applications across diverse use contexts, only very few studied have taken a closer look at the communication that happens on the platform, similar to the kind of study we have undertaken in our case. Most notably, Naaman et al. (2010) analysed patterns of communication and identified two main user groups: "Informers" (20% of users) are motivated to

share information targeting other users' interest, while "Meformers" (80% of users) mainly post messages relating to themselves or their thoughts (Naaman et al., 2010). This is well in line with Java et al. (2007) who found four main communication intentions on Twitter: 1) daily chatter, 2) conversations, 3) sharing information/URLs and 4) reporting news, with daily chatter being by far the largest and most common user activity.

2.2   Microblogging in a Corporate Context

Against the background of hedonic behaviour observed on Twitter and similar services, many decision makers have been reluctant to implement microblogging in their corporate intranet, agitated by the procrastination potential and fearing that the application of microblogging might lead to importing to their intranets the self-referential behaviour associated with Twitter & Co (Günther et al., 2009). At the same time however, the widely recognised success of Twitter has led some corporations to exploring the potential of microblogging for internal communications. However, so far only very few studies exist that have systematically investigated the ways in which microblogging can facilitate group processes within organisations. Notable exception are a study by Zhang et al. (2010) on the adoption of the EMB platform Yammer in a Fortune 500 company, a study by Meyer and Dibbern (2010) on Twitter used in a group of University researchers, and a study by Riemer & Richter (2010) on the appropriation of the EMB platform Communote in a work group context in a software engineering team. Due to space restrictions, we will not elaborate in details on these studies here, but draw on some of their finding in our discussion section, when comparing and contrasting our findings.

3   Case Study Design and Data Analysis

Our study is based on the analysis of the body of text messages accumulated on the Communote platform in IREKO. To explore EMB usage practices we apply genre analysis to the texts in order to identify communication genres, which represent EMB communication practices. In doing so, we replicate the approach used in Riemer & Richter (2010). Having identified genres, we then compare and contrast our findings with the communication patterns found in prior studies, in order to better understand the role of EMB for team communications. While text analysis for identifying genres represents the main method applied, we also conducted four face-to-face interviews with IREKO project members, mainly to gain a background understanding of the project matters, which was needed to enable interpretation of the communication found on the platform. In the following, we introduce the case, provide an overview of genre analysis and spell out our case sampling and data analysis procedures.

3.1   Case Setting and IT Artefact

IREKO is an inter-faculty research project at a German university, launched in November 2009, which consists of an interdisciplinary group of nine engineers, economists and social scientists. As such, IREKO itself is not a coherent project, but an umbrella project that consists of eight different subprojects in areas as diverse as interorganisational learning, innovation transfer, engineering etc. Inspired by a team member, who was an experienced microblogging user, the IREKO team decided to adopt Communote as a platform for their project communication. After a short and informal introduction period, the team started to experiment with the platform in order to get to know the different features. In the following months feedback discussions concerning the language and form of the postings (e.g. tagging) were held, resulting in a set of rules for using the system effectively. At the time of our data collection, usage was described as stable and part of everyday communications. The IREKO culture was described by the team members as receptive and casual, with a high degree of self-organised work. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the team, people come from different professional backgrounds. While this has a positive impact on the discussion culture, it also bears conflict potential. Besides microblogging, the team also uses other collaborative technologies like IP telephony or Google

Docs for collaborative writing, but the two main communication channels were said to be E-Mail and Communote.

Communote is a product of Communardo, a Software Provider located in Dresden, Germany. The platform is a browser-based microblogging service, offering users multiple blog streams for the communication in groups; its user interface is remarkably similar to those offered by Twitter or Facebook. The main difference between Communote and Twitter is the fact that Communote does not feature Twitters' follower principle. Users do not create their personal message stream by following (i.e. subscribing to) other users, but by being member of certain blog streams. Moreover, users can decide in which blog stream they post, in order to restrict visibility of a message to a sub group of users. This allows users to read the messages related to a project, by simply selecting the respective blog and considering the emerging stream of messages. Additionally, users have the possibility to attach documents to the messages and message length is not restricted to 140 characters.

