

9. The sticky media device*

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INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of day-to-day interaction are based on various shared norms of conduct. These common rules are intertwined with the moral structures that members of society are expected to follow. In this chapter, we show how a parent's smartphone use can bring additional ambiguity and difficulty to communicating with his or her child and in fact challenge the conventional normative and moral structures of social actions. Because parent-child interaction is so crucial for the development of children, the challenges posed to it by ubiquitous media devices are one of the pressing issues of our time.

In this chapter, we introduce a new concept, namely the 'sticky media device', which depicts how a media device appears to a person seeking face-to-face interaction with its user. Hence, it refers to a situation in which problems can be seen in acquiring the smartphone user's orientation for face-to-face interaction, which, even if momentarily gained, readily returns back to the device.

ADJACENCY PAIRS AND MORAL ACCOUNTABILITY

In his research on social order, the founder of ethnomethodology, Harold Garfinkel, discovered that members of the same culture share normative assumptions about what is the 'normal' way to act in a given situation. The intersubjective understanding and explaining of day-to-day social activities are in fact only possible through these shared assumptions (Garfinkel, 1967; Heritage, 1984).

As we grow up and are socialized in the conventions of a certain community and culture, these shared expectations become the unconscious guideline for our behaviour with others. At the same time, they guide the moral stances taken by the participants in each interaction. When we greet someone we know, the expectation is that they will greet us back. If that is not the case, we see it as an exception to the norm of polite behaviour, come up with explanations and often become disgruntled: 'What's up with him? He didn't even say hi to me'.

According to conversation analysis, which is the study of naturalistic interaction based on ethnomethodology, social action is realized through adjacency pairs. These pairs – like issuing and returning a greeting or a question and answer – are routinely expected to appear together (e.g., Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 2007, pp. 13–21). Together, the people of any culture construct the dynamics of conversation in such a way that the preferred response to the 'first-pair part' of an adjacency pair is a response that does not cause trouble or difficulty for the ongoing interaction (Brown and Levinson, 1987). In other words, the preferred response (the 'second-pair part') to a first-pair part like an invitation would be accepting the invitation. A response that is not in alignment with the interactional expectations – in other words a dispreferred second-pair part – usually manifests with moments of silence in or between the turns the speakers take. In addition, articulations of

hesitation or other sounds that delay the giving of a response are characteristic of a dispreferred turn, which is often produced with mitigations and accounts (Schegloff, 2007, pp. 58–60). Conversation analysis focuses on the detectable ways people produce, reproduce and orient to the normative structure of interaction, not on what people ‘really want’ or ‘really mean’.¹ It is in these formal structures that the meaningful social action is carried out. As children, when we learn the conventions of interacting with others and taking part in conversation, at the same time we learn the norms of appropriate behaviour. We become habituated and adapted to the common customs and moral obligations of everyday actions.

Request is one of the fundamental social actions in human interaction and adjacency-pair practices. At an early age, we learn that requests should always be answered and the expected answer is acceptance. When rejecting a request, we learn to give accounts and explanations. A request does not always have to be in the form of a question. Depending on the context, a variety of utterances can be understood as requesting something (Schegloff, 2007, p. 8). Already at the age of three, we can interpret social situations so skilfully that we can discriminate between direct and indirect requests (Wells, 1981, p. 43). Children usually acquire this interactive know-how mainly from their parents, though other adults and children also play their part. While growing up, we become increasingly knowledgeable about the ever-increasing number of rules necessary for understanding how to truly be adept in the social world of adults.

One example, especially relevant for the analysis to follow, is the marked difference between the act of request and its close cousin, the command. When uttering an imperative command, or a directive, the action is more about informing than asking, and there is the presumption that the person giving the directive has a legitimate right to regulate and control the actions of the other. A request, on the other hand, does not directly order someone to do something; it also takes into account the possibility that the other may decline (Craven and Potter, 2010). One way that this is seen in day-to-day conversations is that requests are usually preceded by so-called pre-sequences (Schegloff, 1980; 2007, pp. 28–9) that function as ways to protect the ‘faces’ (Goffman, 1955) of the participants from the discomfort that a rejecting response might cause. It is common, for example, to ask ‘Do you have any plans for the evening?’ before expressing an invitation to go see a movie together. It is important to note that this so-called ‘face work’ is not merely done out of shyness or indecisiveness on the part of the requester; it generally serves the interests of both participants.

