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Sequence and turn design of invitations in Finnish telephone calls

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Abstract

We focus on invitations extended during Finnish telephone calls to demonstrate how language and sociocultural practices affect the ways in which Finnish speakers extend invitations. This analysis is based on 42 invitation sequences containing 42 first invitations; these were drawn from a large corpus of naturally occurring telephone calls among friends and family. Invitations were identified in terms of their linguistic design, sequential position, and recipient responses in the framework of conversation analysis. We categorized first invitations into three different types. New invitations and reissued invitations that are delivered as the reason for the call generate an interaction; interactionally generated invitations emerge from an ongoing interaction and are not presented as the reason for the call. As to the linguistic formation of invitations, we discovered that the declarative format is used most frequently; however, invitations are also delivered in the interrogative and imperative formats. In addition, the morphosyntactic formats are related to the type of invitation: the declarative format is typically used in new invitations; the interrogative format, in reissued invitations; and interactionally generated invitations favor the interrogative and declarative formats. While some languages may use a verb of volition in invitations, Finnish speakers use the conditional mood. Furthermore, these invitations are constructed so that the inviter may be the agent and the invitee is not overtly obliged.
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1. Introduction

Q3   Extending and receiving invitations are ordinary activities in everyday life that are motivated by the human need to connect and interact with others, and therefore, they occur and are recognized in multiple cultures and languages. As a social activity, invitations act as a request from the inviter to the invitee to spend time together for the participants' mutual benefit (Eslami, 2005; Bella, 2009; Drew and Couper-Kuhlen, 2014:6). Different languages provide different sets of resources to implement these actions (Sidnell and Enfield, 2012). Thus, while invitations are common activities, their design and how they are interpreted may be both language- and culture-specific (see, e.g., Wolfson et al., 1983; Drew, 1984; Isaacs and Clark, 1990; Barraja-Rohan, 1994; Garcia, 1996, 1999; Eslami, 2005; Salmani-Noudoushan, 2006; Bella, 2009).

Invitations are complex activities in many respects. First, they are seldom delivered and completed in either a simple adjacency pair or during one turn. Instead, they form an extended sequence of multiple turns (Drew, 2005; Schegloff, 2007). Second, studies on invitations have shown that, at least in the English language, invitations cannot be formatted with one

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particular design that would deliver them invariably; instead, they are delivered using varying forms and lexical elements (Davidson, 1984; Drew, 1984). In fact, the details of linguistic design reflect upon the contingencies of a particular context; this is also true for other actions such as self-repair and requests (see Drew et al., 2013; Drew and Couper-Kuhlen, 2014:2). Finally, invitations involve issues of formality, the level of (in)directness and imposition, the timing of issuing an invitation in relation to the occasion, and the decision to invite someone somewhere. Because of the multiplicity of these issues and the linguistic resources used in different languages, the utterances used to extend invitations require (if intuitive) knowledge of native speakers' preferred patterns of communication (see Wolfson et al., 1983; Garcia, 1996, 1999), as demonstrated later in this study. According to Couper-Kuhlen (2014:624), these preferred patterns, which she calls "social action formats", are semifixed patterns with specific lexical and morphosyntactic elements that cluster and are not freely interchangeable.

We focus on invitations extended during Finnish telephone calls to demonstrate how language and sociocultural practices affect the ways in which Finnish speakers carry out social actions when they interact. Our data are drawn from a large corpus of telephone conversations between family members and friends. Below, we provide representative examples of turn-designs that are used for extending invitations.

(1) Youth hostel

```
C :   (Joo 'tä) .hh Tuota meiän  tupaantuliaiset on
       PRT  PRT     PRT  we-GEN   house-warming party be.3SG

      kaheskymmenes- yheksäs päivä<,mhh[hh
      29th day

      (Yea 'at) .hh Well our house-warming party is on the twenty-ninth<, mhh[h
```

(2) Moving

```
C:    [.hhOotteks    te tulossa  illalla   meille vi-
          Be-2PL-Q-CLI you way-INE evening-ADE we-ALL

      [.hh Are you sti- coming to our place in the evening
```

(3) Packing

```
R:    tuu          tänne ens yöks    ni (.)sitte v-
      come-IMP.2SG here next night-TRA PRT     then
      come over here for the night so (.) (we'll)

      lähetään täält aikaseen aamulla.
      leave-PAS here-ABL early  morning-ADE

      leave here e- early in the morning.
```

The above turns appear as (1) an announcement constructed as a declarative sentence, (2) an inquiry formed as a polar question, and (3) a request formed as an imperative clause. Our intention is to show that all these formats are delivered and are heard as invitations in their contexts.

In the sections below, first, we describe our approach in the field of conversation analysis and interactional linguistics. Second, we use our collection of naturally occurring Finnish invitations to systematically analyze how native Finnish speakers construct and understand invitation sequences in everyday conversations. Finally, we discuss the reasons for the division of syntactic designs in Finnish first invitations, and we reflect on the implications of our results for second language learning.

2. Background

Conversation analysis is a methodological framework that is used for understanding the mechanisms of talk-in-interaction that enable people to perform social actions in collaboration. Initially, studies within conversation analytic framework considered the cross-cultural validity of core organizations as an empirical issue (Sacks et al., 1974:700, fn. 10). Although numerous linguistically oriented studies since the early 1990s have investigated the link between the organization of interaction (at different levels) and language specificities in different languages, conversation analysis has mainly focused on a methodological analysis of interactions and not drawn conclusions about language as a vehicle of

culture (Haakana et al., 2009a:30; Sidnell, 2009; Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). Therefore, decades of cumulative studies on conversation analysis have been required for the contrastive and cross-cultural lines of research to gain recognition.