3.2 Genre Analysis

While genre analysis has a long tradition in fields such as the arts and literature, we use the method to understand the communication practices of a social group. In the context of communication, Swales (1990) defines a genre as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (Swales, 1990, p. 58). As such, genres can develop over time due to the dynamic structure of communication actions (Orlikowski and Yates, 1994, p. 545) and shape social activity by providing templates for communicating (Kwasnik and Crowston, 2005, p. 80). Genre analysis is a "useful concept because in identifying and labeling genres we try to capture the gestalt of the various components of the communicative act" (Kwasnik and Crowston, 2005, p. 80). According to Swales' definition above, purpose represents a key determinant in identifying communication genres (Askehave and Swales, 2001, p. 198). Identifying the genre repertoire (i.e. the set of genres) prevalent in a group, we are then able to understand the communication practices of this group. Such practices represent "routinized type of behaviour" (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249) which can be patterned into a multitude of single actions (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 250). These practices (as behaviours) become captured in the textual communication traces on a platform such as Communote. Genre analysis, via text coding and interpretation, allows us to detect patterns (i.e. the group's genre repertoire), which in turn represent the established communication practices that emerged on the technology platform. Technologies are social and dynamic, thus the way technology is used to facilitate communication differs in particular times and places (Orlikowski and Iacono, 2000, p. 359). Genre analysis thus is an effective means to uncover the role of a particular piece of technology for (the practices of) a group.

3.3 Case Sampling and Data Analysis

For our analysis we had access to IREKO's blog stream, which contains messages from November 2009 to August 2010. All IREKO communication happens in this one main blog stream; the team did not make use of the creation of multiple blog streams for different purposes. Since communication practices are routinised types of behaviour that emerge over time, we excluded the first two months of our provided data set, i.e. the period in which the team members were mainly getting acquainted with the technology. As a result, we included a total of 883 posts containing 34,319 words. All messages where extracted from the platform, saved in an .rtf file and analysed with qualitative data analysis software ATLAS.ti 5.

In order to identify the different genres every single blog post was examined and coded according to communication purpose ("What does this communication trying to achieve?"). In doing so, one researcher coded all messages from the included seven-months period. A second researcher acted as a discussant, coding small samples and reviewing the resulting list of genres and already coded posts regularly. After a first round of pre-coding of two months of postings, an initial set of genre candidates emerged, which we discussed. This set served as the basis for coding the remaining months. Over time

new genre candidates emerged, which were discussed and compared with the existing ones. When a candidate indeed described a new type of communication practice, the already-coded messages were recoded, until all utterances were finally coded, no new genre candidate emerged and both researchers agreed on the outcome.

As a result, we identified a total of 1,190 single genre appearances, which means posts can contain more than one genre. On average, each post contains 1.35 genres. Figure 1 illustrates an example of two posts, which we have coded exemplarily. Interestingly, each blog post on average consists of 284 characters, as Communote posts, unlike Twitter, are not length-restricted to 140 characters.
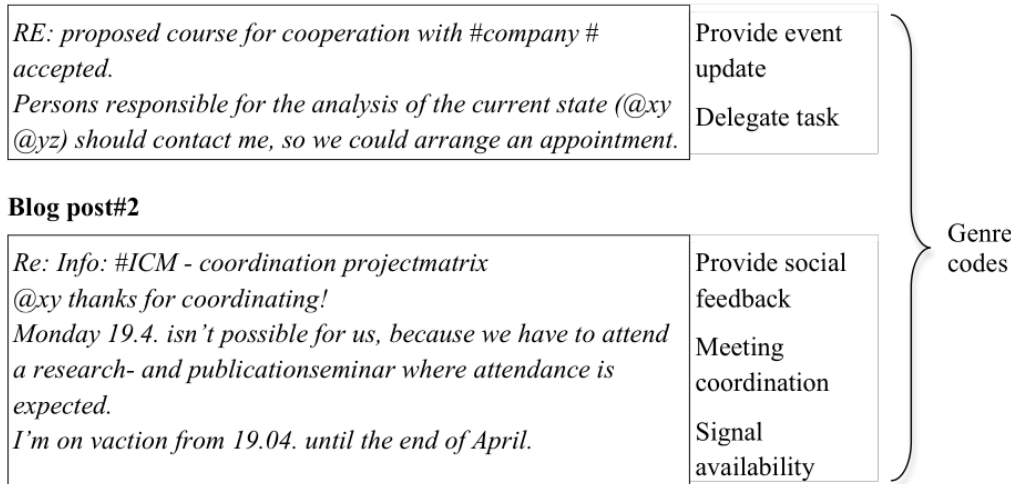
Blog post #1

RE: proposed course for cooperation with #company # accepted.	Provide event update
Persons responsible for the analysis of the current state (@xy @yz) should contact me, so we could arrange an appointment.	Delegate task

Blog post#2

Re: Info: #ICM - coordination projectmatrix *@xy thanks for coordinating!*	Provide social feedback
Monday 19.4. isn't possible for us, because we have to attend a research- and publicationseminar where attendance is expected.	Meeting coordination
I'm on vaction from 19.04. until the end of April.	Signal availability

Genre codes

Figure 1   Two exemplary blog posts with genre coding.