DATA AND METHODS

The phenomenon of the ‘sticky media device’ will be elaborated on with the help of transcribed excerpts from the dataset of the project ‘Media, Family Interaction and Children’s Well-Being’, conducted at the University of Tampere, Finland. The data were collected during 2010 and 2011. The parts of the data utilized in our chapter are the video recordings made in the homes of 26 families with children. They were performed with four – or, in rare cases, three – video cameras installed upon tripod stands. The positioning of the cameras was planned together with the aid of the parents in attempt to cover the most relevant locations from the viewpoint of parent–child interaction and digital media use. In most cases, they ended up being installed in different rooms and have therefore created a dataset that is quite unique in its nature. It often covers simultaneous but different scenarios taking place in two or more separate but sometimes also partly connected rooms within a household. The dataset consists of 665 hours of video footage, which is the sum total of the recordings of all the video cameras, but the data actually only cover a 186-hour time span.

The families taking part in the research were recruited through kindergartens and primary schools in both high- and low-income areas. In each family there was a five- or a 12-year-old child who was later interviewed for a variety of aspects relating to media use and well-being. The cameras were turned on for one day from the time that this focal child came home to the time they went to sleep. The day of the recording was always chosen to be what the parents considered a 'normal day', and the family was instructed to spend the day as usual. This chapter will concentrate on a short episode in which a child of 12 is seeking her mother's attention while the mother is simultaneously using a smartphone. In the excerpts we present, the child makes several requests of her parent. Answering the requests requires the mother to at least momentarily disengage from the ongoing interaction with her smartphone.

We focus on what is commonly referred to as 'talk-in-interaction' and base our analysis on the principles of Garfinkel's ethnomethodology and the tradition of conversation analysis. This means that we look at the data as if we were merely trying to see them more clearly and not in an attempt to interpret them with preconceived concepts and theories that offer hypotheses about the reasons and 'real meanings' behind the observable interaction of the participants. The idea is that the way each participant in the conversation is feeling or thinking about something they themselves or someone else has said or done is only relevant if it is produced as an observable action – be it verbal or non-verbal. Whatever is going on in the inner lives of participants – if not seen in any way in the actual interaction – is analysed by the researcher only through preconceived notions and general theories. These theories might be useful in another kind of study utilizing, for example, the hypothesis-testing methodology of experimental psychology, but they do not really contribute much in the analysis of how actual real-life interaction episodes are produced by people living their daily lives.

It is not assumed beforehand what elements will turn out to be relevant in a given social situation. Careful turn-by-turn study of the progression of a communication episode can reveal the ways that participants themselves relate to what is happening between them, but very little should be assumed before actually having gone through the case with painstaking care. This accuracy is made possible by the tradition of transcription in conversation analysis. Even coughing, silences and breathing are transcribed, as it might be the case that they turn out to play a role in the construction of the interactive episode.

Repeated viewing of the corresponding video material, together with an accurate transcription of it, revealed to us a collection of patterns and aspects we call the 'sticky media device'. Even though these elements are also present in many other places in the data, we chose this original case of a 12-year-old and her mother for analysis and presentation due to its particular richness in various aspects of the phenomenon in question. In addition, we are able to perfectly see and hear both the mother and the child; they are the only people in the apartment during the conversation, and their interaction is not affected by anything outside our field of interest. There are no pets or other family members joining the situation halfway through, and the aspects of the sticky media device can be exceptionally clearly shown and explained by the analysis of the chosen case.

THE CASE OF A MOTHER, A DAUGHTER AND A SMARTPHONE

Here, we elucidate a situation in which a daughter is requesting her mother to participate in a joint activity and has to compete for attention with her mother's smartphone. The facets of this interactive event are explored through the use of five data excerpts, each being a direct continuation of the former. The excerpts show how difficult it can be for a child to get the attention of their parent when the parent is simultaneously using a

smartphone (cf. Radesky et al., 2014). At first, the 12-year-old Anu (the name has been changed) and her mother are sitting at the kitchen table facing each other going about their own businesses. The mother finished eating about 20 minutes before the beginning of the excerpt. She has remained at the table to go through some advertisements and is now doing something with her smartphone. Anu is drawing pictures of supermodels in her notebook. Anu asks her mother to evaluate the drawing and the mother complies, but only after extra effort is applied on Anu's part.

