FACIAL EXPRESSIONS AS AN INTERACTIONAL RESOURCE IN EVERYDAY FACE-TO-FACE CONVERSATION

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

To be presented, with the permission of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Helsinki, for public examination in Auditorium XII, University main building, on June 12th 2015, at 13 o'clock.
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Acknowledgements

This study was carried out at the department of Social Sciences at the University of Helsinki throughout 2009-2015. I am deeply grateful that I was given the opportunity to start a PhD project: my primary goal after finishing my undergraduate studies. In life, and especially in academic life, nothing is achieved alone, and it is now time to thank numerous people who have made this PhD study possible.

My greatest thanks goes to my supervisor Anssi Peräkylä for all the training he has given me during my academic life. Before I started my doctoral dissertation Anssi supervised my Bachelor and Master’s theses. Anssi, your comments were always carefully delivered: you always took into account the level of my education and maturity. Thank you Anssi for taking such good care of me during my “growing” years. I could not have wished for a better mentor. I am also very grateful to my second supervisor, Johanna Ruusuvuori. Johanna, you offered many insightful comments and ideas to help develop my thinking and to improve my work.

I am grateful that I was given the opportunity to visit UCLA for six months in 2012. The visit was of utmost importance for the development of my skills. During my stay in Los Angeles I met many wonderful local and visiting people. I wish to thank Elinor Ochs, the director of the Center for Language, Interaction and Culture, for providing me with this opportunity. I especially wish to thank Chuck Goodwin for being my supervisor during my visit. Thank you for taking such good care of me. I also want to thank Candy Goodwin for her kindness and support. Chuck and Candy’s courses and discourse labs were essential for my study. Thank you Candy for agreeing to be my opponent. Thank you John Heritage, Steven Clayman and Tanya Stivers for providing me with the opportunity to participate in your sociology data sessions and courses. Additionally, I wish to thank all the people in the fields of sociology, anthropology, and applied linguistics, with whom I had stimulating interactions during my stay in LA.

I wish to thank the pre-examiners of this thesis, Jürgen Streeck and Fritjof Sahlström, and the anonymous reviewers of the original articles, for their valuable comments and suggestions.

The analysis and writing of this study were primarily conducted in the postgraduate school Puhe, toiminta ja vuorovaikutus (Talk, Action and Interaction) and in the Finnish Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Intersubjectivity in Interaction throughout 2009-2014. I wish to thank the leaders of our postgraduate school Anssi, Anu Klippi, Ritva Laury, Jan Lindström and Liisa Tainio. Thanks also go out to my colleagues Martina Huhtamäki, Kati Pajo, Anna Vatanen and Elina Weiste. Our joint meetings and data sessions were important for my study. When I returned from Los Angeles to Helsinki, my research community had widely expanded. Suddenly, I had numerous new colleagues at our CoE, which had begun its work at the beginning of 2012. I wish to thank the directors Marja-Leena Sorjonen and Anssi for their great leadership. I am deeply grateful to them and other members of our CoE, who have provided me with social, intellectual and financial support. Thank you Marja Etelämäki, Katarina Harjunpää, Aino Koivisto and other colleagues at the CoE. I cannot think of a better place to work at as a PhD student. I also wish to thank the many visitors at CoE, who have helped me by commenting my data and earlier versions of my papers, especially Charles
Antaki, Douglas Maynard and Jörg Bergmann. I also want to say a special thanks to Betty Couper-Kuhlen. Your many great courses helped me obtain a deeper understanding on conversation analysis in general, and, amongst other things, on action construction and affectivity in interaction, which have been important themes in my papers. I wish to thank colleagues and friends Jarkko Niemi, Pentti Hettonen and many others for warm discussions relating to work and anything else between the earth and the sky at different phases of this project.

I am deeply grateful to Mikko Kahri and Mika Simonen for taking me into their ‘team’ when I was starting my postgraduate studies. Sharing a room with you, first in Mariankatu and later in Snellmaninkatu meant a lot to me; not only did you guide me through the field of conversation analysis and postgraduate studies, but we also became good friends. Thank you Linda Hirvonen and Liisa Raevaara for being my roommates during my time at the CoE. I could not have wished for any better roommates, thank you for the support, company and chats.

I am grateful for the opportunity to conduct my research with such a talented and innovative ‘emotion’ group of the CoE. Thank you Anssi, Liisa Voutilainen, Melisa Stevanovic, Vuokko Hämä, Sonja Koski, Maari Kivioja, Elina, Mika and Mikko. I wish to thank also SOVAKO postgraduate school’s teachers and students, especially Ilkka Arminen, Hanna Rautajoki, Sanni Tiitinen and Inka Koskela.

I am grateful to all the graduate students and staff members at the department of sociology. Thanks go out to the members of our fantastic postgraduate seminar group Torstai-seminaari (Thursday seminar). Thank you Turo-Kimmo Lehtonen for leading this seminar. You led us through fruitful discussions and created a warm and safe environment in which to present our (incomplete) ideas and works. Thank you also Lotta Hau., Anni, Riikka, Lotta Hai., Tiina-Maria and many others who participated in the seminar.

I want to thank my friends for their help and support at different phases of my project. You have helped me keep my sanity, and were there whenever I was in need of listening ears and support. I am especially grateful to Petteri, Sandro, Taneli, Karri and Jenni who have helped me in various ways during my PhD project.

Thanks to Matthew Billington for helping me with my written English in the articles 2 and 3 and in the introduction. Matthew helped me a great deal in making the papers more reader-friendly and systematic in many ways. However, I must say that any typos and spelling mistakes that remain in the study are my own.

I am grateful to Satu Karppinen for the great cover of this book.

I wish to thank my parents Matti and Carita and my brothers for their support throughout this project.

This has been a great journey.

Helsinki, May 2015
Timo Kaukomaa
Abstract

This study examines facial expressions in naturally occurring face-to-face interaction. The focus is on how facial expressions (e.g., smiles and frowns) are part of the collaborative construction and modification of shared emotional stances between speakers and hearers. The data corpus of this study consists of five recorded dyadic Finnish conversations over lunch between individuals who were familiar with each other. The conversations were recorded with three video cameras: two cameras recorded the participants’ facial expressions and upper bodies and one camera the overall situation. The method of this study is conversation analysis, which makes it possible to examine how participants use their facial expression, move-by-move or turn-by-turn, in the joint negotiation processes of shared emotional stances. The dissertation consists of three original articles and an introduction. In the introduction, I lay out the central concepts and the perspective of the study, describe the data and method, and provide an overview and short examples of the results of the study. I also discuss at a more general level the ways in which my study contributes to earlier studies on embodied socio-emotional communication, and to our understanding of social interaction and social life.

The analysis highlights the important role facial expressions have in construction and modification of the public emotional sphere of conversation. The emotional sphere is in continuous transformation, as the participants collaboratively negotiate their situational relationship and interpersonal (in)congruence with regard to the activity at hand. The articles 1 and 2 examine how speakers’ turn initial facial expression (a smile or a frown) contributes to the action of the utterance it foreshadows and to the larger sequential environment. The results show that the interactional trajectories of these turn-opening facial expressions vary substantially: smiles are first steps to a shared moment of positive or humorous stance, whereas frowns initiate a ‘problem’ turn that creates momentary distance between participants. The article 3 demonstrates the ways in which recipients’ facial expression may shift the emotional stance of the speaker’s utterance. The recipient’s facial expressions play a major role in the collaborative modification of shared emotional stance. They do not simply mirror the speaker’s stance or display understanding of the speaker’s talk; rather, they perform well-timed systematic operations on the projected course of the talk. The contribution of the article is to show how speakers and hearers work in collaboration using subtle and well-timed facial (and other) expressions of emotion in order to negotiate, move-by-move, the emotional stance(s) that they will share.

This study reveals the significance of facial expressions in communicative actions and in the regulation of situational affective relationship between speakers and hearers in mundane interactions. These processes resonate with the larger social structures and the reproduction of micro-social order.
List of original articles

Article 1:

Article 2:

Article 3:
Transcription symbols

Transcription symbols:
[ ] or overlapping talk
[ or ] marks a place of a particular embodied action
(0.5) length of silence in tenths of a second
(.) micro-pause
. falling intonation
? rising intonation
, continuing intonation, slightly rising
level intonation
h exhalation
.h inhalation; inbreath
# # creaky voice
< > talk is markedly slow or drawn out
> < talk is compressed or rushed
↑ intonation rises
° ° portions quieter than the surrounding talk
= contiguous utterances (no break or gap)
- cut-off
: prolongation of immediately prior sound
_ (underline) emphasis
(( )) transcriber's descriptions
( ) unheard word
£ £ word(s) uttered with smiley voice
1 Introduction

The face has a unique significance in human life. For example, if we walked along the street and looked at the face of a random fellow pedestrian, we could notice -- arguably in the blink of an eye -- whether that person was familiar to us, male or female, young, middle-aged or old, angry, absent minded or perhaps happy and relaxed. Thus, an individual's face is a powerful indicator of their idiosyncratic and momentary characteristics, social identity and mental state.

Furthermore, if an individual's face instantly reveals a great deal about them to us (as distant observers), it would tell us much more if we chose to approach them for a private conversation. In a face-to-face conversation, we constantly look at our partner's face (and vice versa) for various kinds of information, as the face reveals many things about a person’s attitudes, feelings and focus of attention that the talk, gestures or rest of the body may not disclose (e.g., Bavelas & Chovil 2000; Bavelas et al. 2000; 2002; Ekman 2007).

