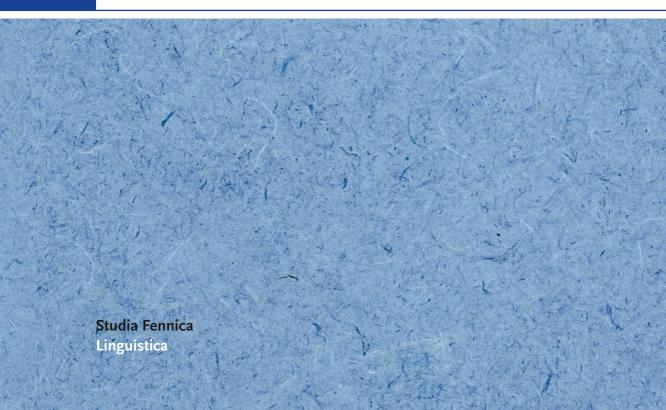


Talk in Interaction

Comparative Dimensions

Edited by Markku Haakana, Minna Laakso and Jan Lindström



Studia Fennica Linguistica 14

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The publication has undergone a peer review.



The open access publication of this volume has received part funding via Helsinki University Library.

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A digital edition of a printed book first published in 2009 by the Finnish Literature Society.

Cover Design: Timo Numminen

EPUB: eLibris Media Oy

ISBN 978-952-222-134-6 (Print) ISBN 978-952-222-784-3 (PDF) ISBN 978-952-222-783-6 (EPUB)

ISSN 0085-6835 (Studia Fennica) ISSN 1235-1938 (Studia Fennica Linguistica)

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.21435/sflin.14

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Foreword

This volume is a collection of conversation analytical studies of interactional practices and structures. The authors investigate, for instance, how American journalists interview presidents, how interactants correct errors in other speakers' talk, how children negotiate in play interaction, and how disappointment is displayed in interaction. The volume is also methodological in nature: the theme of the book is comparative analysis within conversation analysis (CA). The chapters explore and discuss several kinds of comparative approaches to talk in interaction. The authors analyze, for instance, how the practices of interviewing presidents have changed over time, and how the negotiation practices of girls and boys differ from each other.

Conversation analysis is applied as a method in several disciplines; the authors of this volume have their background in sociology, linguistics and logopedics. We hope that the book is of interest to all those scholars who share an interest in the research of naturally occurring interaction. Because of its methodological nature, we hope that the collection can also be utilized in teaching and in learning the discovery procedures typical of CA. Some of the chapters have a more pedagogical dimension than the others. Especially the introduction and the chapter by Ilkka Arminen present and discuss the forms and possibilities of comparative analysis in a more general fashion.

The volume is published by Finnish Literature Society in the series *Studia Fennica*, in its sub-series *Linguistica*. The aim of the series is to promote research made in Finland (on Finnish culture/-s) internationally. Thus, most of the contributors in the volume are Finnish and study interactions that are conducted in languages spoken in Finland (here, Finnish and Swedish). However, as the list of the authors shows, the collection has an international dimension as well. The book has its roots in the International Conference on Conversation Analysis held in Helsinki in May 2006 (ICCA-06). The theme of the conference was comparative analysis, and this collection follows up that theme and includes chapters by the plenary speakers of the conference: Steven Clayman (here with John Heritage), Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen, Paul Drew and Auli Hakulinen & Marja-Leena Sorjonen. Some chapters of the book are based on work presented in the ICCA-conference, but not all of them.

The authors present analyses of interactions that are conducted in English, Finnish, German and Swedish. When the data are in a language other than English,

the transcribed extracts are presented with translations into English and provided with a gloss of the lexical and grammatical features of the utterances. The transcription and glossing symbols are presented in the beginning of the volume.

We would like to thank Finnish Literature Society for publishing this volume, and the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on the manuscript. We are also grateful to the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Study for financial support and Svetlana Kirichenko in particular for valuable help in the editing of the book. Finally, we would like to thank all the authors of the volume for their contributions and for their patience.

Helsinki 10.11.2009

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Transcription and glossing symbols

Transcribed data extracts from languages other than English represent the talk of each person in three lines to be read as follows: the first line is the speech in the original language (e.g., Finnish), the second is the English word-by-word gloss, and the third is the free translation into English. If glossing is not necessary for the understanding of the utterance only two lines are used, that is, the gloss line can be omitted. In the following, a list of transcription symbols and a list of abbreviations used in the grammatical glossing are provided.

Transcription symbols

The notation used is basically the same as the one used in conversation analytic literature (see, e.g., Atkinson & Heritage, 1984: ix-xvi)¹.

Overlap and pauses

- (0.5) A pause and its duration in tenths of a second
- (.) A micropause (less than 0.2 seconds)
- = Latching, i.e., no interval between the end of a prior and the start
 - of following piece of talk
- [Beginning of overlap
- End of overlap

Intonation contour

- . Falling intonation
- ; Slightly falling intonation
- , Continuing (level) intonation
- ? Rising intonation
- Slightly rising intonation

¹ Structures of social action: studies in conversation analysis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). – If the authors use symbols other than these, the transcription conventions are explained in the chapters.