Cross-linguistic studies applying conversation analysis have both supported and challenged the universal tendencies in the basic organization of conversations. Some examples of more recent work in this area have focused on interactional aspects, such as turn-taking (Stivers et al., 2009), repair (Dingemanse et al., 2014; Dingemanse and Enfield, 2015; Dingemanse et al., 2015), and question-answer sequences (see, e.g., Stivers et al., 2010). These studies have shown, among other things, that across languages, participants in talk-in-interaction aim at a minimal gap between utterances, use phonologically similar tokens to signal generic repair initiations, and respond to questions by making relevant answers to them, thus indicating that they understand the questions. These findings support the universal character of the core organizations and mechanisms of interactions. Furthermore, these organizations are ubiquitous. These basic mechanisms are context-free in the sense that they seem to occur in all languages.

At the same time, different languages and their cultural contexts affect the realization and details of action designs, and they provide a varying set of means for actions (e.g., Moerman, 1988; Selting and Couper-Kuhlen, 2001; Hakulinen and Selting, 2005; Haakana et al., 2009b; Sidnell, 2009). The realizations of different actions in different languages are context-sensitive. Sidnell and Enfield (2012) conclude that different languages provide different types of resources for social action. They refer to this language-specific effect as a *local spin*, where a given language establishes a set of affordances to accomplish certain actions (Sidnell and Enfield, 2012:302). These affordances come in the form of linguistic structures.

The affordances of different linguistic structures become evident in Couper-Kuhlen's (2014) analysis of different directive-commissive actions. She first plays with the idea that requests, proposals, offers, and suggestions belong to the same family of actions because they can all be performed using imperative clauses. However, in naturally occurring conversations, participants routinely associate different actions with different morphosyntactic constructions (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). What is known about directives is relevant for invitations because they are one of the actions belonging to a larger family of directive-commissive actions. According to Couper-Kuhlen, patterns of combining syntax and lexis are the resource that help participants to achieve a mutual understanding of which type of action an utterance represents (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014).

Following the findings of the studies above, we build on the idea of the interrelatedness of minute details of language design and achievement of social action. We analyze how a particular linguistic design may reflect the type of invitation and its context as well as how it is treated in Finnish data.

Some affordances for action construction in Finnish are inscribed in its typology. Finnish belongs to the Finno-Ugric language family, and it has rich inflectional morphology. Present-day Finnish combines synthetic and analytic strategies in the construction of utterances. As for synthetic strategies, Finnish has a number of suffixes that can be attached to word stems to express various meanings. For instance, verbs can be inflected to express person, number, mood, and tense; nouns are inflected for number and cases that express grammatical, spatial, and more abstract relations; and polar questions are formed with a clitic that is attached to any utterance-initial phrase instead of by using only inversion for coding yes-no-interrogatives. Therefore, it would be intriguing to know whether these might also be part of the local design to perform invitations in talk-in-interaction.

Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki (2014, 2015) studied the interrelations between grammatical formation and requests in two articles based on English and Finnish data. They demonstrate (2014) that Finnish grammar enables more variation than English in division-of-labor constructions, in which speakers offer to do something while requesting their recipient to take over another part of a given project. What the variation in Finnish data affords is a more indirect lexical construction of who is expected to do what. In their article on the nomination of agents in Finnish requests (2015), they show that speakers rely heavily on indirect practices in assigning agency in requests. For these purposes, speakers of Finnish use zero-person constructions, clitics, and conditional inflections. Zero-person constructions allow one to construct utterances without an overt subject. One of the functions assigned to clitics is the management of epistemic status. Conditional inflection is a way of constructing something as a (desirable) possibility. These means invite joint negotiations over the details of responsibilities (Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki, 2014, 2015). Previous studies on Finnish encourage us to follow this train of thought. Finnish has linguistic means and resources that differ from those exploited, for example, in the English language, in delivering actions such as answers, second assessments, and different types of requests (e.g., Hakulinen and Sorjonen, 2009; Sorjonen and Hakulinen, 2009; Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki, 2014, 2015).

To summarize, this article contributes to the discussion of how social actions are designed and managed in different languages by focusing on analyzing Finnish invitations in reference to language-specific resources, especially the morphosyntactic resources of the Finnish language. Our analysis is conducted in the framework of conversation analysis, and it is closely related to interactional linguistics at the interface of linguistics and conversation analysis (Selting and Couper-Kuhlen, 2001; Hakulinen and Selting, 2005; Laury, Etelämäki and Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). Our study thus contributes to the discussion put forth by Sidnell and Enfield (2012) that different languages have different impacts on the social actions that are produced in social interactions.

3. Data characterization

Our collection of invitations was selected from a large corpus of naturally occurring Finnish telephone calls among friends and family that has been collected by researchers and students for the Finnish Conversation Data Archive at the University of Helsinki. These telephone conversations were recorded from the late 1980s to the present day. From this corpus, we handpicked 42 invitation sequences that appeared as (relatively) clear cut cases of invitations, given that the distinctions between invitations, proposals, offers, and requests are known to be fuzzy (e.g., Davidson, 1984; Drew, 1984; Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). The selection criteria are explained in more detail below.

Invitations were identified with respect to their linguistic design, sequential position, and recipient responses. Because invitations are often delivered in complex and extended sequences, can be issued several times, or may lead to counter-invitations, we decided to focus on the first invitations in the sequences. This thus resulted in the 42 invitation sequences included in our collection. As noted above, first invitations may lead to subsequent versions of invitations in which the invitation is redesigned or elaborated.