Extract 1

- 1 Anu: eihän tää oo nii hirvee,
this isn't so terrible is it,
- 2 (1.1)
- 3 Anu: #äiti#,
#mother#,
- 4 (2.1) ((the mother looks at the picture))
- 5 Mother: [mt' ʔei:: se on ihan (.) kiva.
[th' ʔno:: it is quite (.) nice.
[((the mother's gaze returns to the screen))
- 6 (7.5) ((the mother continues to tap her smartphone but glances
7 at the daughter as Anu browses through the drawings))

The extract begins by Anu inviting her mother to participate in a joint activity. After finishing a drawing of a supermodel, she looks at the drawing, wipes it with her hand (as if removing the residue of coloured pens) and asks her mother: 'this isn't so terrible is it' (line 1). The turn is designed in a way that it invites the receiver to produce a particular kind of response, in this case the recipient's agreement to the negation 'isn't. . . is it'. The question is a first-pair part of an adjacency pair and anticipates some kind of an answer to follow. As Sacks (1987, p. 57) remarks, if the question is built in such a way as to exhibit a preference between 'yes' and 'no' responses, this is the choice that should be preferred by an answerer. This holds true for both 'yes' and 'no' preferred answers. A preferred answer should also be produced instantly after the first pair part. Here Anu produces her question in a way that obliges her mother to evaluate the picture, and the expected response would be something like 'no, it is not (so terrible)' (cf. Sacks, 1992, p. 414; Heritage, 2002).

However, the mother does not produce any answer in the first 'transition relevant place' (TRP),² that is, in the place where the answer should usually be produced, immediately after Anu's question (the 1.1-second pause in line 2). Anu works further to gain her mother's attention and uses the summons 'mother' (line 3) as a means to allocate attention and oblige her mother to answer. Now the mother raises her head and leans forward towards the notebook, looks at the picture (which is upside down from her perspective), and answers: 'th' ʔNo:: it is quite (.) nice' (line 5). The mother's gaze returns to the screen of the phone when she

ends the first stretched word 'no'. The mother says the rest of the utterance ('it is quite nice') when she is again looking at the screen of her smartphone (Picture 9.1).

Thus, the mother fails to answer in the first interactional place expected (line 2), but after Anu's summons produces an utterance that – from the perspective of normative sequence organization in talk-in-interaction – is 'right'; it is the preferred answer. Then again, in the production of the turn there are classical marks of dispreferred answers: delaying the answer, sucking teeth (th), stretching the word 'no' and the micro pause before the word 'nice' (cf. Pomerantz and Heritage, 2012). One might say that these are all connected to mother engaging in the task of evaluating the picture that Anu is showing to her and thus are actually part of her producing a preferred second-pair part to Anu's request. Obviously it is the case that the mother could not evaluate something she hasn't looked at so it is reasonable to assume that at least part of the delay before the mother begins the word 'no' is due to the task of evaluating. However, missing the first TRP as well as all the other classical signs of dispreference still go unexplained. In this case the fumbled answer is not in fact connected to the sequential dynamics of conversation and the content of the utterance (i.e., making a choice between a preferred 'no' and dispreferred 'yes' answer), but is actually caused by the fact that mother's attention is divided: she is orienting both to the interaction with Anu and to the simultaneous interaction with her smartphone (cf. Haddington and Rauniomaa, 2011).

Schegloff (2007, p. 62) mentions that on top of the groundings of preference found within a single sequence in talk-in-interaction, like the aforementioned classical dispreferred markers, preference is also constructed based on the progression of the course of action taking place. There are sequences, like for example the summons–answer, that are designed to mobilize the attention of one or more recipients for some further action. Whether this predicted future action will actually take place or not is contingent on the success of the summons sequence in attracting the attention of the recipient. Some sort of 'go-ahead' response is preferred, since it provides space for the next step to be taken. Here Anu succeeds in getting her mother to evaluate the drawing, but can only catch her attention for a minimal time. This is obvious by the way her mother already turns back to the phone while producing her reply.



Picture 9.1 The mother's gaze is back on the screen at the end of the word 'no::' (line 5)

Anu invites her mother to participate in the joint activity in a situation when mother's attention is preoccupied with the smartphone. The mother has not only directed her gaze at the screen but is also using the device with both of her hands. As mentioned, while answering Anu's question, the mother goes back to using her smartphone, most likely to continue the activity that was interrupted by Anu's request, and Anu begins to browse through her notebook.