1.1 Object of this study

The purpose of this study is to determine how participants use facial expressions in everyday spoken interaction alongside other embodied expressions. My aim is to demonstrate that facial expressions are a dynamic resource that participants use in a flexible way in talk-in-interaction. This study discusses various aspects of facial expressions, including their connections to talk, emotions, and the regulation of interaction and larger social structures.

Moreover, this study demonstrates how facial expressions have the power to clarify the meaning of talk, and the action that it conveys, and help participants negotiate and coordinate their situational relationship and shared understanding and build shared emotions (cf. Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori 2006). Unlike most of the earlier research on facial expressions, this study approaches facial expressions not in an experimental setting but as they appear in naturally occurring talk-in-interaction. Using conversation analysis as the method of investigation, the study describes how the use of facial expressions emerges as part of a sequentially organized and moment-by-moment unfolding of social (inter)action in dyadic conversations.

Despite the ubiquity and undoubted importance of facial expressions, their interpersonal use has received relatively little rigorous scientific attention. Thus, this sociological study provides new information on the interpersonal and communicative use of facial expressions.

Earlier studies on facial expressions can be divided into two broad perspectives: those which focus on how facial expressions are connected to inner emotional states and processes, and those which concentrate on how facial expressions are used in social communication to serve interpersonal functions (e.g., Niedenthal et al. 2006; Manstead et al. 1999). This study adopts the latter perspective and also discusses the broader socio-cultural factors and constraints related to the interactional situation where facial exchanges occur. Next, I begin the theoretical section of this study by examining the basis of social life: interacting people.
1.2 Interaction units

Here I discuss human social interaction, which resonates both with macro-level social structures and micro-level relationships. I begin with sociological and anthropological perspectives on different forms of social events, before moving on to discuss the regulation of social interaction and the role of emotions and facial expressions in the re-production of social order.

1.2.1 Social organization of gatherings

According to Goffman, social events can take different forms. If we consider public places and social situations, a basic line can be drawn between people who are alone (singles) and people who are with other people (withs) (Goffman 1971). Goffman (1964: 135) defines a social situation as "an environment of mutual monitoring possibilities, anywhere within which an individual will find himself accessible to the naked senses of all others who are 'present', and similarly find them accessible to him". Goffman (1963) uses the term gathering to refer to any set of two or more individuals who are currently in each other's presence (e.g., at a cocktail party or picnic, during a day at the office). A social occasion involves people coming into each other's immediate presence as participants. Social occasions are bounded in regard to time and place and provide the structuring social context and "guideline" for general engrossment and involvement in the situation. (Goffman 1963.) Goffman also makes a distinction between unfocused and focused interaction, which are separated by the "state of situational involvement". In unfocused interaction individuals simply share their presence in the same social situation, whereas in focused interaction they participate in a special type of mutual activity that can exclude others who are present in the situation (Goffman 1963: 83).

Moreover, Goffman defines focused interaction as a face engagement or encounter (Goffman 1963: 89). Face-engagements or encounters comprise all instances where two or more participants in a situation join each other to maintain a single focus of cognitive and visual attention, in short, to share a single mutual activity (Goffman 1963: 89; 1964). For instance, private conversations are fully-focused gatherings that typically occur between just two individuals. In contrast, if there are more than three people present, more than one encounter can occur in the same situation (a multi-focused gathering). Goffman uses the term participation unit to refer both to encounters and to unengaged participants (who are not currently members of an encounter and are, in other words, bystanders). Situations containing both engaged and unengaged participants are termed partly-focused gatherings. (Goffman 1963: 91.)

Furthermore, Goffman recognizes an occasion of talk or an episode of interaction as a (naturally) bounded unit consisting of the total activity that participants have accredited one another (Goffman 1967: 35; 1963: 89).
1.2.2 Sociation

For Simmel, interaction between individuals refers to larger social structures and/or society itself. Interaction always arises on the basis of particular drives and for the sake of particular purposes. For Simmel, the significance of interactions lies in the fact that they lead the individuals pursuing these drives or interests to form a unit (or a “society”). Thus, in interactions, everything that is present in an individual in the form of drives, interests, purposes or psychological states is present in order to engender or mediate effects upon others or receive such effects. These are the content or the material of what Simmel calls “sociation”. In sociation they are factors in the transformation of isolated individuals into specific forms of inter-related entities. In other words, sociation (social interaction at large) is the form or process in which (isolated) individuals grow together into units that satisfy their interests. In other words, Simmel’s unit is a kind of interaction (event) in which two or more individuals have engaged to satisfy their needs and interests. Thus Simmel’s unit comes close to Goffman’s face engagements and encounters. Sociation, on the other hand, can be seen as the “larger” process of interaction, including all types of social events where people (re)produce their social worlds and interpersonal relationships.

For Simmel, conversation -- which presupposes two parties -- is the purest and most sublimated form of two-way-ness. Moreover, conversation has its own norms and significance that reflect the elements of sociability1 that keep the conversation away from individual intimacy and all purely personal elements that cannot be adapted to requirements of sociability. Hence, conversational actions are intended and performed for the life, harmony, and common consciousness of the unit (e.g., narratives and their receptions). (Wolff 1950: 49-53.) This means that the interaction unit has the tendency to become the site or vehicle for shared emotions, interests and purposes, which, in turn, form the basis of human societies. (Wolff 1950: 40-41.)

Furthermore, when individuals interact with each other, their (socio-emotional) communication is influenced by the cultural norms or rules of a given society. For instance, Bateson (1978: 40) argues that cultures standardize the affective aspects of their members’ personalities and modify their behaviour to be emotionally consistent. Bateson further argues that in every culture unity has structural aspects that need to be regulated (in interaction) in order to sustain both regularity and continuity with a given culture (Bateson 1978: 39-46, 433-435). This is based on the cultural rules governing a given situation and its participants (cf. Hochschild 1979; also Goffman 1961, rules of etiquette, rules of bodily comportment). Hence, cultural rules of conduct seem to show us how to manage ourselves in a particular social situation that is embedded in a larger socio-cultural structure.

Ekman (2007: 4) sees the cultural factors of the standardization of emotional communication as display rules. Display rules concern who can display which emotion to

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1 The term sociability is the play-form of sociation. According to Simmel, “Its relation to content-determined, concrete sociation is similar to that of the work of art to reality… … Its aim is nothing but the success of the sociable moment and, at most, a memory of it… … Where specific interests (in cooperation or collision) determine the social form, it is these interests that prevent the individual from presenting his peculiarity and uniqueness in too unlimited and independent a manner”. (Wolff 1950: 45.)
One of the most common rules throughout Western cultures is the rule that forbids displays of joy or happiness at funerals (Ekman 2007). Generally, such rules dictate that we diminish, exaggerate, hide, or mask the expression of the emotion we are feeling (Ekman 2007: 4; also 1985). Furthermore, according to Hochschild (1979), not only are there culturally specific rules about what to express in a given situation but there are also rules about what to feel in a situation. Feeling rules help us make our emotions appropriate to the social situation we are engaged in. This kind of emotion work involves the act of evoking or shaping feelings in oneself (Hochschild 1979: 561). But now, one may ask, do individuals shape their (inner) feelings in social situations? While it is not within the scope of this study to describe how emotions are evoked or shaped within the individual, the study can provide evidence of how emotions are evoked and publicly displayed and regulated in interaction using facial and other embodied expressions. Therefore, instead of the individual, the analytic focus of the study is interacting participants (consider Goffman’s focused encounters, Simmel’s units), who collaboratively regulate their emotional relationship and situational involvement as the interaction unfolds.

Of particular relevance to this study is how facial expressions are part of this collaborative regulation process. According to Birdwhistell, facial expressions should be studied in their social setting (context) if we wish to understand the range of meaning individuals (of a given society) convey to each other when displaying facial activity (Birdwhistell 1970: 35). For him, there are no facial expressions or gestures that provoke identical responses throughout the world. In the present study, facial expressions of basic emotions2 (cf. Ekman 2007) are the key focus. Such facial expressions of basic emotions are joy, surprise, disgust, anger, fear and sadness. Even though they are universally displayed and recognized throughout the world, their contextual meaning varies. Thus, we can -- arguably quite easily -- recognize how a certain facial expression is constructed and expressed (e.g., a smile), but the meaningful (socio-cultural) code of the facial expression is not revealed by the expression itself (Birdwhistell 1970: 34; also Nummenmaa 2010: 88-89).

Even though there are thus no rules carved in stone for interpreting the meaning of facial expressions (even within a specific cultural group), individuals usually succeed in making their facial and other emotional expressions understandable to their partners in interaction. This seems to be due to participants’ primary goal of managing their embodied actions and performances in order to pursue and maintain shared understanding and alignment of the current activity (e.g., Goffman 1963).

With respect to previous notions of interactional units and the socio-cultural structures influencing them, the articles in this study examine how certain facial expressions, for example smiles and frowns, are part of the collaborative regulation of interactional units (in my case dyadic units) in Finnish conversations. The articles show how participants use facial expressions embedded in spoken interaction to collaboratively balance and negotiate valence and the degree of intimacy. Through it, a joint display and shared momentary understanding of the situational relation are achieved.