As the most important criteria for identifying an invitation, we relied on the conversation analytic procedure based on recipient responses (Sacks et al., 1974:728–729). By adopting the next-turn-proof-procedure, we accepted those invitations that were treated as invitations into the corpus. However, as invitations are closely related to other directive-commissive interactional actions, such as proposals, suggestions, and requests (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014), we also decided to use other criteria that have been proposed by earlier studies on invitations. For example, in many studies, delivering the exact place and time of the forthcoming occasion has been considered a sign of a genuine invitation in different languages, whereas omitting this information is typical of an ostensible invitation (see, e.g., Wolfson et al., 1983; Isaacs and Clark, 1990; Eslami, 2005; Salmani-Noudoushan, 2006; Bella, 2009). Therefore, two features were considered essential for inclusion in our corpus: (1) the delivery of the place and time of the planned event and (2) the nature of the planned activity (such as birthday party, dinner, get-together; see Wolfson et al., 1983) if the time and venue were not obvious and inferable for the participants in the current context. These criteria are exemplified in excerpts 4–5 below.[1]

(4) Nothing else to do

```
C :  .thhh .hhhh ↑Mä tota:<↑ (.) kutsuisin    teitä       kylään
                 I   PRT         invite-CON.1SG  you-PL.PAR  place-ILL

     .thhh .hhhh I uhm:<  I'd like to invite you to come over


     itsenäisyyspäivän iltana     jos teil  ei  o  muuta< [hhm [menoa.=
      independence day-GEN evening-ESS if you-ADE NEG be  else-PAR   going-PAR

     on the eve of Independence Day if you don't have anything else< to do
```

(5) Restaurant Adlon

```
C:   .mth Tota< (.) onks toi: (.) >Saara kertonu kum mä puhuin    vähä et
          PRT    be-Q-CLI  DEM     NAME    tell-PPC PRT I talk-PST.1SG bit PRT
     .mth Uh:m has: Saara told you that I was thinking,


     mull'on (.) perjantain synttärit ni .nhh vois       mennä johonki.=hh
     I-ADE is   Friday_ESS  birthday  PRT    can-CON.3SG go-INF someplace-ILL
     since it's my birthday on Friday, maybe (we) could go someplace.
```

The callers in examples 4–5 provide several details of the forthcoming get-together in constructing the invitation (see also examples 1–3). They either mention the exact place and location of the event ('our place' in example 2, 'here' in

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[1] The data were transcribed by using a transcription system that has been developed in conversation analysis. Focus turns were provided with morphological glossing (see Appendix A).

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example 3, 'our place' in example 4), the place can be inferred from the nomination of the occasion (the house-warming party is at the inviter's new home in example 1), or the place specification will occur later: the birthday party will take place in an as-yet unspecified restaurant that is negotiated later in the call (example 5; data not shown here). All of our first invitations include a mention of the point in time; this is commonly the day of the event, even if the time by the clock is usually delivered or negotiated later in the sequence or call.

As example 4 shows, one of the verbs that was used in the invitations was *kutsua*, 'to invite,' which informs the recipient about the nature of the activity (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014; Drew and Couper-Kuhlen, 2014:15). Many other verbs and formats were also used in the invitations, as is evident in example 5: *vois mennä* '(we/one) could go'. However, one surprising outcome was that no verbs of volition were used in our data, even though they are considered typical of invitations in many other languages (see, e.g., Wolfson et al., 1983; Garcia, 1996; Eslami, 2005). In other words, in Finnish, inviters do not seem to design their invitations as something they want to do ("I/we want to throw a party.") or something that the recipient wants to do ("Do you want to come to a party?").

Instead, what was typical in our data was the use of inflectional morphology. Finite verbs were often presented in the conditional mood (*kutsuisin* I would invite', in example 4; *vois mennä* '(one/we) could go', in example 5). The use of the conditional mood is also typical of other types of directive-commissive actions in addition to invitations, because it makes it possible to interpret future actions as being hypothetical but desirable. For example, in Finnish requests, the conditional mood leaves the negotiation of the modalities of action more open (Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki, 2014:136–140; Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki, 2015:19). In particular, when the conditional mood is employed in connection with the zero-person form, there is no explicit reference to who is involved. Therefore, more space is afforded for negotiation (see Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki, 2014:139). Even when the persons involved in the invitation can be inferred from the context to consist of at least the caller and the receiver (and his girlfriend) as in example 5, the people involved are not stated explicitly. There is no subject constituent in *vois mennä* 'could go' which is why the inferrable but not designated subject 'we' is marked in the translation in parentheses. Thus, the grammatical formation makes the invitation tentative and open for further discussion on details, including an acceptance/declining of the invitation.

4. Types of invitations and their syntactic design

One of the distinctive features of the data was that in most invitations, the caller was the inviter (32 out of 42 instances; see examples 1–2, 4–8, and 10–11). According to Harvey Sacks, invitations in a spoken interaction can be presented either as "invitations that generate the interaction" or as "interactionally generated invitations" (Sacks, 1992: lecture 6, Spring 1972). Our initial categorization of invitations is based on this distinction. Invitations that "generate the interaction" are usually presented as the reason for the call. They come early or are marked as the reason for call. Within this group of invitations, we found the most cases were news to the recipient. We call these invitations *new invitations*. They are unlike those invitations that refer to previous interactions between the participants. These *re-issued invitations* check or adjust previous commitments, or they ask for a confirmation of an earlier acceptance. In these cases, the activity and at least some details of the event are thus presented as shared knowledge. We found a total of nine reissued invitations; of these, two were clearly presented as reason-for-call. In other words, if invitations are the reason for the call, they generate the interaction and are likely to be news to the recipient.