Prosodic shifts, emphasis and pace of speech

| <u>no</u> | The underlined word or syllable is uttered with emphatic stress |
|--------------|--|
| \uparrow | The word following the arrow is uttered with a higher pitch than |
| | the surrounding talk |
| \downarrow | The word following the arrow is uttered with a lower pitch than |
| | the surrounding talk |
| °no° | Silently pronounced word or utterance |
| NO | A word or utterance pronounced louder than the surrounding talk |
| >no< | Talk inside arrow heads is said at a pace faster than the |
| | surrounding talk |
| <no></no> | Talk inside arrow heads is said at a pace slower than the |
| | surrounding talk |
| no< | A word ends abruptly |
| No | A capital in the beginning of a word indicates the beginning of an |
| | intonation unit ² |

Duration

| wha- | A cut-off word (a hyphen indicates self-interruption of the word) |
|------|---|
| no: | A stretch (a colon indicates lengthening of a sound) |
| ja:a | Legato pronunciation (a colon between identical sounds indicates |
| | a binding of the sounds together) |

Other

| @ei@ | Altered voice quality (e.g., animated voice) |
|---------------|--|
| £ei£ | Smiling voice |
| #ei# | Creaky voice |
| .joo | A word pronounced with inbreath |
| .hh | Inbreath (each h indicating one tenth of a second) |
| hh | Outbreath |
| (koira) | Single parentheses indicate transcriber's doubt |
| (-) | An unclearly heard word or utterance |
| () | Omitted stretch of talk |
| \rightarrow | An arrow in the left margin of a transcript signifies that the focus |
| | of interest is in the current line of the extract |

Gestures and other non-verbal actions

| ((subdued)) | Transcriber's comments are represented within double |
|-------------|---|
| | parentheses. |
| *DRAWS* | Non-verbal actions can be described in small capital letters on |
| | a separate line below the utterance they co-occur with, or on |
| | a line of their own if there is no simultaneous talk. An asterisk can |
| | be used to mark the beginning (and the end) of a co-occurring |
| | gesture. |

² This transcription practice is not shared by all CA scholars. In this volume, some authors use it and some do not.

Abbreviations used in glossing (Modified from Sorjonen 2001)³.

The following are treated as unmarked forms, not indicated in the glossing: (i) nominative case, (ii) singular, (iii) 3^{rd} person singular, (iv) active voice, and (v) present tense.

Case endings are referred to by the following abbreviations:

| <u>Abbreviation</u> | Case | Approximate meaning |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| ABL | Ablative | 'from' |
| ACC | Accusative | object |
| ADE | Adessive | 'at, on' (owner of something) |
| ALL | Allative | 'to' |
| COM | Comitative | 'with' |
| ELA | Elative | 'out of' |
| ESS | Essive | 'as' |
| GEN | Genitive | possession |
| ILL | Illative | 'into' |
| INE | Inessive | 'in' |
| INS | Instructive | (various) |
| NOM | Nominative | subject |
| PAR | Partitive | partitiveness |
| TRA | Translative | 'to', 'becoming' 'into' |
| | | |

Other grammatical abbreviations:

| CLI | clitic |
|------|------------------------|
| CNJ | conjunction |
| COMP | comparative |
| CON | conditional |
| DEF | definite (article) |
| FRE | frequentative |
| IMP | imperative |
| INF | infinitive |
| NEG | negation |
| PAS | passive |
| PC | participle |
| PL | plural |
| POS | possessive suffix |
| PPC | past participle |
| PRON | pronoun |
| PRT | particle |
| PST | past tense |
| Q | interrogative (clitic) |
| RFL | reflexive (pronoun) |

³ Responding in conversation. A study of response particles in Finnish (Amsterdam: Benjamins).

| SG | singular |
|------|-------------|
| SUBJ | subjunctive |

zero subject or object 1st person 0

1 2 3

2nd person
3rd person
passive person ending
1st name, female 4 1nameF 1st name, male 1nameM