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2 Ekman and colleagues discovered that humans universally express the same basic emotions with their face and also recognize these emotions from the face of another, regardless of race, sex, or socio-economic background (e.g., Ekman 2007; Ekman & Friesen 2003).
1.3 Sequentially unfolding embodied interaction

In this section I discuss the constraints and organization of social interaction. First, I show how interaction situations are structurally organized. Second, I discuss the multimodal character of face-to-face interaction.

1.3.1 Organization of interaction

Human social interaction is sequentially organized through turn-taking (Sacks et al. 1974). Moreover, actions that are accomplished by talking (and by other embodied means) are performed in turns-at-talk (Schegloff 2007: 3). The building blocks of turns are called turn-constructational units (TCU). Turn-taking and turn organization have two main features: first, the TCU, as a unit of conduct, implements the action or actions of the turn, and second, it defines the sort of response made relevant by the action(s) for the next speaker (cf. Schegloff 2007:4). Turn-taking organization may be seen in the clearest way in adjacency pairs, where the first pair part is produced by the initiation of some kind of action trajectory and the second pair part by the response to it (e.g., greeting-greeting, question-answer, invitation-acceptance/refusal). Thus, these are the smallest sequences of action (Sacks et al. 1974; Schegloff 2007), with larger activity sequences (e.g., a storytelling event) involving multiple “single” turns. Every turn and action is constructed in relation to the previous turn (and action), which simultaneously creates a place for the next turn (e.g., Heritage & Maynard 2006). Moreover, it should be emphasized that there are no “official” rules governing interaction; instead, there are only the expectations that participants create for each other via their actions (and their projections) (cf. Schegloff 2007; 1984). Moreover, the meaning of every word and embodied display arises from the larger multi-layered semiotic field and context where the action is embedded (Duranti & Goodwin 1992: 3; Birdwhistell 1970).

1.3.2 The multimodal character of interaction

In face-to-face conversation, there occurs a great deal of meaningful interaction “outside” words. When we follow another’s talk, we also pay attention to such things as gaze, gestures and the quality of and variation in the tone of talk. Face-to-face interaction is thereby a stream of multi-modal signals (e.g., Levinson 2006; Birdwhistell 1970). Moreover, in face-to-face interaction we use our full bodies -- such as gestures, gaze directions, head movements, facial expressions and the lexical and prosodic features of talk (Goodwin 2000; 2003; 1981; Rossano 2012; Kendon 2004; Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 1987; M.H. Goodwin 1980; Mondada 2007; 2006; Stivers 2008; Duranti & Goodwin 1992; Stivers & Sidnell 2005; Streeck, Goodwin & LeBaron 2011). Therefore, communicative actions that are performed using resources or modalities other than talk can be crucial for mutual understanding and the organization of (inter)action (e.g., Goodwin 2007).

A distinction can furthermore be made between the vocal/aural and visuospatial modalities (Enfield 2005). The vocal-aural modality encompasses spoken language,
including prosody. The visuospatial modality includes gesture, gaze, and posture (Stivers & Sidnell 2005). Stivers and Sidnell (2005: 2) observe that one modality should not be privileged over another, instead suggesting that much can be gained from examining a turn-at-talk from both a vocal (e.g., prosody, syntax) as well as a visuospatial (e.g., body orientation, gaze, facial expression, accompanying gestures) perspective. Thus, even though this study focuses on facial expressions, no modality has been excluded from the analysis of interactions.

Next, I move on to discuss what we know about the organization of emotional expressions in interaction.

1.4 Emotions in interaction

Expressions of emotion play a central role in social interaction (e.g., Sorjonen & Peräkylä 2012). According to Goffman (1978: 813), in spoken interaction, perceivable affect -- and in a special case, perceivable lack of affect -- is a necessary part of any spoken utterance. In interaction, rapidly changing emotional stance displays are part of the actions that participants perform (M.H. Goodwin et al. 2012; Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 1987; 1992; 2000; Heath et al. 2012; Maynard & Freese 2012; Selting 2010). For example, news is typically characterized by a positive or negative emotional stance. In an emotional stance display, individuals display their emotional stance toward a spoken object, a stance which may or may not be shared by the co-interactant(s). Moreover, this object-orientation may extend across multiple stance acts performed by different participants (cf. DuBois 2007: 159). Thus, stancetaking is not the isolated act of an individual but a dialogical and interactional process (Kärkkäinen 2006; DuBois 2007). Displays of emotional stance are typically made using various embodied resources (such as prosody, facial expression and lexical items) that combine to elaborate meaning (M.H. Goodwin et al. 2012; Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 2000).

Moreover, the emotional meaning of talk is central to its use in interaction, and thus emotional displays are integral parts of the organization of a particular social action made with talk and other embodied resources (cf. Peräkylä 2012: 275-276). Hence, emotions can be seen as meaningful components of action sequences, which can be examined as performed displays that are realized as embodied practices (Couper-Kuhlen 2009: 96). These practices are always situated at specific sequential positions within a given interaction. Thus, as Goodwin and M.H. Goodwin (2000: 239) observe, the relevant unit for the analysis of emotion is the sequential organization of action.

Previous conversation analytical studies have revealed the many ways in which emotions can be an integral part of social action in interaction. Social actions in which emotions may play an important role include, for instance, the production of affiliative responses to stories and descriptions and the delivery and reception of (good and bad) news through the use of prosody (and other embodied resources) (Couper-Kuhlen 2012; Selting 2010; 2012; Maynard & Freese 2012), and using talk, gestures and facial expressions to create congruent understanding and shared opinions between participants in assessment sequences (Pomerantz 1984; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009; Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 1987; 2000). Thus, embodied expressions of emotion are not something that “leaks out”; rather, they are strategically used for achieving particular (individual and shared) goals (e.g., M.H.

In interaction, emotional displays are thus used for managing, moment-by-moment, the situational involvement and social relationship of participants within a particular (constantly changing) social action or activity sequence. As the ongoing action continuously changes during the unfolding interaction, so the situational cognitive-emotional relationship between the participants must also be constantly modified in order to render it appropriate to the action at hand, which in turn, effects on the (situational) relationship.

The conversational analytic studies on emotions in interaction discussed above deal with emotions as public displays that are produced during social action. Thus, emotions are socially constructed and serve the purposes of communication and relationship (intimacy, social bonding etc.). Therefore, public emotions serve interpersonal communication that is closely tied to the regulation of unfolding interaction.

To briefly elaborate on the functions of emotions in interaction, it seems that all the emotional “work” performed in interaction aspires to one common goal: finding and keeping a balance between the current activity and the situational relationship between the participants. This relationship comprises the co-interactants’ (personal) feelings, attitudes and goals, which are publicly worked on or manipulated to create shared views, social bonds and intimacy, in other words (intimate) relationships (cf. Wolff 1950; Bateson 1978; Goffman 1963; DuBois 2007; Schutz 1967).

1.5 Relationships guiding interactions

Relationships can be seen as something that guide interactions, ergo we tend to interact more with people who are familiar to us, and whom we find agreeable (especially when we are not dealing with daily routines and the businesses of our lives), and through recurring interactions with familiar people, we build and maintain intimate relationships. Moreover, in relationships, which are actualized in interactions, individuals share experiences, and build shared emotions and intimacy. But how are these matters of social bonding constructed and managed in talk-in-interaction?

1.5.1 Interacting bodies sharing attitudes, views and emotions

According to Mead, individuals have a strong tendency to favour shared attitudes and evaluations rather than those peculiar to themselves (Mead 1967; 2002, cited in Poggi & Sciortino 2011: 99). In the field of conversation analysis, this tendency for shared opinions has been conceptualized through the idea of preference organization (Pomerantz 1984).

In interaction, individuals do not just seek shared views and understanding; rather, the totality of participants’ behaviour is also oriented towards the affective or emotional aspects of communication (cf. Bateson 1978: 39-40; Goffman 1963: 36) and, importantly, towards sharing these affective aspects with others (e.g., Collins 2004). Recently, Tomasello (2008)
has suggested that sharing (attitudes and feelings) is one of the primary communicative motives alongside informing and requesting.

Thus, sharing an emotion is something that individuals do “purposely”, it is not -- at least typically -- something that is outside our “control”. Moreover, as emotional stances change rapidly as the interaction unfolds (e.g., M.H. Goodwin et al. 2012), participants constantly alter their embodied expressions of emotion, in order to be correctly attuned to the situation at hand. Therefore, in order to be fully engaged in an occasioned activity, we must continuously sustain the right kind of cognitive and affective engrossment with the action and our partner(s) (cf. Goffman 1963). This occurs through the use of our entire bodies (including talk), which the co-participant(s) can recognize and react to.

Thus, our interacting physical bodies -- through which we share attention, information, attitudes and emotions -- are a resource for generating solidarity, representations, and symbols of group membership between participants, which in turn resonate with larger social structures (cf. Collins 2004; Durkheim 1912/1965; Wolff 1950; Goffman 1983; 1967; 1963; Bateson 1978; also Turner 2000). Moreover, according to von Scheve (2012), facial expressions of emotion play a key role in generating robust patterns of social interaction, and thus in structuring and reproducing the micro-social order. Hence, through the examination of the use of facial expressions in mundane face-to-face interaction, this study sheds light on the pragmatic and communicative role of facial expressions in calibrating and constructing social interaction and the social order.