4   Findings: Genre Repertoire and Communication Practices

In this section we present the findings of our genre analysis. We will first introduce and describe briefly the genres we identified, before we discuss the genres in terms of the overarching communication practices they represent.

4.1   Genre Overview

The result of our genre analysis is a set of 23 single genres, which are grouped into eight top-level genres (see figure 2 and the appendix for a complete list, which includes examples). Since genres are identified by communicative purpose, they express why users communicate using the EMB platform: Users offer their opinions and clarify a subject, report peripheral events, provide ideas and information found elsewhere, solve problems, inform others about stored data, coordinate meetings and signal their availability and even use it for informal social communication. In the following sections we will report on each top-level genre, beginning with the most frequent one.

Task coordination is an integral part of all group work; it accounts for 21.8% of all genre appearances in this case. People update others on task progress, e.g. that they just submitted a conference paper, or ask others for a status update. *Providing task-status update*s is the second most important reason for team members to communicate on the EMB platform. This genre was present in 8.6% of all genre appearances, while asking others for a status update was much less common, representing only 0.5%. Moreover, team members post lists of tasks that need to be done (*Note to-dos*), or *delegate tasks*, directly addressing others and asking them to do something. Finally, people occasionally ask others for interest in carrying out a task (*Request for interest*).

Time coordination is the second most common of the nine categories and covers 18% of all genre instances; it subsumes genres coordinating meetings and information about members' attendance. Meeting coordination turns out to be an important practice for the IREKO team, which was also stressed in the interviews. In order to arrange a meeting and determine availability, the team members focus on the following three aspects: what, when and where. In the lead-up to a project meeting people start gathering topic proposals, thus shaping the agenda for the meeting (*Propose content for upcoming event*). In doing so, they use the hashtag *#jourfixe* to mark relevant posts, so that they can filter for and access these posts during the meeting as a form of emergent agenda. In order to coordinate when and where the meeting will take place, people arrange appointments and propose dates for future events (*Event coordination*). In addition, they provide information, e.g. on room availability. Furthermore, people regularly post small out-of-office messages and provide others with additional information about their attendance, such as their holiday period (*Signal availability*).
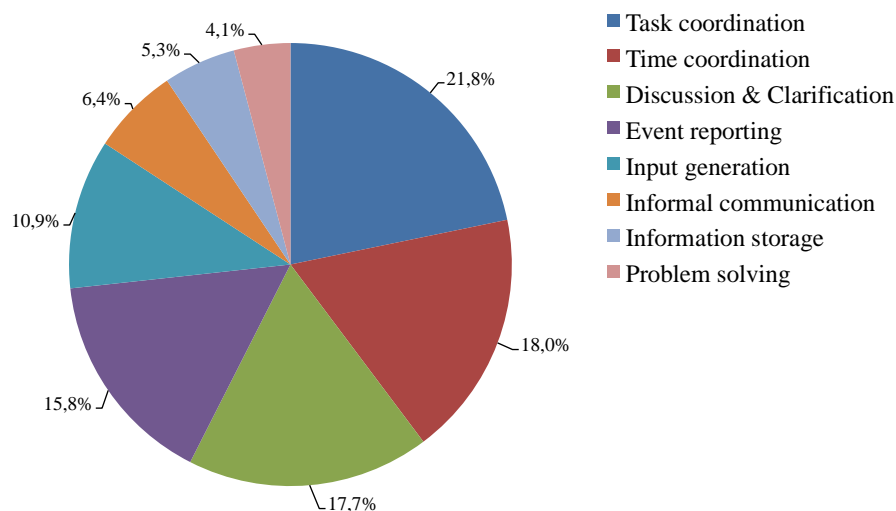

Figure 2.   Distribution of genre appearances across the eight top-level categories.