However, even though the mother did not stop using her phone, Anu's request to evaluate the drawing and mother's answer to it – albeit accomplished by Anu's extra interactional work – did create a communicational space that Emanuel Schegloff and Harvey Sacks (1973, pp. 324–5) call the 'continuing state of incipient talk'. By this term, they mean, for example, a situation within family life where everyone can be passing time in the same room and each be going about their own business, but may also initiate conversation or continue previous topics with others, even after longer gaps, without having to specifically begin or end the conversation each time. By being in the shared space, the individuals present assume that everyone recognizes the possibility of this kind of frame of interaction and no one treats sudden utterances by others as weird or non-normative.

In our example, the mother may orient to the possibility of a continuing state by glancing over to Anu while still using her smartphone (lines 6–7). Hence, when Anu asks her mother to look at and evaluate one of her drawings, her mother's agreement generates a social reality in which she in principle can and would be interested in evaluating Anu's pictures. From what follows, it can be interpreted that the first sequence that began the conversation removed obstacles for new and more specific requests to be made. Thus it functioned as a kind of a 'presequence'; it was preliminary to a more demanding request (cf. Schegloff, 2007, pp. 28, 62).

Extract 2

- 6 (7.5) ((the mother continues to tap her smartphone but glances
7 at Anu when she browses through the drawings))
- 8 Anu: selaa näitä tästä eteenpäin?
browse through these from here onwards?
- 9 (1.3)((Anu stands up and walks towards her mother))
- 10 Anu: [ja s:ano mulle mikä näistä on susta <hianoin>.
[and te:ll me which one you think is <the nicest>.
- 11 [((Anu walks next to her mother, places the notebook on the
12 table and her hand on mother's shoulder))
- 13 Mother: .hhh (.) oh[hhhhh

After asking her mother to go through the drawings (line 8) Anu positions herself right next to her mother, placing the notebook on the table immediately adjacent to her mother's smartphone, which is the current focus

of her mother's gaze. While still walking, she continues to speak: 'and te:ll me which one you think is <the nicest> (line 10). However, the mother does not reply to Anu's request but sighs loudly (line 13, Picture 9.2) while still keeping her gaze on the screen of the phone. The sigh might be an expression of the mother's problematic situation of having to take part in two rival activities – that is, continuing what she is doing with her phone and starting to do what Anu requests.



Picture 9.2 The mother's sigh

Anu's request for the mother to begin looking and evaluating her drawings would require her mother to handle the notebook and put the smartphone away. In other words, the mother would have to stop whatever she is currently engaged in with the smartphone. Anu's next turn, which is a more precise request than the earlier one, overlaps her mother's sigh.

Extract 3

13 Mother: .hhh (.) oh[hhhhhh

14 Anu: [sanot (.) ykkösestä viiteen kuinka monta tähteä
[tell (.) how many stars out of five you

15 annat tälle?
give to this one?

16 ((Anu taps her mother's shoulder while speaking))

17 (2.0) ((the mother looks at the picture, starting to lay her

18 phone aside with her right hand, but draws it back close to her

When Anu takes her turn in line 14, she is in fact not only making her request more precise but also transforming it: '[tell (.) how many stars out of five you give to this one?]' (lines 14–15). Here Anu is no longer asking her mother to take hold of the notebook and browse through it (in order to see which one is the 'nicest') but suggests that she should concentrate on one specific picture. While talking, Anu is holding one hand on the notebook and rhythmically, but lightly, tapping her mother on the shoulder with the other. This functions as an efficient focuser and the mother turns her gaze towards the picture, simultaneously starting to put her smartphone on the table. However, still looking at the picture, mother pulls the smartphone back, very close to her body, soon refocuses her gaze on it, and again takes hold of it with both hands (Picture 9.3). Thus, despite the momentary orientation towards the notebook, prompted by Anu's taps on her shoulder, the mother still does not produce an answer but actually returns to attending to the device.



Picture 9.3 The 'sticky' phone will not disengage from the mother's fingers

However, Anu does not give up, but nudges her mother strongly on the arm saying: 'mother?' This can be seen in Extract 4 (line 20) and Picture 9.4.