Invitations can generate interaction; in addition, an invitation can be interactionally generated. This option is available to both a caller and a receiver. In our data, we identified eight (out of 42) interactionally generated invitations (see Table 1). They consisted of invitations that emerged from previous talk between the interlocutors during the phone call. These invitations are delivered as if they had come to participant's mind during the interaction.

Below, we explore syntactic formats that were used to deliver invitations and discuss them in relation to the type of invitation. We found that four syntactic formats covered the collection of examples: interrogative (polar and question-word forms, as in example 2 above), imperative (the finite verb in the imperative mood, as in example 3 above), declarative (finite verb in the indicative or conditional mood, as in examples 1, 4, and 5 above), and noun phrase (NP) format

Table 1
Syntactic formats in relation to the invitation type.

Syntactic format type	Interrogative	Imperative	Declarative	NP	Total
New invitations that generate interaction	3	1	21	–	25
Reissued invitations that generate interaction	5	–	3	1	9
Interactionally generated invitations	3	1	4	–	8
Total	11	2	28	1	42

(see, e.g., Sorjonen and Raevaara, 2014). Among these, the declarative format was used most frequently (in 28 out of 42 cases), interrogative and imperative formats were used significantly less often, and NP format was used only once[2] (see Table 1). The syntactic formats we identified were not interchangeable, and their use was related to the sequential placements and type of the invitation, which agrees with the notion of social action formats presented by Couper-Kuhlen (2014:624, 637).

In the following analysis, we examine examples referring to the type of invitation, its syntactic format, and its relation to the sequential placement. We begin by briefly discussing the interrogative format, and we continue with the imperative format. This is a rhetorical choice: we believe that these are the formats that first come to mind if one would a priori guess how invitations are delivered. Then, we proceed to a more detailed analysis of the most frequent format in Finnish, namely, invitations in the declarative format; these constituted 67% of all invitations. Table 1 shows the distribution of the syntactic formats in relation to the invitation type. Almost all new invitations that generate interactions are delivered in the declarative format (21 out of 28); most reissued invitations are delivered in the interrogative format; and interactionally generated invitations are delivered four and three times in the declarative and interrogative format, respectively. This means that the most frequent type of invitation in our collection is a new invitation in the declarative format. Later, we discuss the possible reasons for the popularity of this invitation type.

4.1. Interrogative format

The interrogative format occurred 11 times in our data. Interrogatives were delivered most often when the imminent event was not new information for the invitee, that is, the inviter returned to the topic to reissue an invitation or to confirm the acceptance. For instance, the caller in examples 6 and 7 solicits a consolidation of an acceptance, and the interlocutors in example 8 reissue their previous decision of getting together. The reissuing character comes across in the combination of lexical and morphological elements in the turns.

(6) Are you coming

```
1 C: tota: oikeestaan mä soitin     siitä (.) ö- huomisesta, hh
     PRT    actually   I  call-PST.1SG DEM-ELA    tomorrow-ELA
     u:hm actually I was calling about (.) u: that thing tomorrow

2 R: nii,
     PRT
     yes,
```

---

[2] The NP formatted invitation is a reissued invitation that is presented in a transition. Before the shown excerpt, Anna offered to fetch her partner to speak with Erkki, the caller, on the landline phone. In the transition, she reissues an invitation in an NP format. The word for 'welcome' is a noun in Finnish. The turn-initial particle *ja* 'and' constructs the turn as rising from the speakers' premeditated agenda (on *ja*-prefacing, see Sorjonen and Heritage, 1991). Therefore, the invitation is linguistically marked as being evoked by the speaker's intentions, and not as being generated by the preceding interaction. Erkki responds with appreciation and acceptance, the speakers say goodbye, and Erkki then continues with Anna's partner.

```
E:  Okei  joo
    Okay yes

A:  Ja tervetuloo    sitte,
    PRT welcome-PAR then
    And welcome then,

E:  Kii:tos on kiva tulla ja    _[nähä  te]itä taas. Juu,
    Thanks it's nice to come and  [ see you ] again. Yes,
                                  [         ]
A:                                [h Joo. h]

E:  Hei,
    Bye

A:  Heihei.
    Byebye.
```

```
3 C: tuutteks     te  meille.
     Come-2PL-Q-CLI you we-ADE
     are you coming over.

4 R: ö kyll:ä varmaa    [n,
     uhm ye:s    probab [ly

5 C:                    [hyvä:,
                        [goo:d,
```

211   In example 6, after the caller has dealt with some other issues, she presents the reissued invitation as a reason for her
212 call. Her formulation *siitä huomisesta* 'about (that thing) tomorrow' uses the demonstrative pronoun *se* in the elative case
213 *siitä*. The pronoun implies that participants have symmetrical access to and adequately know its referent (Etelämäki,
214 2009). This premise is acknowledged by the recipient with *nii*, letting the inviter go ahead (Sorjonen, 1999:175–176). At
215 the next turn, she requests the recipient to confirm what was presumably shared knowledge. This turn is designed as a
216 straightforward question composed of the finite verb *tulla* 'to come' in the unmitigated indicative form and the second-
217 person plural with the interrogative morph (*-k*) and clitic *-s*, a pragmatic particle that is used to mark shared knowledge
218 (ISK, § 836). The question is thus put forward not as something new but as something already agreed on but in need of
219 being confirmed. The recipient confirms (line 4), leading to the caller's positive evaluation (line 5); this closes the
220 sequence.
221   As in example 6, an invitation is reissued in a straightforward interrogative in example 7. The interrogative inflection of
222 the auxiliary verb is in the non-mitigated indicative form plus an interrogative morph (*-k*) and clitic (*-s*) with a second-person
223 plural ending (*ootte-k-s+te*, 'are you-PL', line 1). The second-person plural designates the recipient and her partner as the
224 ones involved. The clitic *-s* stands for shared information here as well. The caller self-interrupts mid-word, probably
225 approaching to *vielä* 'still' for checking whether the plan is still on (line 1). At this point, the recipient confirms (line 2). In this
226 excerpt, the acceptance check is used as a prelude for offering new information on the place of the forthcoming event
227 (lines 3–4).