Discussion & Clarification: Considering the knowledge-intensive context of the team environment, people use the EMB space to initiate discussions and state their opinions. In the interviews this category has been described as an essential element. Users ask other team members for feedback on ideas and reply to such messages with their feedback (*Provide feedback*). If users require information regarding a specific topic, they consult others (*Ask for additional information*). In response people answer questions or *clarify* a particular aspect. Finally, the EMB platform is used to voice personal opinion on certain subjects (*Voice opinion*).

Event reporting represents the users' intention to provide information about peripheral events, which happen in the team environment, often unnoticed by other group members. Examples are phone calls, meetings with industry partners, or if someone has a conference paper accepted. This highlights the role of EMB as an awareness channel for the project members in their day-to-day work. With 11.5% *Providing event updates* is the single most common genre. In the second category (*Notify of upcoming events*) team members provide others with information about upcoming events.

Input generation reflects communication through which people aim to provide new ideas and interesting information from outside the team environment. People deliberate on new ideas and identify the implication of these ideas for the team. Hence, they generate input by sharing ideas on the EMB platform for others to (re)use them (*Propose idea*). Another typical communication practice is providing URLs to specific topics or posting references, e.g. to relevant literature (*Post link & reference*).

Informal communication: Users also utilise the social potential of the EMB platform, e.g. by commending others on their work (*Provide social feedback*). Often, users say thanks to others who helped

them, e.g. by pointing to relevant information. Project members also use the EMB space to communicate with others about personal issues, e.g. when they report on their vacations; however this remains an exception (*Daily chatter*).

Information storage: In order to keep certain information for later reference, people use Communote to notify others about documents or team-related data. Team members post locations of internal files or attach documents that are relevant to their messages (*Provide internal files & attachments*). However there appears to be no clear pattern, as to which documents are attached and which are stored on a network drive. Occasionally people would inform others about specific data such as IP addresses or telephone numbers (*Record data*). In doing so, EMB is used as team memory or for the dissemination of data.

Problem solving: This category focuses on the need of users to acquire task-specific information from others. In their day-to-day work people might experience a problem and then draw on the platform to ask others for a solution (*Ask how-to question*). In return someone might share his or her knowledge in order to help (*Provide solution*). However, this form of communication is quite rare in our case team.

4.2 Microblogging practices at IREKO

At first glance, the genre repertoire indicates that EMB communication in our case is quite complex and diverse. However, while we identified 23 different genres, many of these only rarely occurred. By concentrating on those that are common and also the fact that they might occur in conjunction with each other, we are able to identify three main EMB communication practices, which stand out from the otherwise diverse communication: 1) *awareness creation*, 2) *task/meeting coordination* and 3) *idea generation & discussion*. In the following we will discuss these practices in more detail.

The identification of genres above reveals that IREKO team members draw on the Communote platform to provide others with information about aspects of team and project work that are unknown to them. Such signalling behaviour raises *awareness* in the recipient of the information for various matters, such as tasks, events, or people's availability. Awareness is generally seen as "an understanding of the activities of others, which provides a context for your own activity" (Dourish and Bellotti, 1992, p. 107). While awareness emerges naturally in face-to-face communication, in technologically mediated environments, such information often remains hidden and needs to be actively provided (Scupelli et al., 2005). One interviewee mentioned that the usage of EMB created a high degree of transparency for the various project topics: *"I just know what everyone is working on [...] I think before [without Communote], we did not have such a transparency, especially in a larger group."* This form of awareness aims to create common ground (shared context) among the team members, but it does not contribute to the immediate coordination of shared tasks.

A notable and important EMB practice evolves around *coordination* of both meetings and tasks. People delegate tasks to a specific sub group, post lists of to-do items or ask and answer task-related questions (how-to) to other group members. By doing so, they coordinate shared tasks and help others. Several interviewees highlighted this practice saying that sometimes they obtained unexpected help. Although the team shares a group calendar, meeting coordination accounts for a large portion of the communication in the EMB space. Team members propose dates and shape an agenda for a meeting. Communote emerged as an integral part of preparing meetings and the meetings as such, as the Communote postings are drawn upon during the meeting: *"We use the tag #JourFixe quite often. During the meeting we then take up issues we have collected over the week."*

The third main practice captures the *sharing and discussing* of new information and ideas. For example, people generate input by posting links to information on the Internet, e.g. concerning relevant literature. In the interviews, Communote was described as an efficient tool for the distribution and research of such information. In addition, the platform is also used as a medium to generate ideas. Often people receive feedback by other team members and discuss different issues, as explicated by this user: *"In my opinion, Microblogging is a way to exchange, to generate ideas and to discuss."*

5   Discussion

Having provided a descriptive account of how the EMB platform has been appropriated in our case team, we will now discuss these results in comparison to what has been revealed in other EMB case studies. This will lead us to argue that in order to understand the multi-faceted nature of EMB, we need to investigate in future research how various factors impact on the emergent adoption of the service under different contextual conditions.