Extract 4

20 Anu: äiti?
mother? ((nudging her mother's arm))



Picture 9.4 Anu nudges her mother's arm

Anu's nudge as an embodied directive is an extreme way for the child to get the attention of the parent in talk-in-interaction. However, rather than just a single occurrence in an action sequence constructed by an adjacency pair, embodied directives are more like trajectories of action in progress (Goodwin, 2006; Cekaite, 2010). The trajectory leading to the nudge is co-constructed with verbal and embodied practices, and it is in the service of the whole 'project' of the activity that is going on, not only of the adjacent actions (cf. Levinson, 2013). From the four excerpts above, it can be seen that the nudge is related to Anu's many attempts to get her mother's attention to focus on the notebook instead of the smartphone. The physical touch and the word 'mother' uttered with a pleading intonation get the mother to finally release the smartphone and concentrate on the picture Anu is trying to show her. This is shown in Extract 5.

Extract 5

- 21 (0.4)
- 22 Mother: oh-
wel- ((the word is cut just a bit short and ends with holding
23 of the breath))
- 24 0.8) ((mother puts the mobile far from her, on the edge of the
25 table and looks at the picture))
- 26 Mother: @tää on must muuten niinku (.) tosi makee?@
@I think this is otherwise like (.) really cool?@
- 27 Anu: m-hm?

The single dialogue-particle ‘well’ (line 22), which Anu’s mother utters just before she moves the smartphone far from herself, manifests a transition to a new activity (cf. Sorjonen, 2002). The mother’s ‘well’ ends with a cut sound and the typical way of producing this word is replaced by a holding of the breath at the end. This makes it seem like there is some kind of complex relation to the transition. The mother then puts the smartphone on the table as far from herself as she can, focuses on the picture and produces a verbal evaluation: ‘I think this is otherwise like (.) really cool’ (line 26). In her next turn, Anu acknowledges her mother’s evaluation with an approving minimum input: ‘m-hm?’ (line 27). For the following ten or so minutes, not included in the data excerpt, the mother goes through Anu’s pictures, evaluating them with an upbeat style. She praises one of costumes that Anu has drawn as being just as stylish as those in the ‘Supermodel’ TV show that Anu was watching earlier that day. During this time, Anu keeps chuckling, smiling and laughing regularly.

CONFLICTED BY TWO SEPARATE INTERACTIONS

An interactive situation can have various interactive resources that are relevant for the ongoing action. These resources can be conceptualized as semiotic fields (Goodwin, 2000). A semiotic field describes a collection of aspects of the human body and its environment that are significant to a specific social action. This collection can consist of elements, such as speech, gestures, posture, material and technological objects, arrangements in space, and so on. Goodwin emphasizes that speech cannot be dissected from the other material and bodily components of the interaction: they all co-create the semiotic fields through which interaction takes place. In interaction, many different semiotic fields can be simultaneously present, but they may not all be active at the same time. Those semiotic fields that the participants are currently orienting towards form the ‘contextual configuration’ of the ongoing social action (Goodwin, 2000, p. 1490).

Changing the contextual configuration requires orienting towards new semiotic fields. In our example, while trying to get her mother to attend to the joint activity, Anu also had to try to alter the contextual configuration that her mother was currently acting in. A central semiotic resource in that contextual configuration was the screen of the smartphone. At first, Anu asked for the evaluation of just one picture. When Anu later asked for more thorough participation, the initial request functioned as kind of a ‘foot in the door’ (Freedman and Fraser, 1966), as part of a course of action requesting the mother to join a more long-term joint activity (cf. Schegloff, 2007, p. 62; Levinson, 2013, p. 126).

In the usage of a smartphone, the action taking place is structured in turns undertaken by both the device and the human being. This is true even if the device is not being used to engage in interaction with another person, such as in chatting via an application. The use of a smartphone – or any other ICT device – has a structure of ‘adjacency pairs’ so that even the machine is in a way ‘expecting’ certain relevant actions from the user at certain relevant times (Suchman, 1987). This means that the device always reacts in some way to the user’s actions. Even an absence of reaction is a response. The information from the device directs the action, just as other participants’ actions do in a human–human interaction. Although it is the human participant that reads the meaning into whatever the technologies do or display, this interpretation work resembles what people do when encountering each other, and is in this way interactionally bonding (Raudaskoski, 1999, p. 17).