(7) Moving

```
1 C: .hhOotteks     te tulossa   illalla    meille vi-
         Be-2PL-Q-CLI you way-INE  evening-ADE we-ALL
     hh Are you sti- coming to our place in the evening


 2 R:  >Joo.<
        <yes.<


 3 C: Njoo, Onks   teill  osote. mt (.) Mulle tuli     yhtäkkii
       PRT  be-Q-CLI you-ADE address      I-ALL  come-PST.3SG suddenly
      Yeah, Do you have the address. tch (.) It just struck


 4    sellanen tunne et £teil   ei varmaankaa oof.
      such     feeling PRT you-ADE NEG probably    be.3SG
      me that you probably don't.
```

228   Examples 6 and 7 are similar in that they seek confirmation for an earlier acceptance; in contrast, in example 8, the
229 interrogative format is used in a slightly different manner. A call initial and reciprocal how-are-you sequence precedes this
230 excerpt.

(8) Come over

```
1 C: Selevä. .hh ↑Mites se: olisi:   jos te: lähtisitte meillä   käymään
     Okay        How-CLI DEM be-CON.3SG if  you go-CON.2PL  we-ADE visit-INF.ILL

     O:kay. .hh  ↑What do you say: if you came to visit us
```

```
2      nytt[e me- .hh ]
       now [ we- .hh    ]
```

```
3 R:      [No kun mä] aattelin     että kävelkää     te tänne.
          [ PRT PRT I] think-PST.1SG PRT  walk-IMP.2PL you here.
          [yes but I    ]was thinking that maybe you come over here.
```

```
4 C:  Joo (.) oikein kaikki vai. h
       Yes (.) all of us right. h
```

In example 8, the question word *mites* is composed of the interrogative pronoun *mite(n)* 'how' and the clitic -*s* (*mites*, "how"+'-s'; line 1); the construction *mites* carries the meaning of a sudden suggestion that is open for further negotiation (c.f. Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki, 2014:136–137) whereas the turn final adverbial *nytte* 'now' can be considered to turn a more general idea of getting together into a specific invitation. In this example, the conditional mood is used in the finite verb in the if-clause (*lähtisitte* 'you would come', 'if you came'; line 1) to express the still open but desirable future. The past tense in the recipient's counter-invitation (*mä aattelin* 'I was thinking'; line 3) confirms that the caller's invitation was not news but was the result of a joint negotiation regarding getting together. Both participants had planned for their meeting in the near future, and the caller is the one who initiates the activity of making the final decision by phoning the recipient. This type of reinitiating is carried out by using the interrogative format. In conclusion, speakers typically use the interrogative format in invitations that are reissued or renegotiated on the basis of earlier interactions.

4.2. Imperative format

In this section we analyze the imperative format in its interactional contexts. In general, the imperative mode is used widely in different types of directives. The counter-invitation in example 8 (Section 4.1) is a case in point. It was delivered in the imperative format that occurred in a subordinate clause, and it used the verb *kävellä* 'to walk' in the second-person plural *kävelkää* (walk-IMP-2PL, see the recipient's turn in line 3). In Finnish requests, the imperative format has been demonstrated to anticipate a nonproblematic acceptance of a request (Sorjonen, 2001; see also Craven and Potter, 2010). This also seems to be the case in the counter-invitation that occurs in example 8, as the agreement to get together soon was obviously reached before the call was made.

Even though the imperative format is regarded as one of the key features in implementing directive-commissive actions (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014:624), it occurred infrequently in our collection of first invitations. We detected only two cases of first invitations that had been delivered in the imperative format (see Table 1). Example 9 below is an instance of interactionally generated invitations. The speakers have been talking about the hike they have been planning together. After some negotiation concerning what to pack and how to get everything done before they embark on their long drive the next day for a one-week hike in Lapland, the recipient invites the caller to stay overnight at his place.

(9) Packing

```
R:   .mhhh No mitä y y (.) tuu      tänne ens yöks      ni (.)sitte v-
        PRT what         come-IMP.2SG here next night-TRA PRT     then
.mhhh Well what e- e-(.) come over here for the night so (.) (we'll)
```

```
lähetään täält aikaseen aamulla.
leave-PAS here-ABL early  morning-ADE
leave here e- early in the morning.
```

(0.8)

```
C:    .mhhh .mh Joo:.mhh
      .mhhh .mh Ye:s .mhh

      (0.2)
C:    Ei: se< niinku ideana mikään (.) [sillee hassu ] oo et tota.
      It' s< not like                  [ a bad idea  ] like.
R:                                      [Mm:.         ]
```

The invitation is delivered by using the verb *tulla* 'to come' in the second-person singular in the imperative mood (*tuu*). This is both an invitation to the caller and a solution to at least some of the caller's problems, the early start of joint journey with a lot of equipment. The caller does not immediately accept the invitation but appreciates it as a solution to his problem.