Introduction: Comparative dimensions of talk in interaction

Tonversation analysis (CA) emerged as a method in the sociology lectures given by Harvey Sacks between 1964 and 1972 (published as Sacks 1992a,b), and some of the fundamental findings were published in ground-breaking papers by Sacks and his colleagues in the mid-seventies (e.g., on turn-taking, Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson (SSJ) 1974; on the organization of repair, Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks (SJS) 1977). In the beginning CA was a radically empirical enterprise, launched as an alternative to experimentally driven social psychology or deductive social theorizing. Since those early days, CA has developed into a distinctive method for analyzing conversation or talk-in-interaction, as the object of the study has come to be known (see e.g., Schegloff 2007: xiii). This method is currently utilized with several disciplines sharing an interest in social interaction (anthropology, linguistics, social psychology, sociology, etc.) and has been applied to a great variety of languages and types of interaction, ranging from ordinary conversations at home to various institutional interactions, as well as to the interactions between native and non-native speakers, speakers with aphasia and other speech and communication disorders, and so on. The principles of the method are presented in several textbooks (see e.g., Schegloff 2007; ten Have 1999; Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998; Tainio 1997), its "classics" are available in edited volumes (e.g., Drew & Heritage 2006; Lerner 2004), and conferences are regularly organized around CA work. These are all signs of an established discipline. Indeed, the current abundance of CA studies from different languages and cultures on the one hand, and from a wide range of interactions on the other, make it possible and relevant to engage in comparative analysis of talk-in-interaction. This is the theme of the present volume, which serves as a showcase collection of novel conversation analytically grounded studies employing and exploring various kinds of comparative approaches to talk-in-interaction.¹

Conversation analysis can be characterized as an essentially comparative method. The analysis typically begins with the analyst identifying a phenomenon of interest

¹ The theme of comparative analysis has certainly been in the air within the field of CA. In 2006 it was the theme of the international conference on conversation analysis (ICCA-06) held in Helsinki. This volume continues that theme and earlier versions of some of the chapters in the present volume were first presented at that conference. Simultaneously another collection on comparative CA is published (Sidnell 2009), concentrating on cross-linguistic analysis of interaction.

in the data: a certain type of sequence, a certain action or an interactional (verbal or non-verbal) device. The identification of a potential phenomenon subsequently leads to gathering a collection of relevant instances, and the analytical work consists of a careful analysis of each case as well as the comparison of these cases. This comparative work enables the analyst to identify the recurrent patterns of interaction and to make generalizations about the phenomenon analyzed.

The essentially comparative nature of this analytic practice can already be seen in the very first lecture of Sacks (1992a: 3–11), entitled *Rules of conversational sequence*. As that title indicates, the aim is to find a rule behind specific instances of interaction. Sacks starts by presenting extracts of the beginnings of phone calls to a suicide prevention clinic. Two of those instances are presented here:

(1)

A: This is Mr Smith may I help you

B: Yes, this is Mr Brown

(2)

A: This is Mr Smith may I help you

B: I can't hear you A: This is Mr Smith

B: Smith

Sacks shows that in the beginning of the phone call, the representative of the clinic first presents himself, and typically the caller then presents her/himself (extract 1). However, there were occasions when something else happens: the caller would initiate repair (in extract 2, *I can't hear you*, as a sign of a hearing problem) in the slot where self-presentation would ordinarily occur. From this observation Sacks moves on to think about the possibility that the callers sometimes specifically use repair initiation as a way of *not* giving their name when it would be interactionally relevant. Thus, Sacks presents cases that are typical (reciprocal presentations) and cases that depart from the basic pattern. It is important to note that the deviant cases then seem not to be random, but orderly: repair initiation can be a method of not giving one's name.

The comparative nature of CA is clearly present in the seminal articles on turn-taking (SSJ 1974) and repair (SJS 1977). The generalizations about the turn-taking practices and the practices of repair and the preference organization present in them are arrived at through a careful examination of a considerable number of cases in which speaker transition occurs (or does not occur) and in which speakers deal with a problem of speaking, hearing and understanding. The analysis of singular instances groups some cases together and separates some: one finds different variations of the same phenomenon (e.g., different ways of allocating a turn-at-talk or initiating repair on the other speaker's turn), and on the other hand, differing but related phenomena (e.g., various forms of self- and other-initiated repair).

Conversation analysis is, thus, a comparative approach at heart. Nonetheless, there are several possible levels of comparison that the analyst can engage in. For instance, in reading the classic papers on turn-taking and repair, one might start to wonder whether turn-taking organization works in the same way in different interactions (see e.g., Drew & Heritage 1992a on turn-taking in institutional talk) or how turn-taking practices may or may not differ in different cultures and in

During the recent decades Conversation Analysis has developed into a distinctive method for analyzing talk in interaction. The method is utilized in several disciplines sharing an interest in social interaction, like anthropology, linguistics, social psychology, and sociology, and it has been applied to a great variety of languages and types of interaction. Conversation Analysis then is coming of age as a truly comparative enterprise. This volume presents and discusses comparative approaches to analyzing interactional practices and structures. The contributors to the volume have their background in sociology, linguistics, and logopedics. They offer comparative analyses of activity types, participant roles and identities, displays of emotion, and design of actions such as questions and corrections. The languages covered by the chapters include English, Finnish, German, and Swedish.

This volume is of interest to all those interested in the research of language and social interaction. Because of its methodological nature, the book can also be utilized in teaching and in learning the discovery procedures typical of Conversation Analysis.



STUDIA FENNICA LINGUISTICA 14 ISBN 978-952-222-134-6 88.2; 87 www.finlit.fi/kirjat