In order to challenge her mother’s current action, Anu has to get her mother’s attention away from the smartphone. Anu’s mother is required to change her posture and direction of gaze to signal to Anu that she is

attending to the same participation framework with her daughter and the notebook (cf. Goodwin, 2000, p. 1500). This cooperative stance (Goodwin, 2007, p. 62) is not accomplished easily; it takes plenty of work from Anu. She uses – among other things – several deictic expressions like ‘here’, ‘these’ and ‘this one’, and thus builds a competing focus of attention to the smartphone (cf. Goodwin, 2007, p. 55). In the progression of the episode, Anu’s verbal requests evolve to be more and more imperative, while at the same time she adds other modalities into them: she moves next to her mother, taps on her mother’s shoulder, nudges her and positions the notebook in her mother’s field of vision.

THE STICKY MEDIA DEVICE

Most of us have found that communication with a person using an ICT device – like a smartphone, tablet or computer – can sometimes be quite frustrating. We might have to wait for the response or feel we have not been heard at all. We might also get unclear or incomplete responses. The conversational counterpart’s orientation is not easily taken from their device, and while their attention may be momentarily disengaged, it nevertheless might return back to the device without delay. This is a common phenomenon, but to date no detailed description of it has been made, so we suggest that naming it will serve both scientific and lay communities. We call it the phenomenon of the ‘sticky media device’. The concept depicts the situation from the viewpoint of the person who is inviting the user of the media to engage in face-to-face interaction.

The stickiness of the smartphone shows in Anu and her mother’s interaction particularly clearly when the mother begins to put away her smartphone for the first time (Picture 9.3). She cuts her movement short and pulls the smartphone back close her body, takes hold of it again with both hands and focuses her attention on it once more. It genuinely looks like the smartphone cannot easily be dislodged from the mother’s hands. In extracts 4 and 5, Anu’s actions become increasingly demanding. After this, the sticky smartphone is finally released. The stickiness of a device can be conceptualized as a difficulty to change the contextual configuration. As discussed earlier, the device and its user form an interactive relationship. The contextual configuration that the mother is orienting to has been formed in relation to the events taking place with the smartphone and what the mother – and the device – predict will happen next (cf. Arminen, 2005, p. 203; Raudaskoski, 2009, pp. 145–76). This interactive relationship requires the user to engage in cognitive processing, and disengaging from it might not happen easily – especially if the task at hand is unfinished.

With a media device the rhythm of the interaction is different from non-technology-mediated human interaction. Also, by and large, only very simple actions can be executed with a media device without it starting to hamper other consecutive activity. In face-to-face interaction, the pauses between and within turns are subject to precise social control, and having too many or too long pauses is considered problematic for the joint activity. Any action with the smartphone that requires even slightly longer orientation by the user influences the simultaneous conversation in the form of stammering, hesitation, delays and repetitive beginnings. In fact, the simultaneous performance of several different conscious activities rarely truly takes place. Instead, people synchronize concurrent activities with an overlap, one immediately after another, and this has an effect on construing all of the ongoing activities (Levy and Gardner, 2012).

In the analysed episode, the overlap of activities is seen, for example, in the slowness of the mother’s turn-taking. As stated earlier, while we learn the order of interaction, we also become aware of the

moral aspect connected to that order. If our counterpart in an interaction does not join us in the same participation framework, in spite of our invitation, it is considered to be a breach of the shared rules of social conduct, and the counterpart is seen as morally accountable and usually as a cause of some irritation. It is nevertheless worth noticing that Anu does not in any direct way appear to lose her temper with her mother and, for example, walk away from the situation. Anu seems to attribute the troubles in the interaction to her mother's simultaneous use of the smartphone, just as we do. As researchers, we do not know what Anu's mother is doing with her smartphone, but the situation is the same for Anu: the details of the interaction between her mother and the smartphone are no more readily available to her than to the researchers watching the video recordings (see Chapter 11 for more discussion on the bystander's position).

Still, Anu can clearly see that her mother is focused on the smartphone and even though she does not get a reply from her mother before summoning her (Extract 1, line 3) – and regardless of her mother's gaze returning to the screen even before delivering an answer (Extract 2, line 10) – Anu acquiesces in the situation. Anu does not in any recognizable way treat her mother's first reply as a dispreferred action, but it is interesting to note that nor does she treat it as a clearly preferred one (cf. Schegloff, 1992). Anu seems to be capable of understanding that her mother's fumbled conversational turns relate to the presence of the smartphone: the problems in preference organization of talk-in-interaction originate in the mother's difficulty in changing the object of her orientation, and are not really connected to the contents of the requests that Anu is making. This vagueness would not be present if the mother was not in the midst of using a smartphone.