Blumer (1966) furthermore claims that in human communication the meaning of our bodily expressions is dependent on the changing actions and orientations (or stances) that arise in interaction (cf. Monaghan 2006: 126). Moreover, as our bodies are situated within a constant stream of motion in both time and space, the situational meaning of our embodied expressions arises in a world in which there is an ongoing process of “structure, destruction, and (re)construction” (Birdwhistell 1970: 76). This is close to Goodwin’s (2013) idea of the organization of human (social) action. When we produce an action in interaction, we do it by combining a different set of embodied resources that can and will often be decomposed, reused and transformed when constructing the next action(s) (Goodwin 2013). Hence, the meaning of the embodied expression(s) (e.g., a particular facial expression, body posture, and/or lexical and prosodic element of talk) constantly changes as the interaction unfolds, becoming dependent on an evaluative contrast between the past and the present (moment of time) (cf. Vannini & Waskul 2006; Birdwhistell 1970: 76; Goodwin 2013).

Bearing this in mind, this study also produces knowledge of how participants’ facial expressions -- which are part of holistic embodied communicative acts or actions -- contribute to the process of regulating the situational affective engrossment of participants in an interaction unit. In the next section, I more closely discuss the constraints that underlie face-to-face interaction in terms of constructing shared actions and congruent understanding.

1.5.2 Creating shared understanding via perceptible body movements

According to Schutz (1967), we grasp what is occurring in other peoples’ minds only through the medium of their perceived body movements, meaning that others’ bodies are a field of expression of their inner life. In a face-to-face interaction, we watch the gestures, face, and
tone of voice of the other, trying to understand what it is they are communicating to us (and vice versa) (Schutz 1967: 169-173). This happens through observation as we keep pace with each moment of the other’s consciousness as it is manifested to us. In other words, the matter or thing that is expressed arises together with the act of expression (Merleau-Ponty 2012). For Merleau-Ponty (2012: 316), what is expressed through the body is always part of the original or initial “work” which creates the meaning of the display (and never a “secondary” work that follows the original planning of what is being expressed). Moreover, what is expressed is essentially part of how it is expressed. Hence, our experiences of the world and others are mediated through our bodies and in negotiation with others. Therefore, meaning lies in the production of an action and in the perception of that action. Thus, face-to-face interaction presupposes the actual simultaneity of two separate streams of consciousness, achieved by mutual close attention and interpretation of the other’s bodily expressions (Schutz 1967: 163-173; Merleau-Ponty 2012). Schutz uses the term “we-relationship”³ to describe interactants’ mutual orientation toward each other within an interacting unit.

Thus, in summary of the phenomenological studies discussed in the previous chapter, individuals repeatedly orient to and interpret (and constantly re-interpret) each other’s fleshy bodies as the interaction unfolds, seeking meaning and the correct interpretation of the mental state of the other in order to appropriately (re)modify their own conscious acts (through embodied expressions) in alignment with the other. The articles presented in this study show some distinct ways in which facial expressions are one channel for representing consciousness within a situational activity. Thus, visible changes or movements -- whether minor or drastic -- in our faces and bodies can be seen as both providing an instant “ontological” window into our changed focus of attention or the state of “conscious embodied mind”, and also creating a substrate (cf. Goodwin 2013) for the recipient to shift or modify their visible focus of attention and mental state to align with and/or be similar to the other. The facial expressions of both participants, thus, are an important channel for communicating the interpretation of the other’s embodied action(s) and how they live that moment of interpretation (and re-action) as a living bodily entity.

Next, I provide a more detailed discussion of earlier studies on facial expressions in (dyadic) face-to-face interactions, before presenting the objectives of this study.

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³ The we-relationship is a reciprocal “thou-orientation”. In a thou-orientation we recognize the other as an entity, and its pure form consists of being intentionally directed to the pure being-there of another alive and conscious human being. In a we-relationship, participants are aware of each other and sympathetically participate in each other’s lives. When you and I are immediately involved with each other, every experience is colored by that involvement. Moreover, a we-relationship is spatial-temporal. While I am living in the we-relationship (with someone else), I am really living in our common stream of consciousness. (Schutz 1967: 163-167.)
1.6 Facial expressions and regulation of interaction

Before I move on to discuss the research on facial expressions in micro-level dyadic interaction, I will provide a short theoretical overview of earlier studies on the socio-emotional aspects of facial expressions at a more general level.

1.6.1 Facial expression, emotion and communication

Darwin (1872/2009) mentioned that facial expressions have an adaptive value, as they have served important functions in helping our ancestors survive and protect themselves. For Darwin, facial displays -- as a means of expression -- are not primary learned; rather, they are inherited behaviour patterns that have evolved from particular natural causes (Darwin 1872/2009: 302-304). After the evolution of these expressions, they (later) became detached from their original functions and instead began to be purposely used for communicative purposes (Darwin 1872/2009: 305). For instance, Darwin mentions that people may display anger through their facial and bodily expressions (e.g., by baring their teeth and lowering their eyebrows) just before attacking, or at something they have no intention of attacking. Thus, displays of anger serve as a social "warning sign" to the other to retreat or risk assault (cf. Fridlund 1994). Darwin also recognizes that there is a link between facial expressions and emotions.4

If we now consider the relationship between interpersonal communication, facial expressions and emotions, there are two main perspectives that strive to clarify the behavioural functions of the facial expression of emotions: the readout and behavioural ecology hypotheses. In short, the readout hypothesis understands facial expressions as something strongly connected to inner motivational-emotional processes. These processes have important functions in our lives, but they work "autonomously", as reactions to the external environment, while being, at least to some degree, accessible to the conscious mind. Hence, we are not blind to these inner mechanisms but may learn from them and, especially, how to socially control or coordinate them (see, e.g., Buck 1980; 1985; 1994). In contrast, the behavioural ecology hypothesis in effect ignores the inner states of "emotion" that may or may not be related to facial expressions, while emphasizing the social motives behind facial expressions. Thus, the behaviour ecology hypothesis sees social intent behind every act, and consequently as social constructionists5 see it, facial displays do not necessarily need "emotions" to explain them or their functions (cf. Fridlund 1997; 1994; 1991).

4 In the 1960s, psychologist Paul Ekman and colleagues (e.g., Ekman 2007; Ekman & Friesen 2003; 1969) began to study human facial expressions and their connection to inner emotional states and processes. It has been claimed that if we feel a particular emotion it is hard to conceal it in the face (Ekman 2007; Matsumoto & Sung Hwang 2013), meaning that there is a link between a particular facial expression and a particular inner emotional state (e.g., smile connected to happiness) (also Ekman & Davidson 1993; Soussignan 2002; Finzi 2013). For instance, it has also been reported that each of the facial expressions of basic emotions has a distinct and discrete physiological signature in the autonomic nervous system (Ekman et al. 1983, in Matsumoto & Sung Hwang 2013: 22, see also Davidson et al. 2003; Levenson & Ekman 2002; Mauss et al. 2005).

5 Social constructivists -- similar to proponents of the behaviour ecology hypothesis -- are sceptical about the inner experiences and processes that (possibly) underlie emotional communication. (Potter 2006; Gergen 1999;
Now, let us move on to examine what we already know about facial expressions in dyadic face-to-face interactions.

1.6.2 Facial expressions as a communicative resource

Bavelas and Chovil (2000) argue that in face-to-face dialogue facial expressions are “visible acts of meaning”. For them, facial expressions and words combine to form an integrated message; thus the meaning of a particular facial expression comes from the linguistic context in which it is displayed. In her research on video-recorded dyadic conversations in a laboratory setting, Chovil (1991) observed that participants used both syntactic and semantic facial displays. Syntactic facial displays were used to emphasize the talk, e.g., marking a question or the beginning of an account. These displays were typically made with raised or lowered eyebrows. In contrast, semantic facial displays were used by speakers to express their personal reaction toward the talk, e.g., by raising the upper lip and wrinkling the nose while talking about disgusting food. Chovil (1991) also draws a distinction between redundant and non-redundant facial displays. Redundant facial displays convey the same information as the talk, while non-redundant facial displays convey information that the talk does not address. Moreover, Chovil and Bavelas (Chovil 1991; Bavelas & Chovil 2000) observe that the recipients of talk use facial listener's comments (e.g., moving their eyebrows) to display both the fact that they are listening and also their reaction to the talk. For Bavelas and Chovil, the meaning of a particular facial expression comes from the linguistic context in which it is displayed, and consequently they analysed and understood facial expressions in relation to the talk of the speaker. In other words, rather than examining the inherent (emotional) meanings of facial expressions, they focused on how they serve talk. Moreover, for Bavelas and Chovil, facial expressions are a communicative resource.