In summary, based on our limited number of first invitations delivered in the imperative mood, we suggest that the imperative mood is used in contexts where the acceptance of the invitation is treated as nonproblematic. This interpretation is supported by example 8, where the imperative mood was used in the counter-invitation when the get-together was already agreed on and was thus an unproblematic action. Similarly, in example 9, the agreement to embark together is already confirmed. In these circumstances, an interactionally generated straightforward invitation does not hazard social relations, whether accepted or rejected.

4.3. Declarative format

The declarative format is used in two-thirds of our invitations (28 out of 42). The declarative format is used most prominently in invitations that "generate the interaction" (Sacks, 1992: lecture 6, Spring 1972) and were delivered as new information to the invitee. As suggested by Sacks, usually, they were also presented at the beginning of the phone call as the reason for the call; if presented later, the activity was linguistically marked as the reason for the call. Examples 1, 4, and 5 above represent typical invitation designs in the declarative format. This format functions in a double status that is clarified in the analysis below.

Invitations are considered delicate and complex activities in terms of preference and cultural expectations. This is reflected in their interactional management through a complex sequence (Davidson, 1984; Drew, 1984; Barraja-Rohan, 1994). Consequently, invitation sequences are reported to be recurrently preceded by a presequence or their progress to be delayed by insert sequences (Schegloff, 2007:28–30, 97–100). A typical presequence for an invitation is also said to be a general check to establish the recipient's availability (e.g., "*Watcha doin'*"; Schegloff, 2007:30). Presequences are one of the ways in which at least English speakers are reported to deal with the delicate character of an invitation as a social action; however, the Finnish collection only had three presequences leading to an invitation (such as *tieksää mitä* 'you know what' or *mi̲tä sä teet huomenillal̲la?* 'what are you up to tomorrow evening?'). Thus, presequences were not a recurrent strategy for initiating an invitation sequence.

An alternative strategy is the use of the declarative format or, as Drew (1984:140) suggested, reportings. Such reportings are used as a prelude to invitations. Through the use of the declarative format, they provide for an ambiguous interactional strategy that leaves it to the recipient to treat the reporting either as news or as a potential invitation. They also deal with the intrusiveness of extending an invitation by portraying it as something that is already planned to take place, and therefore, the inviter is not dependent on the recipient's availability and the recipient is not responsible for the event to come true. Thus, the recipient's (moral) obligation to accept the invitation is less binding (Drew, 1984:141–143).

In Finnish invitation sequences, reportings were commonly used by inviters as a lead-in to the invitation sequence. These declarative utterances contained specific information concerning the get-together that is necessary for a genuine invitation (time, place, and nature of the event), and thus, they opened up the possibility of being treated as invitations. Below, we demonstrate how an announcement in the declarative format allowed different types of uptake. For instance, in example 10 below, the invitation sequence lead-in is designed as a declarative clause that could be interpreted as a mere announcement of the party, but it is immediately treated as an invitation by the recipient.

The excerpt follows greetings and a "how are you" episode of four turns. The receiver is at work and has complained about the on-going chaos at her office. The caller receives this complaint as news (see the particle *aijaa* 'I see/uhhuh', which is used as news receipt, Koivisto, 2016). This is where the following excerpt begins.

(10) Hostel

```
01  C:  Aijaa:.=>(Joo) mä (su-) yritin sinne jo aikasemmin
        I see:. => (yes) I (ca-) I tried to call you already

02      soittaa ja puhelin oli koko ajan varattu=Se oli varmaan
        earlier and the phone was busy= It was probably

03      pois seinästä sitt(h)eh .hh[h    ] J(h)oo.h
        off the hook the(h)n eh  .hh    [    ] Yes.
                                        [    ]
04  R:                              [Joo:.]
                                    [yeah:.]

05  C:  (Joo 'tä) .hh ↑Tuota meiän
          PRT PRT        PRT   we-GEN
        (Yea 'at) .hh ↑Well/U:hm our

06      tupaantuliaiset   on    kaheskymmenes-
        house-warming party be.3SG 29th
        house-warming party is on

07      yheksäs päivä<,mhh[hh
        the twenty-ninth<,  mhh [h
08  R:                    [.h Kaheskymmenesyheksäs=
                          [  .h The twenty-ninth

09  R:  =[niinkö, [<Kir:jaan    ] heti>.
        [ or,      [<I will write    ] it down immediately>.
        [          [
10  C:  [Nii:.    [>Tervetuloa<.         ]
        [Yeah:.   [>Welcome (to our place)<.    ]
```

After receiving the recipient's complaint, the caller reports that she has been trying to reach the receiver several times without success (lines 1–2). This report expresses that the caller has something important and urgent to communicate to the recipient. The participants close the sequence with the exchange of the particle *joo* 'yeah' (lines 3–4). Subsequently, the caller immediately initiates a new topic by announcing the nature of an approaching event that is 'our house-warming party' (lines 5–7). This utterance combines the place and the nature of the event 'our house-warming party' as the theme of the clause, as something that has been at least in the air. The caller then adds the date in the rhematic position. Elements in post-verbal position are more likely to be heard as news. Even though the caller's utterance could be responded to as just a reporting, it is interpreted as an invitation. The recipient checks the time, and reports that she acknowledges the caller's announcement by writing down the date (lines 8–9). The receiver thus interprets the (invitation-relevant) announcement as an invitation, treats its' rhematic element as the news, and the caller welcomes her response to be an acceptance (line 10).