5.1   Comparison with another Communote EMB case

Our study has been set up deliberately so that our results are comparable with those by Riemer and Richter (2010), who have investigated the appropriation and use of the same IT artefact (Communote), albeit in a different organisation. Since we followed the same procedures in identifying genres, our results are directly comparable. However, we have applied a different way of grouping single genres into top-level categories. While Riemer and Richter (2010) elected to group genres from an individual perspective using "distinct types of interactions, i.e. reasons for and ways of engaging with others on the EMB platform" (Riemer & Richter 2010, 8), we are grouping genres from a group perspective. We reason that in order to gain an understanding of the IT artefact for the group, we need to approach genre interpretation from this perspective; this allows us to arrive at a side-by-side comparison of our results with Riemer and Richter (2010) (see figure 3).
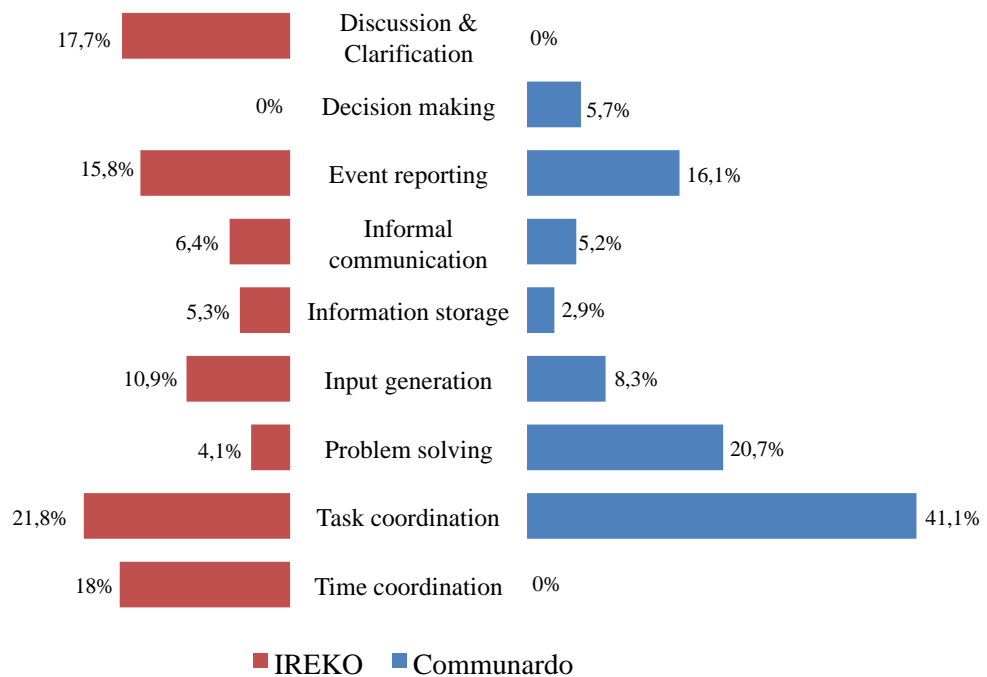

Figure 3.   Comparison of top-level categories between IREKO and Communardo Case.

According to Riemer and Richter (2010), team members in the Communardo case have established two main EMB practices, awareness creation and task coordination, which are also present in our case. However, there are also striking differences. Drawing from the comparison in figure 3, the following five notable differences become obvious.

1) Opinions and discussions: While a main practice in our case, Communote was not used by the Communardo team to voice opinions or facilitate discussions on any topic matters. This fact was explicitly noted as being conspicuous in the earlier study.

2) Time/event coordination: The same applies for time coordination. Here, the IREKO team has established a noteworthy practice of using EMB for various aspects of coordinating their general project meetings (jour fixes). Such a practice is not present in the Communardo case.

3) Problem solving: Unlike in IREKO, where problem solving only rarely occurs, this is a main genre category in Communardo, described by the authors as part of the general practice of joint task-oriented work, where people help each other with immediate task-related problems.