1.6.3 Facial expressions as an interactional resource

Building on Bavelas and Chovil’s work, Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori (2006; 2012; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009) began to study facial expressions using conversation analytical methods and data collected from naturally occurring conversations. They were interested in how facial expressions are used in social communication and how they help interlocutors coordinate their (communicative) actions and regulate their emotional expressions and situational relationship. They found that facial expressions can emphasize or modify the valence of the lexical assessment as well as secure the mutual alignment of the participants. They call these functions semantic and relational (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori 2006; also Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009: 380). Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori, who studied the use of facial expressions in assessments and various kinds of accounts and descriptions, argue that facial expressions can stretch the boundaries of spoken actions. For instance, they report that when foreshadowing an utterance a facial expression can work as a pre-assessment that hints at

also Peräkylä 2012: 286.) In contrast, social constructionists argue that emotions are purely socially constructed and thus thoroughly public phenomena.
the emotional valence of the forthcoming utterance. In contrast, a facial expression that follows an utterance may work as a resource for inviting an affiliative response from the co-interactant (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori 2006; 2012; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009). For them, facial expressions are a powerful and flexible resource for emotional stance displays. Facial expressions are intertwined with but not identical to the spoken action, as they are temporally flexible and can precede, co-exist with or follow the spoken action.

As Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori (2006) argue, facial expressions seem to work as a flexible interactional resource that provides information on interpersonal meaning and the purposes of both the speaker and the hearer necessary for participants to construct and sustain mutual alignment with regard to the momentary unfolding of spoken action (see also Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009). This study uses the same theoretical perspective employed by Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori, and thus builds on their work on facial expressions in interaction.

2 Data & method

2.1 Data

The data corpus of this study consists of five recorded dyadic Finnish conversations over lunch. The conversations were recorded with three video cameras: two cameras recorded the participants’ facial expressions and upper bodies and one camera the overall situation. The length of the conversations varies from 30 minutes to 70 minutes. University students were asked to come for a free lunch in a room located in a cafeteria on the local university campus. The data are quasi-natural, as the researchers provided a setting that would most closely approximate a natural situation. The participants were familiar with each other and were able to decide themselves on the direction of their interaction; thus the researchers gave them no advice other than the instruction to hold their lunch meeting in the normal way (cf. Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori 2006). All participants agreed to have their images reproduced in academic papers.

In their first publication on the topic, Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori provided an explanation of the chosen method and type of data (with regard to the earlier standardized experimental studies on facial expressions), both of which are also used in this study:

*Conversation analytical research has provided a set of well documented and cumulative findings that show how everyday conversation is orderly and organized in sequences of actions achieved through adjacent turns of talk by the participants. Thus, instead of standardizing the environment, as in experimental studies, it was possible for us to draw upon previous conversation analytical research to find segments in conversation where a similar action was taking place, where the participants were observably ‘doing the same thing’ as before. (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori 2006: 129.)*

As Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori explain, the type of data used provides an opportunity for ongoing, uninterrupted access to the faces of both participants at any given moment of time. This was crucial for the analytic purposes of both their facial expressions studies and my PhD study.
2.2 Conversation analysis as a method for analysing facial expressions in mundane face-to-face conversations

As mentioned above, research focusing on facial expressions in naturally occurring interaction is new and draws on conversation analytical notions of everyday social interaction. Conversation analysis has its roots in ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1967), which studies the processes, structures and organization of everyday life, describing, more specifically, how ordinary members of society, together with other co-members (of a given society or social group) understand and make sense of the spheres of that life (Heritage 1984). Hence, conversation analytic research not only focuses on interactional practices and social actions but also on the larger organizational and structural aspects of human social interaction and social life. The guiding principle of conversation analysis is that social interaction unfolds moment-by-moment in time (and space), meaning that participants use social actions to collaboratively manage the sequential activity in a given context: every action is both context-shaped (participants tie their actions to what has just passed) and context-renewing (each and every action creates a context and an expectation for the next action) (e.g., Heritage & Maynard 2006; Heritage 1984).

Conversation analysis originated from lectures given by Harvey Sacks at the University of California between 1964 and 1972 (cf. Sacks 1992a; 1992b). Sacks saw the social world as structurally organized and “in place”, and the sociologist’s job was, through empirical analysis, to unveil the structures and practices used to maintain the social realm. Thus, conversation analysis is data driven, focusing on the systematic analysis of audio or video recorded conversations (today video recorded data are becoming more and more popular within the conversation analytic community). The first conversation analytic studies were groundbreaking, as through rigorous analysis of telephone conversations they demonstrated the systematic and generic practices of conversation: turn-taking (Sacks et al. 1974), repair (Shegloff et al. 1977), and openings (Shegloff 1979) and closings (Schegloff & Sacks 1973). Conversation analytic research has also demonstrated the preference organization of human communication (Schegloff & Sacks 1973; Pomerantz 1984) and that the meaning of a particular social action is based on its sequential context (e.g., Heritage 1984; Duranti & Goodwin 1992).

Conversation analytic research on everyday face-to-face interaction describes how conversational practices and social actions are constructed and modified and how the key components of interaction, such as turn design, turn-taking and turn and action construction are collaborative managed and coordinated, using our whole bodies, to render them appropriate to the given contextual moment (Schegloff 1996; 2007; Levinson 2012; Mondada 2007; Streeck & Hartge 1992; Goodwin 2000; 1981; 2013; M.H. Goodwin 1980; Rossano 2012).

With regard to this study, another relevant aspect of conversation analytic research concerns the situational management of participants’ affective relationship. Previous research has shown how participants use different kinds of embodied resources, such as nods, head shakes, words, phrases and sentences, prosodic markings and gestures to regulate situational congruence and incongruence and build intimacy and shared emotions (M.H. Goodwin et al. 2012; Selting 2010; Couper-Kuhlen 2012; Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 1987; M.H. Goodwin 1980; Voutilainen 2010; Hepburn & Potter 2012; Iwasaki 2011). Even
though previous research has shown how participants can use the full range of embodied resources in these situations, few studies have systematically examined facial expressions in these processes (notable exceptions include e.g., Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori 2006; 2012; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009; Iwasaki 2011; Haakana 2010; Selting 2010; 2012; also Pajo & Klippi 2013).

2.3 Aims of the study and research questions

This study follows earlier conversational analytic studies on facial expressions, emotions and collaboration in turn and action construction. The aim is to examine human facial expressions as a resource in the collaborative construction of emotional stance in social interaction. To examine the uses of the face in the construction of stance, it is also necessary to investigate the uses of the face in relation to turn design and action construction, and in the management of the situational relationship between the speaker and the hearer. The first two articles of this study examine the interactional trajectories of smiles and frowns (as pre-beginning elements, see Schegloff 1996) that occur during the silence just before the onset of a spoken turn. The third article of this study focuses on the role of recipients’ facial expression of emotion during speakers’ talk and accounts, analysing their functions in the collaborative modification processes of the shared emotional stance. My general research question can be formulated in the following way:

How do facial expressions contribute to the construction and modification of shared emotional stances in dyadic interactions?

The starting point for the first and second articles of this study is the results presented in Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori’s initial studies on facial expressions, which demonstrate that facial expressions are an important resource for participants in an assessment activity, as they are used in the coordination and incorporation of participants’ momentary affective relationship and can also extend the (temporal) boundaries of a spoken action (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori 2006; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009). Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori argue that facial expressions that precede or succeed spoken utterances may have important interpersonal and communicative functions in face-to-face interaction.

Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori’s studies inspired me to examine more closely the facial expressions that foreshadow spoken turns. Consequently, I began to compile a collection of smiles, and a little later a collection of frowns, that occur just before spoken utterances, and which remain on the speaker’s face after they have begun to talk. The specific research question with regard to articles 1 and 2 can be formulated as follows: what is the interactional work performed by incipient smiles and frowns that occur before utterances and are maintained during the utterance they foreshadow?

It soon became clear that these facial expressions have not only interpersonal but also turn constructional functions, as they also work as elements that indicate the approach of a proper turn beginning (see articles 1 and 2). Schegloff’s (1996: 92-93; 1984; also 2007)
notions on **pre-beginning elements** and **action projection** provided me with invaluable help in better understanding turn-opening facial expressions as components of turns, and more specifically their interpersonal functions and interactional trajectories (see more in the next section 3).

The third article of this study was inspired by the work of C. Goodwin and M.H. Goodwin. They have demonstrated how (the meaning of) talk is emerging action produced not by the speaker alone but together with the hearer(s) (Goodwin 1979; M.H. Goodwin 1980; Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 1987; Goodwin 2013). Moreover, the authors have demonstrated the many ways in which both parties use various embodied resources (e.g., nods, head shakes, gestures, prosody) to collaboratively produce the action at hand (see also Goodwin 2000). They underscore the dynamic and ongoing process of action (and meaning) construction, in the sense that speakers may shape their turn of talk on the basis of the visible and vocal operations of the hearer, which are not restricted to the boundaries of the turns of talk (cf. Schegloff 1996) but are often produced simultaneously with the talk, for instance in assessment activities (Goodwin 1979; 2013; M.H. Goodwin 1980; Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 1987; see also Iwasaki 2011).

I consequently began to compile a collection of instances where recipients produced distinct facial expressions of emotion (as yet undisplayed by the speaker) during or immediately following the speaker’s talk. Moreover, as the third article of this study shows (see section 3 below), in these cases, recipients can use facial expressions to successfully contribute to the talk of the speaker and, more specifically, introduce a new emotional stance to the conversation (in collaboration with the speaker).