Example 10 illustrates a common strategy seen in the Finnish data: at least between friends, announcements regarding a social occasion taking place in the future are heard as invitations. However, as example 11 below demonstrates, it is also possible that the announcement, which is loaded with information relevant to the invitation, can be

312 responded to as news. In the latter case, the recipient often uses the particles *aijaa, ahaa*, or *aha*, which belong to the
313 family of news receipts (ISK, §797–798; Koivisto, 2016). If the turn is treated as an announcement with these particles, the
314 inviter in all cases proceeds to a more specific subsequent version of the invitation. Subsequent versions are the inviters'
315 method for prompting a response after a weak agreement, such as an acknowledgment token, or in the absence of a
316 response (Davidson, 1984).

(11) Renovation

```
01 R :      no [hei
            PRT [hi
            oh [hi
               [
02 C :         [O:nks    tota Satu   kotona h
               [be-Q-CLI PRT   NAME   home-ESS
               [I:s uhm Satu at home h

03          (0.4)

04 R :      <e:i o    tullut    tota tö:istä    vielä<.
            NEG  be-3SG come-PPC PRT  work-PL.ELA yet
            (she) hasn't come (home) from work yet<.

05 C :      ahaa:. .hh >ku tota mull ois<    sellasta asiaa    et
            PRT         PRT PRT I-ADE  be-CON.3SG such-PAR thing-PAR PRT
            o:h. .hh >well I just wanted to let you know that

06          meil  on       tupaantuliaiset    kaheskymmenesyheksäs
            we-ADE be-3SG house-warming party      29th
            we are having a house-warming party on the twenty-ninth

07          päivä lauantaina?hh
            day   Saturday-ESS
            on Saturday?h

08 R :      a↑haa:?hh
            PRT
            uhu:?hh

09 C :      ja kutsusin      teitä       sinne. Hh
            and invite-CON.1SG   you-2PL-PAR there
            and I would like to invite you (to come) there. hh

10 R :      va:i niin. No sehän ma:iniota.
            PRT  PRT    PRT it-CLI great-PAR
            O:h really. That'(s) great.

11 C :      joo. hh=
            PRT
            yep.
```

317 Example 11 begins with an inquiry as to whether the recipient's partner is at home (line 2). The response is that
318 she is not available (line 4). The caller marks by using the particle *ahaa* that this information was not anticipated, and
319 the caller has to reorient herself to this new situation (cf. Koivisto, 2016). She does, through proceeding to issue an
320 invitation.

The caller delivers the first invitation as the reason for the call by using the causative marker *ku* 'cuz' (see Herlin and Kotilainen, 2004) and by offering an explanation (I just wanted to let you know that. . ., line 5). She then continues with a declarative utterance that foreshadows that an invitation is under way. In this utterance, the caller mentions a future, invitation-relevant event (house-warming party, lines 6–7). Invitation-relevant occasions are usually mentioned only to the person or persons to whom they will be extended. However, the announcement is designed so that it can be heard merely as a reporting of a future event. In her utterance (lines 6–7), the caller designates *meil* 'at us/at our place' as the location of the occasion. This first-person plural form excludes the recipient who is not addressed or nominated in the announcement. The formulation leaves the question of what capacity, if any, the recipient is involved in this invitation-relevant event open.

The uptake particle *ahaa* (line 8) indicates that the recipient indeed regards the information as news but also as something that needs reorientation or contains problems (cf. Koivisto, 2016:174–177). The ambivalence of this reception might be due to the fact that the caller initially addressed the call to the recipient's partner Satu—the original friend of the caller—and the recipient is at this point uncertain whether the utterance should be treated by him as news that he should deliver to his partner or as an invitation that is addressed to both of them.

Thus, in this example, following from the announcement and its uptake as news and a possibly problematic activity, the inviter continues on to what can, without hesitation, be considered an invitation. The subsequent formulation *kutsusin teitä* (invite-CON-1SG you-2PL) 'I would invite you-PL' disambiguates the invitation. As a lexical choice, the verb is performative and refers to the activity of inviting. As a formal choice, the verb is inflected in the conditional mood. This is consistent with the fact that the conditional mood in Finnish is known to occur in a rich set of constructions that deliver a variety of pragmatic meanings, with many having to do with expressing wishes, plans, and requests (Kauppinen, 1998). In other words, the conditional mood clusters in directive-commissive activities. In the construction of an invitation, the conditional mood is a distinctive Finnish feature. In addition, the subsequent version disambiguates the participant's position vis-à-vis the occasion: the caller places herself as the agent and subject of inviting thus owning the action to herself. In addition, she embeds the recipient and his partner in the clausal object as the target of her actions. The recipient's response treats this turn as an invitation and delivers an appreciation of it (line 10). Methodologically, the recipient's uptake confirms the analysis that the turn is indeed heard as an invitation.

To summarize, an utterance in the declarative format that consists of specific information concerning a potential get-together can be interpreted by the recipient either as an invitation or as a prelude to an invitation (see Drew, 1984:141). If the recipient's response is something other than a direct acceptance of the invitation or acceptance-relevant detail check, in most cases, it is a news receipt. Then, the inviter produces an utterance in a declarative or, in some cases, interrogative format that ensures that the action is interpreted as an invitation. According to our data, and by referring to the reception of invitations in examples 10 and 11 above, we therefore suggest that in Finnish interactions, even a simple declaratively formatted utterance that could be interpreted as an announcement of a get-together is frequently recognized and understood as an invitation.

5. Discussion: invitations are sociocultural activities

This article explores the social organization of the complex and delicate social action of extending an invitation in Finnish interactions to identify the social action formats that are used for delivering invitations. For our data, we used naturally occurring phone calls between relatives and friends. In line with the observations of other scholars, such as Sidnell and Enfield (2012), our departure point was the claim that different languages provide different linguistic devices for implementing social actions. We also further explored Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki's suggestion (2014:141) that different linguistic resources might also reflect the different social organizations of these actions.