4) Task coordination: Our side-by-side comparison shows that the Communardo team has a much stronger focus in their EMB communication on coordinating joint task work. This is signified by the fact that *Provide task status update* accounts for 22.8% of task appearances in their case, but only for 8.7% in our case.

5) Decision-making: We did not find any evidence for decision making behaviour in our sample, whereas this did occur in several instances in Communardo.

5.2   Shared context as the main driver of local appropriation

The above shows significant differences in the ways in which the Communote platform has been interpreted, appropriated and made part of joint team practices in the two cases. We attribute these differences to differences in the extent to which the team members share the same local organisational context.

In Communardo we see highly task-dependent work in a software engineering team, where people work on joint work objects (e.g. software code) and have appropriated EMB accordingly to coordinate their work using task status updates (raising awareness), problem solving behaviour, task delegation and decision making. In this case, EMB has been appropriated in what can be termed a work group context, where people already share the same organisational culture, or even physical space. People in this case have other means for discussion and no need to engage in context building through EMB.

Much to the contrary, IREKO is a 'project of projects', an umbrella vehicle to connect the individual (often PhD-related) activities of various researchers from different faculties in a University context. This has two implications. Firstly, due to the interdisciplinary composition of the team, members are confronted with different attitudes and professional socialisations (e.g. business, social and engineering sciences). Hence, people frequently use EMB to engage in discussions or to voice opinions as a means for joint context building and sense making to better grasp what everyone is doing as part of the overall project. Secondly, IREKO team members do not share an immediate task context, as individual projects are largely independent with regards to day-to-day practices. Therefore, team members in our case update others on their task progress in much less detail and with much less frequency. The main shared team activity is organising the joint project meetings.

The above shows that appropriation in the two cases happens quite fittingly according to the nature of shared team context. The influence of shared context on the proliferation of EMB practices becomes all the more obvious by comparing the above with another microblogging study, undertaken by Meyer and Dibbern (2010). In this study, the authors analysed their own usage of Twitter as an internal (i.e. private) communication channel in a team of seven University researchers. The authors elaborate on four different areas where microblogging with Twitter proved to be beneficial to their teamwork: 1) organising meetings, 2) coordinating tasks, 3) promoting of social interaction and 4) sharing of knowledge. The ways in which microblogging has been appropriated, while still different to some extent, is much more similar to the IREKO case than the Communardo case. A main similarity is the use of EMB to facilitate and coordinate meetings and the ways in which users update each other about their general task progress and also the typical content of such messages (e.g. submission of research papers). Another similarity is the promotion of social interaction aiming to build shared context (i.e., providing team members with a basic understanding of one's own work). Hence in this case, which is institutionally and context-wise similar to our case, microblogging has been appropriated in ways that

resemble our case more than the Communardo case, which used the same IT artefact after all. This suggests that shared context exerts a stronger influence on EMB appropriation than the underlying technology, even though the Communote platform is distinctly different compared to Twitter.

6   Implications

In summary, the contribution of our study is threefold. Firstly, our research contributes to gaining a better understanding of how microblogging as a novel service, originating from the public Internet, can be used productively in organisational contexts for facilitating joint communicative practices. The study shows how teams can productively appropriate a service, which has gained a questionable reputation based on its association with hedonic behaviour and associated procrastination potential.

Secondly, our case study contributes to understanding better the appropriation of collaborative technologies. It has been argued elsewhere that an "essential characteristic of communication and collaboration technologies is what can best be expressed in German language as *Nutzungsoffenheit,* a type of openness whereby the artefact does not lend itself to or even determines a particular form of usage" (Richter & Riemer, 2009, p. 8). Our findings confirm this openness, evidenced by the ways in which the same artefact has been appropriated differently in the two cases discussed above. However, while the inherent flexibility and openness of EMB makes it hard to predict its likely diffusion or patterns of use in a particular case, it does not imply that appropriation happens accidentally.

Finally, in light of the above, our case comparison reveals that shared team context as a factor impacts on microblogging adoption and the proliferation of shared practices. Further research is needed to deepen our understanding of EMB in particular and the corporate application of social media technology in general. In doing so, research should investigate in more detail the influence of various contextual factors on platform appropriation. Given the openness and flexibility of such technologies, the mere study of technology characteristics, as well as technological positivist studies that try to confirm causal relationships between technology characteristics and forms of use, will reveal little about potential impact of such open technologies in organisations. At the same time, this does not mean that the IT artefact itself does not exert any influence, since it obviously acts as an enabler for the various practices we have observed in our case. It only shows that our understanding of the nature, role, impact, and managerial challenges of social media platforms in organisations is still limited, which yields ample opportunities for future research.