The articles in this study were co-authored by Anssi Peräkylä and Johanna Ruusuvuori, who were the supervisors of my PhD thesis. The initial ideas for the articles arose from our shared work and my individual work with the data. When the ideas began to crystallize, I produced the first versions of the articles, which were then commented on and later edited by Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori. The articles were then submitted to journals for publication, after which I made the necessary revisions and passed them once more to Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori for comment and editing. Peräkylä was my primary supervisor throughout the work; he significantly contributed to the work from day one, giving ideas, help in analysing the data and guidance in the research process. With regard to articles 1 and 2, he helped clarify the concepts in the introduction and discussion sections and contributed to the data analysis and the structure of the articles. Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori also contributed to the analysis and structure of article 3, especially regarding the use of concepts and the article’s line of argument. Peräkylä also contributed to the outline and narrative of the article.

### 3 Summary of the results of the articles

#### 3.1 Turn-opening smiles in conversation

The first article of this study examines smiles that occur during the silence between two utterances. In these interactional moments, the upcoming speaker begins to smile just before starting to talk, and as the smile that foreshadowed the utterance is sustained on the face of
the speaker after the talk has begun, the smile becomes intertwined with the talk and the other embodied expressions displayed within it (such as gestures, gaze shifts, laugh particles, and prosodic features of the talk). As a result, the turn initial smile becomes part of the action of the turn.

The analysis focused not only on how such smiles relate to the utterance they foreshadow but also on how they relate to the larger sequential context and how their recipients respond to them. In other words, the article describes the interactional trajectories of what we call turn-opening smiles.

Furthermore, the article demonstrates how turn-opening smiles begin an emotional transition in conversation by introducing a new positive or humorous stance, which is then strengthened with various embodied resources during the upcoming spoken turn. The recipients of turn-opening smiles always reciprocate them, and thus share the new emotional stance. Recipients also typically reciprocate the other markers of the new stance, such as laugh particles, and this serves to collaboratively (with the speaker) strengthen and prolong the stance. The timing of the reciprocation varies from quick to delayed. In delayed reciprocation, the recipient reciprocates the stance after the speaker has made explicit the grounds for the emotional transition, whereas quick reciprocation takes place before the verbal explanation for the emotional transition, often the moment (or shortly after) the recipient sees the smile. There seem to be many contextual factors, such as previous conversational context, the participants’ epistemic relationship, shared experiences and common ground, which influence the timing of emotional reciprocation.

The article suggests that turn-opening smiles and their interactional trajectories are closely related to emotional contagion (cf. Hatfield et al. 1993a; 1993b). The results of the study suggest that the process of emotional contagion is not automatic but operates through the organization of the interaction (cf. Peräkylä 2012).

To give the reader a better understanding of the phenomena examined in the article, below is a simplified example:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 A: Määkään en osannu siihen sit oikkee sanoa ( ) ( )</td>
<td>I also was unable to really say anything about that ( ) ( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (et #ota#)Marjattaa #yhteyttä#.</td>
<td>(that #get#) in #touch with# Marjatta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (0.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 B: Hhh[hi hi hi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 A: [EMarjattaa soittaa ja</td>
<td>[EMarjatta will make a phone call and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 hoitaa hhe hh[e .hh sen</td>
<td>deal with hhe[hhe .hh it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the extract, the interlocutors are discussing the educational plans of A’s brother, who is planning to apply to college. In lines 11-12, A describes her recent meeting with her brother, in which she was unable to help him – instead advising him to contact Marjatta. Until this point, the interaction has proceeded in emotionally neutral terms. A small silence then follows.

A’s *turn-opening smile* emerges during the silence that occurs when she is gazing down at her meal and while B gazes at her. Frame 7:1 captures the neutral faces of both participants, while frame 7:2 reveals that the corners of A’s mouth have risen.

Frame 7:1
A (speaker)  
B

Silence in line 13

Frame 7:2

Silence in line 13

Next, the recipient, B, instantly begins audibly to exhale in anticipatory laughter (line 14), and a smile also appears on her face (frame 7:3). Thus, the shift in emotional stance initiated by A’s smile in line 13 received immediate reciprocation from B through her smile and her laughing outbreath (line 14). The utterance that follows in lines 15-16, A explains the grounds for their (now shared) amusement by stating, “Marjatta will make a phone call and deal with ... it,“.
At the same time that A begins the utterance explaining the grounds for the shift in her emotional stance (line 15), B begins to laugh (line 14). Through the continuation of A’s utterance, the mutual expression of emotion escalates. The facial expression of amusement becomes intensified in both participants, and especially in B, the recipient (frame 7:4). This was thus an example of the recipient reciprocating turn-opening smile very quickly, immediately after noticing it.

### 3.2 Turn-opening frowns in conversation

The second article examines frowns that occur during the silence between two utterances. In a turn-opening frown, the upcoming speaker frowns just before starting to talk. Such frowns have the same turn initiatory and compositional characteristics as turn-opening smiles: they project a turn beginning and remain on the speaker's face after they have started to talk, thus becoming integral parts of the action of the turns they foreshadow. However, the interactional trajectories of turn-opening frowns substantially differ from the trajectories of turn-opening smiles.

The article reports that turn-opening frowns anticipate utterances involving negative evaluation, disaffiliation, and/or epistemic challenge. The utterance that follows the turn-opening frown exposes the grounds for the problem.
The problem that turn-opening frowns anticipate typically arises from the sequential context of the interaction. There is a misfit between turns starting with frowns and what has occurred just before. In “problem turns” the speaker introduces a “private”, but still communicative, problem, with the seeming intention of signifying that the upcoming turn will create a breach in conversation and temporally halt the smooth progression of the activity. These turns relate to marking a disagreement or disaffiliation between speaker and hearer that has not been addressed in prior turn(s).

The article concludes that turn-opening frowns mark a problem and/or an independent speaker stance that is not made relevant for the recipient to share. Moreover, as the article demonstrates, it is unusual for the speaker to look at the recipient while frowning or for the recipient of the turn-opening frown to reciprocate the facial expression. However, in these cases, the recipient must eventually look at the frowning speaker and thus notice the frown. Even though turn-opening frowns are not offered for recipients to share, they remain on the face until they have been seen. They appear to be used to indicate to the recipient that the speaker is encountering a problem that is about to be addressed.

Here is an example taken from the article:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 B:</th>
<th>Meillä on se (0.8) pirun huoltomies ni .hhh just ku se niitä (0.7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>piö- pihaa sieltä (0.4) auraa sil[lä], .mh roa- yard there (0.4) with that .mh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 A:</td>
<td>[Mm]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 B:</td>
<td>&gt;Siis&lt; (0.3) kä:yks teillä siellä pihalla semmosella pienellä emmää tiä mikä &gt;I mean&lt; (0.3) does someone come into your yard with a small I don’t know what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>joku semmonen pikkutraktori helvetti millä .mhh (kind of) something like a small tractor oh to hell with .mhh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>(0.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 B:</td>
<td>[Mmhh]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>(1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 B:</td>
<td>Ai jaa mh no meil on semmonen pieni .hh ja siis viime talvenaha se alotti aina siinä Oh well mh we have that like a small .hh and like last winter it always started then</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27
At the beginning of extract, B has just initiated a new topic and action, complaining about a caretaker who clears the snow from the ground of her apartment building (lines 1-2). In line 4, B asks A whether a small tractor is also used to clear the snow from outside A’s apartment (lines 4-5). This question involves a word search (see line 4): B appears to have difficulties categorizing the small ‘thing’, and settles for ‘tractor’. Towards the end of B’s enquiry (see line 5), A withdraws her gaze from B and looks down (pictures 1-2, in Figure X, see below). During the silence that follows, A frowns before starting to answer B’s question (lines 6-7, pictures 1-3).

4 B:  >Siis< (0.3) kää:yllä siellä pihalla semmosella pienellä emmää tiää mikä
   >I mean< (0.3) do:es someone come into your yard with a small I d'on’t know what

   ![Picture 1](image1.png)

   ![Picture 2](image2.png)

5 joku semmonen pikkutaktori hel[jetti milia. .mhh
   (kind of) something like a small tractor oh to hell with. .mhh
   ![Picture 3](image3.png)

   Frown Emerges on A’s Face

6 (0.1)
   (0.1)

   [Frown disappears from A’s face

7 A:  Mts. Emmää tiää kyl se musta ai[a] isolta näyttää se.
   Mts. I don’t know well I think it looks rather big.

8 B:  [Mmhh.

After she starts to frown, A states, emmää tiää kyl se musta aika isolta näyttää se / I don’t know well I think it looks rather big (line 7), referring to the size of the tractor. A’s turn-opening frown then gradually fades from her face. A uses her utterance to display her uncertainty or difficulty in assessing the size of the tractor that is used to clear the snow in her garden. Moreover, the frown was displayed under the gaze of the co-interactant.

In the extract, the turn initiated by the turn-opening frown involves an epistemic difficulty. B had trouble finding a category to characterize the size of the vehicle. Her hesitation (I don’t know well I think it looks...) reflects this difficulty. The shape of the frown on her face seems to incorporate the epistemic aspect of the problem: upon close examination, her face in picture 3, in figure X, seems to convey the quality of “pondering”.

28
In summary of articles 1 and 2, the following conclusion is offered: turn-opening smiles begin an emotional stance display that looks for connection and sharedness, which is what they receive as a response, as their recipients always reciprocate them. Moreover, turn-opening smiles seem to work as the first step towards lightening the tone of the conversation, as they create shared positive emotions and understanding (affiliation). Turn-opening frowns, on the other hand, begin a private problem display that the recipient will not share or prolong. Moreover, it seems the primary function of turn-opening frowns is to mark or indicate a problem or difficulty on the part of the speaker (e.g., “I have a problem with X, I’m not comfortable with....”), and thus create a momentary distance between the participants (disaffiliation) that has to be dealt with before returning to the smooth flow of conversation.