By analyzing 42 invitation sequences, we were able to categorize different types of first invitations, which relates to Sacks' observation of ''invitations that generate interaction'' and ''interactionally generated'' invitations (Sacks, 1992: lecture 6, Spring 1972). We identified invitations of three types: new invitations, reissued invitations, and interactionally generated invitations. New invitations came as news for the recipient, reissued invitations referred back to earlier discussions, and interactionally generated invitations were marked as a result of the ongoing interaction. In our collection, new invitations formed the majority of all invitations (25 first invitations, 9 reissued invitations, and 8 interactionally generated invitations).

Invitations were not restricted to one linguistic format; however, the variation in syntax allowed for designing invitations according to different types of contexts. It was noted that the imperative and interrogative formats have been reported earlier as vehicles for directive-commissive actions in English, which includes invitations (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). We recognized that these formats were also used by Finnish speakers. However, they were not at all as common as we might have expected, given that they are grammaticalized forms for different directive actions in Finnish (ISK, §1645–1646). Instead, we discovered that most invitations, especially new ones, were delivered in the declarative format. However, the smaller group of invitations that generate interaction, that is, reissued invitations, were mostly presented in the interrogative format, and interactionally generated invitations were mostly presented in the interrogative and declarative

formats. This division between the different clausal formats was somewhat surprising: what we found was intuitively known and observed but not consciously noticed prior to our analysis.

We then consider the reason for this division in delivering Finnish invitations. In their comparative analysis on the action formats of requests and offers in English and Finnish, Couper-Kuhlen and Etelämäki (2014:141) suggest that ''differences in grammatical resources not only *produce* differences in practices but also *reflect* differences in social organizations and practices.'' In reference to this observation, we want to suggest that the extensive use of the declarative format and its double status both as a design of first invitations and a design of a prelude to first invitations creates an opportunity for the receiver to treat the utterance either as an invitation or as a news announcement that can be responded to as news. This allows the participants to deal with delicate social aspects of extending invitations.

Even though this phenomenon was analyzed earlier for the English language by Drew (1984), what we want to suggest is that in Finnish, the declarative format in an invitation or in a prelude to an invitation is culturally conventionalized to the extent that even when the recipient chooses to treat the (prelude to) invitation as news, with something such as a news receipt, it can be expected that the inviter will produce a subsequent invitation that disambiguates the action in that specific context. However, the morphosyntactic resources of Finnish allow speakers to design the details of invitation as vague and under negotiation. This includes information about who are the others that will be invited to the occasion and other details of the event that might lead to either the acceptance or rejection of the invitation. In reference to our analysis, we suggest that the choice of forms in Finnish tells us something about the social organization of extending and responding to invitations in Finnish culture. These include Finnish speakers' avoidance of verbs of volition that are frequently used in other languages and their use of rich morphosyntactic resources such as conditional mode, zero-person constructions, and various suffixes and clitics. Our impression is that a Finnish inviter uses all of these resources to avoid intruding on the uncomfortable territory of dealing with dispreferred social actions, such as rejections.

Finally, we would like to consider our findings in the framework of language learning. As native speakers of Finnish, we do not intuitively see why invitations cannot be delivered with a verb of volition and a recipient-addressed utterance such as ''Wanna cum down'n av a bighta l̲:unch with me:?'' (Drew, 1984:135). However, it is an empirical fact that the invitations in our data were performed in such a way that we were not able to envision in detail. This observation necessitates the methodologically central position of naturally occurring interactions as the focus for interactional studies and as the basis for theorizing, as proposed by Sacks (1992: lecture 1, Fall 1971): ''[. . .] from close looking at the world we can find things that we could not, by imagination, assert were there.'' The implication for language learning is that activities do not translate word-for-word from one language to another. Instead, different expressions are used for dealing with similar social situations depending on the resources available in a language. For example, invitations in Finnish favor the use of modal conjugation over the use of modal verbs of volition.

Unfortunately, the language in textbooks for Finnish learners does not reflect authentic Finnish interactions, as was demonstrated in Tanner's (2012) study on language use in service encounters in textbook Finnish and authentic interactions. It is easy to understand the obvious reasons for the same: authors must compromise between the linguistic resources that the students have gained access to; textbooks have to present correct language and introduce complex structures sequentially; and even textbook authors' intuitions on conversational structures do not always accurately reflect actual use (see Golato, 2003; Huth and Taleghani-Nikazam, 2006; Taleghani-Nikazam, 2006:14). Sociocultural practices are therefore intimately tied to the lexical and morphosyntactic choices and syntactic formats of social actions (Wolfson et al., 1983; Garcia, 1996; Bella, 2011). In conclusion, the only way to be able to present accurate pedagogical information to language learners is to investigate how the different linguistic formats are actually used in delivering social actions in naturally occurring interactions.

Q4 Uncited references

Mark et al. (2015), ISK et al. (2004) and Laury et al. (2014).

Appendix A

Finnish glossing symbols

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ADE	adessive
ALL	allative
ABL	ablative
CLI	clitic

429	CON	conditional
430	DEM	demonstrative
431	ELA	elative
432	ESS	essive
433	GEN	genitive
434	ILL	illative
435	IMP	imperative
436	INE	inessive
437	INF	infinitive
438	NEG	negation verb
439	PAR	partitive
440	PAS	passive
441	PL	plural
442	PPC	past participle, active voice
443	PRT	particle
444	Q	interrogative clitic
445	SG	singular
446	TRA	translative

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