Then again, the way Anu nudges her mother while snapping at her ('mother?' on line 20) actually shows some moral indignation: it is the duty of her mother at this point to give at least some kind of a reply. Anu's turn is reminiscent of the behaviour of some children in an experiment performed by Michael Tomasello's research team (Tomasello, 2014). They found that if a prize was gained through collaboration and one of the children took more than their fair share of the bounty, the other child would execute a very simple protest, consisting of a short verbal outcry or just a mere motion of a hand. There was no need to elaborate on the nature of the perceived moral transgression; it was immediately understood what kind of behaviour was expected by the one who had taken more than they were supposed to (Warneken et al., 2011). In our present example, the divergence from the norm – not paying attention to Anu and not giving a reason why – comes to be treated as if it would be obvious to both Anu and her mother what should be done. In the aforementioned experiment, the addressed child did not protest but gave up the extra candy without argument (ibid.). Similarly, Anu's mother did not protest the nudge. Even though it is clear that we cannot see inside her head and claim to know why she acted the way she did, the comparison here is tempting. We know that adults are aware of the shared social norms of their societies and Anu's mother's rapid agreement to comply after receiving the nudge can therefore reasonably be proposed to be connected to her knowing very well what she should do. In fact, she starts to put her smartphone away less than 0.1 seconds following Anu's nudge, thus making it inconceivable that she would at this point be unclear about the proper cause of action.

The central function of social norms is to aid in interpreting the behaviour of others. Shared norms help us to see the social world, not as utter chaos, but as something that can be understood and influenced in predictable ways. This order is threatened if others do not play by the common rules (Heritage, 1984, pp. 95–101). Therefore, every instance of interaction also contains a moral stance – and with it an affective stance – towards the activity (Goodwin, 2007, pp. 65–9). The person invited into interaction has to either take part in it or

offer some sort of explanation for their default. While Anu's mother is interacting with her smartphone, she repeatedly fails to fulfil the fundamental requirements of human interaction and delays responding to Anu's requests. This 'failing' is understood co-constructively, and hence Anu's demand for a reply and the nudge embodying it are justified by the jointly comprehended moral and affective stances.

Each time a turn produced by a user of a smartphone is delayed, contains pauses or inconsistencies, is manifold in its meaning, or is left unfinished or started again, it makes the interpretative task of the receiver of the turn more challenging. Do these aspects relate to the shared social activity of the participants of the interaction, or do they exist solely due to one of the participants having their orientation directed towards their smartphone? We claim that when one of the participants in conversation simultaneously uses a smartphone, from the perspective of the ongoing talk-in-interaction, it is harder to identify whether their turns are preferred or dispreferred. If sticky media devices make the deciphering of joint activity in families more difficult, it means that their constant presence can cause difficulty, awkwardness, annoyance, arduousness and discomfort in family interaction. In one family of our personal acquaintances, the father has an inventive method for acquiring the attention of his children when – even though they are sharing the same physical space with him – they are very much absorbed in the games they are playing on their smartphones: he calls them with his own phone and produces his social act as part of the contextual configuration that the children are already orienting to. Would Anu also have gained the attention of her mother more rapidly if she had called her mother across the kitchen table?

DISCUSSION

Many of the elements of the conversation we have presented here are recognizable to most people in today's developed world. Mobile phones, and especially smartphones, have become an integral part of people's day-to-day lives. They have radically changed the conventions and temporal structures of our everyday activities: things are negotiated and rapidly agreed upon through mobile connections, and it is generally expected that others are available for this ongoing planning and restructuring of daily coordination (Ling, 2004). People become easily disgruntled when they are unable to reach someone through a mobile connection.

On top of phone calls, today's smartphones provide a variety of interactive social media and other applications for their users. The devices act as hubs for a plethora of applications and connections to distant others. At the same time, some new norms have developed about how the members of a society are expected to respond to these multiple ways of being contacted. Between friends, it can already begin to be a cause of concern if a message is not answered within a minute. In families, arguments can arise if one of the parents cannot be reached when there is a need to reorganize the immediate plans of the household. In the crossroads of such socially normative expectations, individuals find themselves having to decide, over and over again, how to conduct their lives with the media devices that accompany them (cf. Raudaskoski, 2009, pp. 76–9). Are they going to be available all the time? Do they immediately need to know what their friends have published on some social media site?