3.3 Listeners’ facial expressions in collaborative modification of emotional stance

The third article describes the ways in which the speaker and the recipient work together to modify shared emotional stance in the conversation. More specifically, the article demonstrates how the recipient's facial expression of emotion may contribute to the talk while it is ongoing or immediately after its completion.

The results suggest that the recipient’s facial expressions play a major role in the collaborative modification of shared emotional stance. The recipient’s facial expressions do not simply mirror the speaker’s stance or display understanding of the speaker’s talk; rather, they perform well-timed systematic operations on the projected course of the talk. The article reports that recipients’ facial expressions can (i) re-enact a past, previously shared emotion, (ii) evoke a new, more appropriate emotion as a response to the talk, (iii) establish a stance that has been withheld and/or ambiguous in the talk, or (iv) offer an alternative emotion for the talk.

The contribution of the article is to show how speakers and hearers work in collaboration using subtle and well-timed facial (and other) expressions of emotion in order to negotiate, move-by-move, what exact emotional stance(s) they will share. Moreover, it demonstrates how facial expressions are used to manage the shared meaning of immediately preceding, emerging or forthcoming talk. The article highlights the important role of recipients’ facial expressions during the speaker’s talk or description and how speakers, who may or may not have initiated the process of stance modification, integrate these new emotional stances into their talk by reciprocating the new stance through changing their own facial (and other) reactions, either while the talk is still emerging or right after its completion.

Let us now consider an example taken from the article: the participants are discussing A’s work. Alongside her studies, A works part-time in a grocery store. At the beginning of this fragment, B asks if there are other students working at the store (line 2). After A has finished her turn relating to a prior subtopic, A says that Harri is a student (line 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>(1.6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 B:</td>
<td>Nii joo onks siel niit muita opiskelijoita paljon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oh yes are there many other students there.]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 A: [Siis iha selkeesti enemmän ku yleensä]  
[Well definitely more than usually]

4  (0.4)

5 A: Ei siel nyt (.) niinku Harri opiskelee mutta.  
Not now (.) I mean Harri studies but.

6  (1.0)

7 B: Missä se opiskelee.  
Where does he study.

8  (0.4)

9 A: Ammattikorkeakoulussa.  
At a polytechnic.

10  (1.0)

11 A: Lastentarhanopettajaks  
to be a day care teacher

12  (0.2)

13 £Mik[h]ä on aika yllättävä mun  
£Whi[h]ch is quite surprising

14 B: [Aika  
[Quite

15 A: miljESTÅ? hhe] he .hhhh hh[e he .hhh £joo (mäkin)  
to mE£? hhe] he .hhhh hh[e he .hhh £Yeа (I too)

16 B: yllättävä. ] [Heh heh ( )  
surprising. ] [Heh heh ( )

17 A: [( ] £

18 B: [£Las]tenhoitajan pitäs olla semmonen empaatti[nen ja  
[£A day]care teacher should be like empa[thic and

19 A: [£]oo£,  
[£]Yeah£,
After A’s statement that Harri is a student, a one second silence ensues before B asks where he is studying (line 7), to which A replies: ammattikorkeakoulussa / at a polytechnic. When A is finishing her turn, B makes a few nodding gestures, marking that she has acknowledged this new information, before shifting her gaze away from A. During these moments, the participants have adopted neutral faces. After a short silence, A makes an increment to her initial answer by saying lastentarhanopettajaks / to be a day care teacher (line 11). After a short silence, A says, mikä on aika yllättävää mun mielestä / which is quite surprising to me (lines 13-15), and begins to smile and shortly after to laugh. During A’s turn, B begins repeating in overlap the words aika yllättävää / quite surprising (lines 14 and line 16). Subsequently, B, the recipient, reciprocates A’s nonverbal actions before starting to describe the ideal characteristics of a day care teacher, which Harri obviously lacks (lines 13-16). A confirms B’s points by saying joo / yeah when B is producing her criticizing turn (line 18). The negotiation of these shared emotional stances (surprise that transforms into a humorous stance) emerges largely through facial expressions (see Figure X below).
In figure X, A gazes at B after saying ammattikorkeakoulussa / at a polytechnic, while B averts her gaze from A (picture 1 in Figure X, lines 9-10). Next, without being prompted, A provides an increment by saying lastentarhanopettajaks / to be a day care teacher. This word is uttered with slightly more prominent prosody than in the previous talk, with raised pitch and volume. During the first syllable of the word, A raises her eyebrows for a short moment before lowering them somewhat but still keeping them slightly raised (pictures 1-2). Moreover, it appears that with the incremental word A changes the sequential action from answering a factual question to news delivery. With her raised eyebrows and prosody, A intensifies the talk and situational involvement and makes this “new/extra unit” response relevant for the recipient. Next, the recipient, B, shifts her gaze to A and, in a very prominent way, raises her eyebrows and widens her eyes (picture 3), while A utters the last syllable of the word lastentarhanopettajaks / to be a day care teacher. With her distinct facial expression, B seems to be reacting to the vocal and facial actions that “flagged” the newsworthiness of this word.

Subsequently, after A, the speaker, has finished her turn, B, the recipient, raises her head before tilting it down (picture 4). At this very moment, A makes another more substantial raise of her eyebrows (picture 4), which seems to be an attempt to align with B’s facial display. Next, A begins to explain her surprise at Harri’s career choice (lines 13-15), while B continues her facial displays by maintaining her raised eyebrows and widening and rolling her eyes (picture 5) before starting to repeat A’s words (lines 16-18). At that moment, A adopts a smile and introduces a humorous stance, which B reciprocates shortly after as they engage in mutual laughter (lines 15-19, pictures 5-6).

In the example, surprise was the first public emotion, which was transformed into amusement, the second public emotion. Moreover, this transformation of the shared emotional stance was first negotiated facially, before being marked lexically. Prior to this the speaker had first made subtle hints about the forthcoming topic of talk via lexical and prosodic elements of talk and face. The recipient was then able to notice these hints and
subsequently introduce a new emotional stance to the conversation with her facial expression while the speaker’s TCU production still continued.

Furthermore, when recipients make facial emotional contributions of this kind they seem to be related -- at least in our data -- to making a conversational shift from a serious to a light-hearted mode of talk. If we consider the example above, this shift was twofold, as the facial expressions first shifted from seriousness to surprise and then on to humour. Typically (as in shown example), but not always, the speaker makes relevant the recipient’s well-timed and appropriate facial expression for the talk or narrative, thus giving the recipient an important role in the collaborative modification of the emotional sphere of the conversation.

4 Discussion

4.1 Facial expressions are a shared interactional resource for participants

When Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori (2006) released the findings of their conversation analytic research on facial expressions, they emphasized the fact that facial expressions have an important role in naturally occurring face-to-face interaction. They observed that in conversation facial expressions have many meaningful relational and semantic functions with respect to emotions, interpersonal relationship, and the coordination of actions. Moreover, as is argued in this study, the face is a key area of our corporeal bodies in the regulation of interaction, which, in turn, is connected to larger social structures.

This study continues the work of Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori 2006; 2012; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009) and also contributes to studies that address the interplay between talk and bodily conduct (see e.g., Heath & Luff 2013) by showing how facial expressions are both integral parts of turns of talk and also components of the interactional and embodied construction of (social) actions and activity sequences. The articles in this study focus on the interactional trajectories of particular turn initial facial expressions and also on the collaboration (facial and/or otherwise) between the speaker and the recipient in joint modification of the emotional sphere of conversation during the speaker's utterance or narrative. The articles show that facial expressions are used in highly coordinated and systematic ways to express something significant about the emotional attitude of a person that the co-interactant should take into account while planning the next public action(s). The articles show both how participants pay close attention to each other's facial expressions when interpreting the other’s actions and also how facial expressions are used to hint at (or project) the content of upcoming (verbal) actions and emotional attitudes. This “facial calibration work” seems to be performed in order to help the co-interactants interpret and appropriately align with the action(s) that their partner in conversation is constructing through a set of embodied expressions (cf. Goodwin 2000; 2013; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä 2009). Facial calibration work contributes to shared emotions, attitudes and views, and it helps participants find unity and strengthen (social) ties with the other. Shared opinions and emotions build solidarity and cohesion between individuals and, ultimately, hold society together (cf. Collins 2004; Wolff 1950; Durkheim 1912/1965).
4.2 Facial expressions are flexible and meaningful components of turn and action

Articles 1 and 2 demonstrate how facial expressions occurring during the silence between two utterances can project the start of the next turn, more importantly, disclose something crucial about the content of the spoken turn they foreshadow. Thus, by examining turn initial smiles and frowns, these articles contribute to the discussion on the work of pre-beginning elements in interaction (cf. e.g., Schegloff 1996: 92-93; Mondada 2007; Streeck & Hartge 1992; Lindström 2006). Moreover, as the articles demonstrate, turn-opening facial expressions are integral parts of the action they hint at. More specifically, they are already (beginning) elements of the actual action of the turn. Hence, they can be seen as similar to the work of turn initial discourse particles, in that they are also used to contextualize and position, typically precede the verbal contribution displayed in a turn construction unit, and are necessary in order for the recipient to correctly interpret the implemented action (in particular, see the discussion section in article 2; also Lindström 2006; 2008). Moreover, turn-opening smiles and frowns are important action components that help recipients understand speakers’ projected actions (cf. Schegloff 1984), preparing them to appropriately (re)modify their responsive actions in order to sustain (or to restore) a shared perspective on the talk at hand.