7   Conclusion

In this paper we presented a case study of microblogging in a University context, where a multidisciplinary team appropriated the platform mainly as a means for context building and meeting coordination, in a project of otherwise loosely related individual activities. By conducting a genre analysis of the team's microblogging stream and comparing our results with findings from two other EMB cases, we found that EMB is highly dependent on the particular organisational context and concluded that appropriation of Enterprise Microblogging happens largely in accordance with organisational context characteristics.

Our findings need to be viewed in light of the study's limitations. Firstly, we only investigated one case, albeit comparing it with other cases. Hence, there are limitations to the transferability/generalisability of our results. Secondly, we only focused on the production part of microblogging, i.e. the posting on the platform, but not the consumption part, i.e. the reading and perception by (passive) users. To our knowledge no study has investigated this important aspect so far. However, this is vital to gain a balanced and holistic understanding of the impact and role of microblogging in organisations. We intend to carry out interviews in this respect in the next step of our study. Finally, microblogging warrants further classification with regards to its contextual forms of (enterprise) use.

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Appendix: Overview of 23 single genres

Name	Explanation	Stylised examples	%
Discussion & Clarification			
Ask for additional information	Somebody requires additional information concerning a topic.	"Could you give me the title to this?" "Who has istalled Visio?"	3.95%
Ask for feedback	Others are asked to give feedback about a specific topic.	"Could you provide me feedback to this?"	1.35%
Clarification	Information is provided to clarify something.	"From now on, please use our new logo." "Here applies the following rule: …"	6.14%
Provide feedback	Feedback is given in return	"Really interesting topic, some comments below…"	2.52%
Voice opinion	Personal or subjective opinions are uttered.	"In my opinion we should do…" "I agree with you…"	3.78%
Event reporting			
Notify of upcoming events	Others are informed about up-coming events.	"Tomorrow, Mendeley offers a Webinar." "Delivery date of our furniture…"	4.29%
Provide event up-date	Others are informed about events peripheral to the team.	"#Conference knowtech 2010 accepted." "Today our phones were delivered."	11.52%
Informal communication			
Daily chatter	Posts which are out of context or concerning leisure time.	"Congratulations on your baby. Wish you all the best!"	2.27%
Provide social feedback	Success is appreciated and props are given.	"That sounds perfect." "Thank you, that should really help me"	4.12%
Information storage			
Provide internal file & attachment	File paths to internal documents are posted or files are attached.	"Attached, the file…" "Scanned book at I:/…"	4.46%
Record data	Others are informed about data e.g. IP adresses or phone numbers	"The address for your new b&w printer is…"	0.84%
Input generation			
Post link & refer-ence	URLs or literature that are found especially relevant for a team or subject are posted.	"#Cloudcomputing The Digital Magazin reports http://…" "Source for all economists among us: …"	7.82%
Propose idea	Contribution of new ideas.	"This would be an interesting case…"	3.03%
Problem solving			
Ask how-to ques-tion	People need to know something to solve a problem.	"How could I find the list?"	2.27%
Provide solution	Somebody shares his know-how to help others with their problems.	"Everybody who has not Visio installed, can download it at MSDNAA."	1.85%
Task coordination			
Ask for task update	Somebody asks for task progress.	"How far are you with…?"	0.50%
Delegate task	Person or group is asked to do something.	"Could you please take case of…?"	6.48%
Note to-dos	Tasks still to be done are posted	"We should do that tomorrow: …"	4.54%
Provide task-status update	Somebody updates others on task progress or completion.	"Now you should have access to our wiki." "Submitted my paper for iKnow."	8.66%
Request for interest	Somebody request for interest concerning a specific topic.	"If anyone is interested in… please give me a note."	1.60%
Time coordination			
Meeting coordina-tion	People make appointments and propose rooms for meetings.	"This appointment is inconvenient. I would prefer 01.10. 3pm"	6.39%
Propose content for upcoming event	Content for an upcoming event is gathered.	"Topics #jourfixe: coordination of…" "#workshop our next topic will be…"	6.64%
Signal availability	People share information about their availability at the office.	"I'm on vacation until 01.08."	4.96%