In our data example, Anu's mother eventually stretched out to place the smartphone as far away from herself as she could – on the very edge of the table, away from her space of action. This gesture in a way brings to mind the classical Stanford marshmallow experiment, where some children used the same tactics as a means of self-control: putting the marshmallow physically further away makes it easier to resist the

temptation to eat it (Mischel and Ebbesen, 1970). As mentioned earlier, portable media devices are socially normative and are expected to be ‘always on’ (Turkle, 2008) in order for everyone to be continuously reachable. In addition, they also contain a countless media and entertainment possibilities that can easily be tempting, or even addictive, to people of any age (Cheever et al., 2014). Reviewing the dataset (see Appendix 1) as a whole revealed that some kind of presence of media devices is commonplace during the daily face-to-face interactive situations within families. Nevertheless, as our example shows, the role of media devices in interaction might not be unproblematic. Every media device can bring a parallel and rival contextual framework for ongoing activities. They also create the presence of at least two concurrent but divergent normative worlds. One is the world of norms connected to the interactive processes with the device and the other is the normative world of face-to-face social interaction.

Considering the norms of face-to-face interaction, in the case examined, Anu was relatively patient with her mother’s difficulty in transiting into the shared activity, even though she had to do a lot of interactional work to disengage her mother from the ‘sticky’ smartphone. Through the examined case and other similar occurrences present in the data, we can conclude that media devices break the traditional social norms of interaction and introduce interpretive complexity into face-to-face interaction.

Over the last two decades, portable screen media devices have radically changed various social and societal practices. We who have lived in the era before mobile phones can in some sense compare the current situation to what came before. Those who are born today, who grow up surrounded by different media devices, actually learn what social skills mean in this very environment. Parent–child interaction is crucial for the development of children, and therefore the challenges that media devices pose to this interaction is a question of the utmost importance.

Earlier, we discussed how the knowledge of what is socially appropriate is learned simultaneously with the skills of interaction. The question here is one of intersubjectivity, not merely as a skill of the individual, but something that is built turn by turn through a contextual configuration, always in a certain time and in a certain place in joint activity with others (Pontecorvo et al., 2001, p. 346). As previously mentioned, social norms are first and foremost learned in order to understand and function in a social world. It is disturbing and even threatening when other people do not act according to common rules, and therefore the situated activities always also have moral and affective aspects (Goodwin, 2007, p. 71). But if the ubiquitous presence of screen media devices can break these traditional normative rules, and thus produce ambiguity and interpretative variance, it may have an effect on the development of children’s social and emotional skills. Today’s children encounter conflicting norms in their daily lives: for example, they might first learn the practices of requesting and answering a request, but then notice that these practices might not be applicable after all, at least when a smartphone is present in the interaction.

Reviewing the data, some grand questions come to mind. Older children can already interpret interaction to a large extent, but what about when a crying baby is waiting to receive attention from a parent who is interacting with a sticky media device? Attachment theory suggests that it is in interaction with the caregiver that children form their understanding of being worthy of receiving help and care, and whether other people can be expected to offer aid or not (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980 [1982]). If a child must compete for parental attention with media devices from infancy, can this endanger the formation of secure attachment? Could sticky media devices turn out to be developmental risk factors?

NOTES

*This chapter is based on Mantere, E. and S. Raudaskoski (2015), 'Kun matkapuhelin vie vanhemman huomion', in A.R. Lahikainen, T. Mälkiä and K. Repo (eds), *Media lapsiperheessä*, Tampere: Vastapaino, pp. 205–26.

1. We might, for example, invite our boss to a party purely out of courtesy, even though we might not really consider them a friend or actually want them to attend. The boss might decline the invitation pleading work overload instead of saying that they are really not interested in the party at all.

2. Transition relevant place (TRP) is a name given to such a moment in interaction where the speaker can change without it being perceived as an interruption. It is usually marked by a pause after the latest utterance. In these moments, it is common to non-verbally and rapidly 'negotiate' who will be the next speaker, but if the next speaker has already been addressed, it is expected that they will take the next turn. If they do not do this quickly, it is commonly interpreted to mean that a dispreferred second-pair part – for example, declining an invitation – is to follow (Clayman, 2012).

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