Articles 1 and 2 show how the speaker’s facial expressions in the transition space before the forthcoming spoken utterance are vital action components of the ensuing turn of talk; article 3, in contrast, highlights the important work of recipients’ facial expressions during the course of the speaker’s utterance and action construction. Recipients’ facial expressions of emotion are important operations on the speaker’s utterance and have consequences for the emerging process of the talk, more specifically in modifying the shared emotional perspective on it.

When comparing the results of the articles of this study, the following observations can be made: in the first article, the speakers, through smiling, began a transition in their emotional stances towards a positive or humorous position, which the recipients reciprocated and prolonged. In the second article, the speakers, through frowning, began a transition in their emotional stances towards a negative and/or problematic position, which their recipients noticed and reacted to, but did not typically reciprocate. In the third article, during their utterances, the speakers initiated modifications in their emotional stances by various embodied means, which the recipients noticed, joined in and executed/carried further. Alternatively, it was the recipients who took the lead in implementing a new emotional stance, which was, however, made possible by the speaker’s utterance (see extract 4 in article 3). Moreover, it seems that in terms of turn-opening facial expressions (at least in the cases of smiles and frowns), speakers use them to take a new public emotional stance toward the spoken object that recipients are either expected to join in and carry further or use as information to alter their stance in order to re-find a shareable perspective and/or stance toward the spoken object. The findings of the third article highlight a different interactional phenomenon: during the preceding moments of listeners’ facial contributions to speakers’ utterances, the speaker has not displayed a new public emotional stance with a clear interactional trajectory or function. In these conversational moments the speaker and the hearer seem to be in the middle of an “emotional transition” or a negotiation process of emotional stance where one clear, dominant emotional stance (of the speaker) that is made either to be shared or unshared cannot be found (compare to articles 1 and 2).
Earlier studies by M.H. Goodwin (1980) and C. Goodwin (1979; 2013; Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 1987; 2000; also Iwasaki 2011) may shed light on the phenomena discussed in the previous chapter. They have shown how speakers modify their emerging utterances to render them appropriate for the (current) recipient, and how the recipient makes projections about the future course of an utterance and seeks possibilities for engaging in it as a hearer by using different kinds of embodied actions. If we consider article 3 of this study, the recipients engage in and make a shift in the emotional stance of the speakers’ utterances at the precise moment that it has been made possible by the speakers. Hence, the article shows how these stance modification processes are typically negotiated and constructed, move-by-move, in collaboration between the speaker and the recipient. As observed in the articles of this study, this kind of collaborative facial calibration work seems to occur in every phase of a conversation, and thus, it is not restricted to the boundaries of talk, where transformations of actions have typically been thought to occur (Goodwin & M.H. Goodwin 1987; Schegloff 1996; Sacks et al. 1974; M.H. Goodwin 1980; Iwasaki 2011). Instead, facial calibration work seems to be related to the action or actions under construction by the speaker with their turns of talk, and which consequently, create expectations and possibilities for the responses of the recipient.

As this study shows, facial expressions are not bounded by the constraints of turn-taking (cf. Schegloff 1996; 2007; Sacks et al. 1974). Moreover, as this study suggests, if facial expressions are less constrained than talk, in terms of turn-taking, they might easily lend themselves to the management of the beginnings and endings of actions and activity sequences. Thus, more work on the subject is warranted.

### 4.3 Facial expressions, emotional involvement and situational activity

According to social phenomenologists, we communicate others through our full bodies through time and space (Schutz 1967; Merley-Ponty 2012). Thus, the meaning of our embodied displays arises in an environment characterized by an ongoing process of “structure and destruction, and (re)construction” (cf. Birdwistell 1970: 76; see also Goodwin 2013). This study shows how participants use their facial expressions to communicate information about their state of (embodied) minds in talk-in-interaction (cf. Peräkylä 2009). Moreover, as the situational activity and relationship (between participants) constantly changes as the moment passes, every embodied communicative action is performed ad hoc for a given moment of time.

It appears that the simultaneous and/or subsequent facial expressions of participants (occurring with or without talk) are crucial for the expression of mutual kind of cognitive and affective engrossment (cf. Peräkylä 2009). It seems that participants use similar facial expressions (e.g., shared smiles) to display that they share a single focus of visual and cognitive attention and emotional attunement, and this display, in turn, further strengthens their ability to collaboratively coordinate and maintain the attunement of their minds and mutual situational involvement with regard to the activity at hand. Articles 1 and 3 of this study highlight the role of facial expressions in finding and constructing moments of intimacy and shared emotion between participants, whereas article 2 shows how a particular facial expression (frown) works as a hint about a “private” cognitive-relational problem. Thus, it also operates as an interactional resource for preserving intersubjectivity during problematic conversational moments (cf. Beebe & Lachmann 2002; also Peräkylä 2009; Mead 1967), as it helps (as a part of an action)
participants find a shared emotional and cognitive attunement and perspective on the activity at hand.

Through their facial expressions, speakers and hearers balance their emotional relationship. For instance, mutual smiles appear to be important parts of the “interactional machinery” by which stances are aligned, as they help participants facilitate a shared cognitive-emotional understanding of the talk and sequential activity.

Throughout this introduction, I have argued that participants use facial expressions in interaction, to convey and negotiate emotional stances. It must be noted, however, that this use of facial expressions is of a special kind, qualitatively different from the use of words or hands or (particular) gestures. Facial expressions cannot be “looked at” and evaluated together; rather, they are essentially more “interactional”, as their primary target is the recipient. Furthermore, sharing a facial expression is always a two-way process of what one feels in one’s body and sees in another’s (eg., Meltzoff & Moore 1997). However, it should still be underlined that facial expressions are displayed as part of “complex” multimodal communicative messages that are located in a specific sequential moment of time. Moreover, the local embedded context seems to give facial expressions their particular “form” and duration, interpersonal meaning and function (cf. Birdwhistell 1970; see also Duranti & Goodwin 1992). Ultimately, this means that facial expressions are a (shared) resource that is “used” (or utilized) in the regulation of the momentary unfolding face-to-face interaction.

### 4.4 Facial expressions, micro-social order and society

As this study has shown, facial expressions are an important interactional resource for participants in face-to-face interaction and are put to good use in order to create shared understanding and emotions. Moreover, this study shows (particularly in article 3) how participants use their facial expressions (alongside other embodied expressions) to create shared emotional stances, move-by-move, in collaboration, negotiating and hinting at their own possible emotional stance before publicly executing it, often at a moment when it is evident that the other will participate in the new stance. On the other hand, as shown in article 1, participants may use their facial expressions to drastically alter the shared emotional sphere of the conversation, which, depending on contextual factors (sequential, epistemic, and relational), is either immediately adopted by the recipient or is taken up after a delay. Consequently participants find themselves sharing similar kinds of (embodied) minds or public selves (cf. Schutz 1967; Merleau-Ponty 2012; also Goffman 1967; 1959).

Participants seem to have great trust in each other’s facial expressions. A facial expression of emotion, when shared, typically strengthens the (particular) emotion, and commonly it is jointly prolonged through talk and other embodied resources (see articles 1 and 3). Moreover, facial expressions of emotion are excellent social stimuli, as they appear instantly and instinctively reveal something about the performer’s consciousness, helping participants create shared emotions and interpersonal congruence.

Furthermore, facial expressions of emotion appear to sustain the structural and affective aspects of unity in a dyad, which, in turn, resonate with larger social structures (cf. Bateson 1978: 39-40; Wolff 1950; Goffman 1967). Hence, facial expressions of emotion seem to be key components in the maintenance and structuring of the “micro-social order” in face-to-face
interaction and thus need to be regulated in order to sustain homogeneity and continuity in society (cf. von Scheve 2012; Goffman 1983). Von Scheve (2012) assumes interlocutors’ facial expressions are calibrated or attuned on the basis of compatible practices, norms and rules and socialization conditions in a given society. According to von Scheve (2012), this social calibration of emotional expressions gives rise to nonverbal emotional contagion (cf. Hatfield et al. 1993a; 1993b), which has been shown to be an important factor in the structuring of social interaction and the reproduction of the micro-social order, as it fosters the transfer of phenomenal feelings between participants and also marks the patterns of physiological arousal and action tendencies coupled to emotional states. Peräkylä (2012) rejects claims that the process of emotional contagion is fully automatic, suggesting instead that it follows the organization of the interaction (see also article 1 of this study). Furthermore, the micro-social order and/or cognitive and affective (embodied) situational congruence that are jointly constructed in interactions between two or more individuals creates the “social glue” that keeps society together: intimacy and solidarity, shared representations, emotions, values and symbols of group membership (Collins 2004; Durkheim 1912/1965; Wolf 1950; Goffman 1983; 1967; 1963; 1959; Bateson 1978).

To conclude, it is evident that spoken words are merely used for describing how individuals experience, think or feel about an event (in interaction), while facial expressions instantly show the reality of that experience in the bodies of physical beings.
References


